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EDITORIAL: TAKING UP THE CALLS TO ACTION OF THE TRC IN TEACHER EDUCATION

For those working in the field of teacher education who have begun the complex process of (re)positioning themselves in relation to the Calls to Action issued in the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report* (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada [TRC], 2015), it has become clear that they present much more than just an informational problem. It is true that there is much *information* regarding Indigenous insights, experiences, knowledges, and memories that most people living in the place currently called Canada have been asked to consider recently. Such information needs to be shared with students in teacher education contexts before in-depth deliberations on the implications of the Calls can be meaningfully engaged.

The move beyond information requires a deep engagement with Canadian colonial legacies in relation to Indigenous insights; this is a particularly complex and delicate endeavour that many teacher educators are encountering in their work. Most mainstream teacher education programs operating in Canada have not been conceptualized in ways that support this type of engagement. For the most part, the philosophies and knowledge systems that undergird these teacher education programs are not capable of providing meaningful guidance on how to respond to the challenges of Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. If teacher education programs in Canada continue to rely on existing dominant knowledge systems and governing structures to respond to the Calls to Action, they will fail to address them with the spirit and intent with which they were issued. There will be no cultural changes to teacher education programs unless they undergo significant structural changes that will allow Indigenous and Canadian people and peoples to walk alongside each other as equals. This idea of change also applies to universities more broadly. While inclusive spaces are not necessarily difficult to create, institutions often fail to support them as places over which Indigenous people have control, particularly over the long term.

We are a collective of Indigenous and Canadian educators, all with current or recent relationships, as professors and graduate students, to Faculties of Education across Canada. As co-editors of this special issue, we thus conceived of teacher education broadly, and wondered what it might mean to teach so

that future generations “can live together in dignity, peace, and prosperity on these lands we now share” (TRC, 2015, p. 13). The authors in this special issue are also differently situated in relation to teacher education, describing initiatives taking place at all levels, from single graduate and mandatory undergraduate Bachelor of Education courses, new Masters in Education programs and graduate cohorts in Indigenous Studies, and provincial K-12 curricular reforms. Authors are Indigenous and non-Indigenous, practicing teachers and education professors, and graduate students new to teacher education, together with veteran teacher educators and researchers.

As we had hoped, the papers collected in this special issue give a sense of the complexity and range of processes set in motion in teacher education by the Calls to Action, as well as their incompleteness. Many of the papers are shaped by a kind of tentativeness, driven by a sense that a lot of the work of teaching “information” about Indigenous peoples has been done poorly in the past; mistakes the authors work hard to not repeat. Grappling with the ethical, political, epistemological, cosmological, and ontological dimensions of colonial legacies is even more complex. While Indigenous scholars in education and higher education have long taken a decolonizing stance as they worked to foster complex understandings of the philosophies, perspectives, and practices of Indigenous peoples, including ways in which these understandings conflict with mainstream schooling, for most other teachers and staff working in education in Canada, this approach is fairly new. There are also few models of what has worked in the past. This tentativeness helps explain why a number of the submissions are Notes from the Field, well suited to exploring attempts at decolonizing minds and institutions as very much beginning places and works in progress. The work of learning and unlearning means establishing new ground through partnerships and dialogue that occur within and between Indigenous and settler communities.

The need to walk alongside others as equals as a key aspect of (re)positioning understanding explains why most of the papers are shaped by a deep commitment to dialogue and being in relationship. Given the situatedness of perspective, it is not surprising that a number of these dialogues involve sometimes difficult conversations between Indigenous and settler Canadians. This work draws upon methodologies that foster relationality and individual and shared self-reflection. For instance, Macdonald and Markides, a self-identified settler and a Métis doctoral student in education, draw upon “duo-ethnography” and Dwayne Donald’s (2016) notion of “ethical relationality” to reflect upon their learning experiences in their program, noting the pedagogical value of spaces for dialogue, as well as land and community-based learning opportunities led by elders and Indigenous professors. Keliipio, Perry, and Elderton also come together to share their stories as teacher educators preparing themselves to address the Calls to Action. A resonance across their stories is the vital role of relationships with indigenous teachers, including children, elders, scholars

and colleagues, in their learning journeys. Similarly, Kearns, Tomkins and Lunny-Borden draw upon “sharing circle conversations” to learn more from a specialized graduate cohort composed primarily of non-Indigenous teachers, including about the vital role that critical and caring learning communities can play in supporting educators seeking to decolonize their professional practices and communities, which can include combating resistance from colleagues.

A central question for many of the authors and projects is how to unlearn colonialism, particularly within institutions grounded in it. A number of the pieces speak to the institutional limitations on this work, including Watson and Currie-Patterson’s concern that a single course could never do the decolonizing work Battiste (2013) has called for which, in Watson and Currie-Patterson’s words, “reconstructs education embedded with Indigenous ways of knowing and being.” In their Note, they describe the challenges they faced as non-Indigenous teachers leading a required course for BEd students, including fear, anxiety and complacency from students; this class must be seen as only the beginning of a lifelong commitment to reconciliatory learning for teachers and students.

The Calls to Action require a commitment to change from all levels of education. St. Pierre’s Note documents an interview with an administrator in the Ministry of Education in Ontario about the detailed process of K-12 curriculum revision, beginning with history and social studies, upon which they had embarked, overseen by a committee of First Nations, Métis and Inuit members engaged in every stage of the process. (Testament to the fragility of some of these initiatives, the summer 2018 curriculum design session was cancelled by the newly elected provincial government).

In another inquiry into a mandatory teacher education course, Korteweg and Fiddler describe a collaborative teaching partnership between an Anishinaabekwe and a White settler teacher-educator in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Based on their experiences of co-teaching five cohorts of teacher education students, in which they modeled the political nature of the personal and ways of connecting across difference, they describe a series of key “sticky” points for the students, including grappling with their own White settler privilege and the legacies of colonialism in K-12 and teacher education.

Koelwyn proposes that some of this resistance or disengagement from non-Indigenous students might be read as a symptom of shame, for instance, at learning about residential schools. In response, he explores the ethical and pedagogical potential of “working through” what he calls settler-shame, drawing upon reintegrative and transformative models from psychoanalysis and criminology. He argues that shame might also be a grounds for what Regan (2010) calls “unsettling” the settler, including rethinking one’s relationships and responsibilities to difference.

These structural challenges to the work of transforming educational institutions are complicated. For instance, Miles' exploration of the implications of the Calls to Action for history education identifies a number of conceptual barriers to decolonizing history education: dominant nation building narratives, a tendency to think of colonization as "in the past," and the difficulty for non-Indigenous teachers and students of adopting a historical consciousness which grapples with their own responsibilities and implication in past and ongoing settler colonial practices. In this article, he argues for "historical thinking" as a strategy for grappling with these barriers.

Art is also offered as a means of helping to learn and unlearn. Convinced that arts are an important element of Indigenous resurgence, the regeneration of Indigenous ways of knowing and being in the face of "colonial erasure," Hanson explores the potential of Indigenous literature, through conversations with Indigenous writers as well as teachers of Indigenous literature. Weaving a *métissage* of their perspectives, Hanson argues that Indigenous literature can "call readers into relational understandings" that bring with them a commitment to "response-ability."

Also exploring the arts as a method of grappling with the Calls, Conrad, Jagger, Bleeks, and Auger describe their experiences in a graduate course on arts-based research methodologies that took up as central question Dwayne Donald's question, "What does it mean to live on this land?" Sharing some of their reflections as well as art-works, they also argue that this question raises the notions of relationship and responsibility, implicating them in issues "around geographical settings, historical contexts, colonization, and nationhood, relations as/with Indigenous peoples, Indigenous ways of knowing, relations with the natural environment, exploitation of the land, the environmental crisis, our own family histories and personal journeys."

The role of land, or *Land* (Zinga & Styres, 2011) — storied and animate — returns in Wiseman's exploration of how Indigenous and Western ways of knowing, being, and doing might come together in science education. Like Miles and others in this Special issue, Wiseman troubles the notion of "reconciliation," while at the same time holding onto it to "see if it allows for anything useful." Her conclusions, drawn from the experience of developing Indigenous Teaching and Learning Gardens in two different sites, help us to think through this special issue's initial commitment: she reminds us that "Finding ways for ourselves and future generations to 'live together in dignity, peace, and prosperity on these lands we now share'" (TRC, 2015, p. 13) is not a one-time event. It is something we must return to over and over again, and keep working on, together. What works in one place, or in a specific place / Land or *Land*, may not work in another, or not in the same way."

And so this is the challenge we leave readers with: How might you take up some of the ideas presented within the special issue in your own work? What

does it mean to do this work in a good way? What changes, adaptations, and new ideas fit better in your own places, the Land where you live or find yourself living? How might you unlearn your own practices so that decolonization might become possible, and you can move beyond the informational in teacher education? And, always, how do you keep returning, over and over again, to make the work a dialogue, a partnership that resists the sense that the work is done, or that any/one (group) of us has all the answers?



THE EDITORIAL COLLECTIVE

LYN DANIELS *Surrey Schools*
 SANDRA DEER *McGill University*
 DWAYNE DONALD *University of Alberta*
 BRONWEN LOW *McGill University*
 DAWN WISEMAN *Bishop's University*

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ÉDITORIAL : RÉPONDRE AUX APPELS À L'ACTION FORMULÉS PAR LA COMMISSION DE VÉRITÉ ET DE RÉCONCILIATION AU SEIN DE LA FORMATION DES ENSEIGNANTS

Pour les intervenants impliqués dans le domaine de la formation des enseignants ayant amorcé le processus complexe de se (re)positionner en lien avec les appels à l'action formulés dans le *Rapport final de la Commission de vérité et de réconciliation* (Commission de vérité et de réconciliation [TRC], 2015), il est évident que ceux-ci soulèvent bien plus qu'un problème informationnel. Il est vrai que les gens vivant dans le lieu actuellement nommé Canada sont exposés à et appelés à tenir compte d'une foule d'informations concernant les connaissances, expériences, savoirs et souvenirs autochtones. Ces informations doivent être partagées avec les étudiants inscrits en formation initiale des enseignants avant que des discussions approfondies sur les implications de ces appels puissent être sérieusement menées.

Aller au-delà de l'aspect informationnel nécessite un travail de fond pour mettre les legs coloniaux canadiens en relation avec les connaissances autochtones. Il s'agit d'une tâche complexe et délicate menée dans leur pratique par plusieurs professeurs en éducation. La majorité des programmes traditionnels en formation initiale des enseignants au Canada n'ont pas été conçus de manière à appuyer ce type de relations. Dans la plupart des cas, les philosophies et systèmes de connaissances à la base des programmes en formation des enseignants sont incapables de fournir des orientations utiles quant à la manière de répondre aux défis de la Vérité et Réconciliation avec les Autochtones. Si les programmes en formation des enseignants persistent à s'appuyer sur les systèmes de connaissances et structures de gouvernance actuellement dominants pour répondre aux Appels à l'action, ceux-ci ne pourront pas y faire face en respectant l'esprit et les buts dans lesquels ils ont été formulés. Aucun changement culturel n'est possible au sein des programmes en formation des enseignants si ceux-ci ne subissent pas des changements structurels significatifs permettant aux personnes et aux peuples autochtones et canadiens de cheminer côte-à-côte, comme égaux. Ce concept de changement s'applique également aux universités dans leur ensemble. En effet, les espaces inclusifs ne sont pas nécessairement difficiles à créer. Cependant, les institutions rencontrent souvent des difficultés à les soutenir de manière à donner aux Autochtones un contrôle, particulièrement à long terme.

Nous sommes un collectif d'enseignants d'origine autochtone et canadienne. Nous avons ou avons récemment eu un lien avec une faculté en éducation au Canada, comme enseignants ou étudiants aux cycles supérieurs. Comme corédacteurs de cette édition spéciale, nous avons considéré le concept de formation des enseignants dans son sens large et nous sommes questionnés sur ce que signifie enseigner aux générations futures pour qu'elles « puissent vivre ensemble dans la dignité, la paix et la prospérité, sur ces terres désormais communes » (TRC, 2015, p. 13). Les auteurs publiés au sein de cette édition spéciale occupent différentes positions dans le domaine de la formation des enseignants et dépeignent des initiatives mises en place à tous les niveaux : l'étudiant diplômé et les cours obligatoires au sein du baccalauréat en éducation, de nouveaux programmes de maîtrise en éducation et des cohortes d'étudiants à la maîtrise en études autochtones ou des réformes provinciales de programmes au primaire et au secondaire. Autochtones ou non-autochtones, enseignants en classe ou professeurs en éducation, étudiants aux cycles supérieurs fraîchement impliqués en formation des enseignants ou encore chercheurs et professeurs chevronnés, les auteurs de cette édition présentent des profils variés.

Tel que nous l'espérons, les articles réunis dans cette édition spéciale montrent toute la complexité et l'étendue des processus mis en branle dans le domaine de la formation des enseignants par les Appels à l'action. Ils permettent aussi d'en saisir le caractère inachevé. Plusieurs articles sont caractérisés par la notion d'essai et présentent l'idée qu'une grande partie de la tâche d'enseignement « informationnel » concernant les Autochtones a été bâclée dans le passé, des erreurs que les auteurs tentent d'éviter à tout prix. Chercher à comprendre les dimensions éthiques, politiques, épistémologiques, cosmologiques et ontologiques de l'héritage colonial se révèle encore plus complexe. Les universitaires d'origine autochtone dans le monde de l'éducation et de l'enseignement supérieur adoptent depuis longtemps une posture décolonisatrice lorsqu'ils travaillent à encourager une compréhension plus riche des philosophies, perspectives et pratiques des Autochtones et ce, même en identifiant des façons dont cette compréhension entre en conflit avec les courants éducatifs dominants. Cependant, cette approche est relativement nouvelle pour la majorité des autres enseignants et intervenants du domaine de l'éducation au Canada. Par ailleurs, peu de modèles ont fonctionné dans le passé. Cette idée d'essai permet de comprendre pourquoi un nombre important de soumissions sont des Notes du terrain, véhicule idéal pour explorer des tentatives de décolonisation des esprits et des institutions à des stades initiaux ou de travaux en cours. Ce chantier d'apprentissage et de désapprentissage nécessite d'établir de nouvelles fondations à l'aide de partenariats et de dialogues, au sein et entre les communautés autochtones et colonisatrices, sur des bases individuelle et collective.

La majorité des articles sont caractérisés par un engagement fort envers le dialogue et la nécessité d'être en relation, en raison de l'aspect fondamental que revêt le besoin de cheminer côte-à-côte, comme égaux, dans le (re)posi-

tionnement de l'interprétation. Puisque la situation d'un individu façonne son point de vue, il n'est pas surprenant qu'un bon nombre de discussions entraînent des conversations difficiles entre les Autochtones et les « colonisateurs » canadiens. Ce cheminement requiert l'utilisation de méthodologies encourageant la relation ainsi que la réflexion individuelle et partagée. À titre d'exemple, Macdonald et Markides, respectivement « colonisatrice auto-proclamée » et doctorante d'origine métisse, se basent sur la « duo-ethnographie » et la notion de « relationalité éthique » de Dwayne Donald (2016) pour réfléchir aux apprentissages effectués dans le cadre de leur programme. Elles soulignent la valeur pédagogique de lieux propices au dialogue et des opportunités d'apprentissage sur le terrain et au niveau communautaire, lorsque pilotées par des aînés et des professeurs d'origine autochtone. Keliipio, Perry et Elderton collaborent aussi pour partager leur expérience comme formateurs de futurs enseignants se préparant à répondre aux Appels à l'action. Un thème résonne fortement à travers leurs récits : les relations avec des professeurs d'origine autochtone, incluant des enfants, des aînés, des universitaires ou des collègues jouent un rôle fondamental dans le cheminement comme apprenants. De la même manière, Kearns, Tomkins et Lunny-Borden s'appuient sur les discussions tenues dans des « cercles de partage » pour en apprendre davantage sur une cohorte spécialisée à la maîtrise et composée majoritairement d'enseignants non-autochtones. Ils s'intéressent au rôle vital que peuvent jouer des communautés critiques et bienveillantes pour soutenir les enseignants désireux de décoloniser leurs pratiques et communautés professionnelles et rencontrant parfois de la résistance de certains collègues.

Un questionnement demeure central pour plusieurs auteurs et au cœur de plusieurs projets : comment désapprendre le colonialisme, particulièrement au sein d'institutions qui reposent sur celui-ci? C'est pourquoi certains auteurs s'intéressent aux limites institutionnelles dans leurs travaux, incluant Watson et Currie-Patterson. Pour ceux-ci, un seul cours ne peut pas effectuer tout le travail de décolonisation prôné par Battiste (2013) et qui, selon Watson et Currie-Patterson, « reconstruit l'éducation en y intégrant les principes autochtones de savoir et d'être ». Dans leur note du terrain, ils décrivent les défis rencontrés en tant qu'enseignants non autochtones animant un cours obligatoire à des étudiants au baccalauréat en éducation, incluant les peurs, l'anxiété et la complaisance des étudiants. Pour eux, ce cours doit n'être que le début d'un engagement continu à un apprentissage visant la réconciliation, pour les professeurs comme les étudiants.

La mise en œuvre des Appels à l'action impliquent un engagement à changer de tous les niveaux du monde de l'éducation. La note de St-Pierre relate une entrevue menée avec un gestionnaire du Ministère de l'Éducation ontarien. Cet entretien porte sur le processus détaillé de révision des programmes du préscolaire à la 5^e secondaire piloté par ce ministère, démarche amorcée avec les domaines de l'histoire et des sciences sociales et supervisée à toutes les

étapes par des membres des Premières Nations et des communautés métisse et inuite. (L'abolition de la session Été 2018 de conception des programmes par le gouvernement provincial nouvellement élu démontre la vulnérabilité de certaines de ces initiatives).

Toujours dans le contexte d'un cours obligatoire en formation des enseignants, Korteweg et Fiddler décrivent leur collaboration à Thunder Bay, en Ontario en tant que partenaires pédagogiques, une enseignante d'origine anichinabée et l'autre, « blanche colonisatrice ». Après avoir co-enseigné à cinq cohortes de futurs enseignants en modélisant la nature politique d'une personne et les manières d'entrer en relation au-delà des différences, elles se basent sur leur expérience pour présenter une liste de points plus « délicats » pour les étudiants, incluant la lutte contre les privilèges associés au statut de « colonisateurs blancs » et contre les legs hérités du colonialisme durant leur parcours scolaire, du préscolaire à la fin du secondaire ainsi qu'en cours de formation comme futurs enseignants.

Koelwyn suggère qu'une part de la résistance ou du désengagement des étudiants d'origine non-autochtone puisse, dans une certaine mesure, être interprétée comme un symptôme de honte. Honte d'apprendre, par exemple, l'existence des pensionnats indiens. Pour y pallier, il explore le potentiel éthique et pédagogique du cheminement pour « surmonter » ce qu'il nomme la honte du colonisateur, s'appuyant sur des modèles de réintégration et de transformation inspirés de la psychanalyse et de la criminologie. Il soutient que la honte peut aussi être un moyen de « décoloniser » le colon, comme l'avance Regan (2010), notamment en repensant les relations et les responsabilités de chacun face à la différence.

Ces défis structurels reliés à la transformation des institutions éducationnelles sont complexes. À titre d'exemple, Miles identifie un nombre d'obstacles conceptuels relatifs à la décolonisation de l'enseignement de l'histoire dans son analyse des implications qu'ont les Appels à l'action dans ce domaine. Parmi celles-ci, Miles liste les récits élaborés par les groupes dominants, une tendance à concevoir la colonisation comme un concept « appartenant au passé » et la difficulté pour les enseignants et les étudiants non-autochtones à développer une conscience historique qui les éveille à leurs responsabilités et implications dans les pratiques du passé et coloniales. Au sein de son article, il soutient que la « pensée historique » constitue une stratégie pour lutter contre ses obstacles.

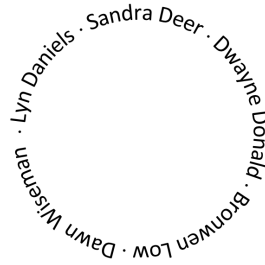
L'art est également proposé comme moyen permettant d'apprendre et de désapprendre. Convaincu que les arts constituent un élément fondamental de la renaissance autochtone — la réhabilitation des principes autochtones du savoir et de l'être face au « processus d'effacement colonial » — Hanson explore le potentiel de la littérature autochtone, utilisant des conversations réalisées avec des écrivains d'origine autochtone et des enseignants en littérature autochtone.

Effectuant un *métissage* de leurs points de vue, Hanson soutient que la littérature autochtone peut « attirer les lecteurs dans une zone de compréhension relationnelle » qui entraîne un engagement envers une « réponse-ibilité ».

Conrad, Jagger, Bleeks et Auger explorent aussi les arts comme véhicule pour répondre aux Appels. Pour ce faire, elles décrivent leur expérience au sein d'un cours de deuxième cycle en méthodologie de recherche axée sur les arts, durant lequel elles se sont posées la question *Que signifie vivre sur cette terre?* de Dwayne Donald. Partageant quelques-unes de leurs réflexions et des productions artistiques, elles soutiennent également que cette question les a amenées à s'interroger sur les notions de relation et de responsabilité et à s'impliquer sur des problématiques en lien avec « des lieux géographiques, des contextes historiques, les concepts de colonisation et de nationalité, les relations *en tant que* et *avec* les Autochtones, les principes autochtones de savoir, les relations avec l'environnement, l'exploitation de la terre, la crise environnementale ainsi que nos histoires familiales et nos cheminements personnels. »

Le rôle de la Terre ou *Land* (Zinga et Styres, 2011) — racontée et animée — revient dans l'exploration par Wiseman des principes autochtones et occidentaux de savoir, d'être et de faire et de la manière dont ceux-ci peuvent cohabiter dans le domaine de l'enseignement des sciences. À l'instar de Miles et d'autres auteurs publiés dans cette édition spéciale, Wiseman bouleverse la notion de « réconciliation ». Tout en y adhérant, elle cherche à « voir si celle-ci entraîne quelque chose d'utile ». Ses conclusions, basées sur son expérience de mise en place dans deux endroits différents de jardins d'enseignement et d'apprentissage autochtones, nous aident à parcourir cette édition spéciale en gardant en tête l'objectif premier. En effet, elle nous rappelle que « trouver des manières pour les générations futures et actuelles de “vivre ensemble dans la dignité, la paix et la prospérité, sur ces terres désormais communes” » (TRC, 2015, p. 13) n'est pas l'affaire d'un jour. Il s'agit d'un concept sur lequel il importe de se pencher de manière continue et pour lequel la collaboration est nécessaire. Les pratiques efficaces en un endroit ou un lieu précis / Terre ou *Land*, ne le sont peut-être pas dans un autre lieu ou encore, pas applicables de la même manière. »

En somme, nous vous donnons, chers lecteurs, le défi suivant : De quelle manière intégrerez-vous certaines des idées présentées dans cette édition spéciale au sein de vos projets? Qu'est-ce que cela signifie de faire ce travail dans le bon sens? Quels changements, adaptations, ou idées nouvelles ont leur place dans vos espaces, la Terre où vous vivez? Comment vous y prendrez-vous pour désapprendre vos propres pratiques afin de rendre possible la décolonisation et aller au-delà du niveau « informationnel » en formation des enseignants? Finalement et comme à l'habitude, de quelle façon persisterez-vous, jour après jour, pour effectuer votre travail avec un souci de dialogue, de partenariat qui survit au sentiment du devoir accompli ou qui transcende l'impression que tous les/un des (groupes) parmi nous possède toutes les réponses?



LE COLLECTIF ÉDITORIAL

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CALLED TO ACTION: DIALOGUE AROUND PRAXIS FOR RECONCILIATION

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ABSTRACT. Education for reconciliation is centered on renewing Indigenous-settler relations. In this article, two graduate students share their experiences as they endeavour to take up a praxis for reconciliation. Positioned by their different cultural identities, they join in a duoethnographic conversation, to reflect on their learning and to share their successes, insights, and tensions as they navigate various complexities. Through their reflective process, they ask: *What might collective enactment look like and what forms might it take in education?* As they journey together, they discuss the need for spaces that promote vulnerability and openness, and the strength of land-based and grassroots learning opportunities.

APPEL À L'ACTION: DIALOGUE SUR UNE DÉMARCHE DE RÉCONCILIATION

RÉSUMÉ. L'éducation ayant pour but la réconciliation vise à renouveler les relations entre Autochtones et pionniers. Dans cet article, deux étudiantes à la maîtrise font part des expériences vécues au sein d'une démarche de réconciliation. Influencées par leur identité culturelle différente, elles participent à une discussion duo-ethnographique pour réfléchir à leurs apprentissages. Elles partagent leurs succès, observations et tensions au long de ce parcours parsemé d'embûches. Au cours de leur processus de réflexion, elles s'interrogent : « À quoi une démarche collective pourrait-elle ressembler et quelles formes pourrait-elle prendre dans le domaine de l'éducation ? » En pleine démarche, les étudiantes abordent le besoin de lieux pour promouvoir la vulnérabilité et l'ouverture d'esprit, ainsi que le potentiel des opportunités d'apprentissage plus populaires et sur le terrain.

We met in the fall of 2015 as we were beginning our doctoral programs in education. By chance, we happened to sit beside each other on the first day and then subsequently shared all the same classes. Finding ourselves in continuous conversation around topics of the natural environment, culture,

teaching and learning, and wellbeing, we circled matters of truth and reconciliation — seeing ourselves as part of the process and sharing our experiences and insights — from two different cultural and geographic perspectives.

FROM SELF-SITUATING TO SHARED PRAXIS

MacDonald: I grew up in the small city in Eastern Ontario. I am a settler Canadian, of Scottish and British descent. My identity has also been shaped by my work as an outdoor environmental educator and spending time with the rivers, lakes, mountains, and trees. I have also worked as a physical education and humanities teacher in secondary school settings for nearly a decade, and now in undergraduate teacher-education courses.

Markides: I am a member of the Métis Nation and resident of High River, Alberta. I have Swampy Cree, British, Swedish, Irish, Coast Salish, Belgian, and Scottish ancestry. My hometown of Smithers, B.C., is situated in the beautiful Bulkley Valley — where the Bulkley River borders the traditional territories of the Wet'suwet'en and Gitksan Peoples. Additionally, I have worked as a teacher for nearly 15 years — first, in elementary Montessori, and now in undergraduate teacher-education classes.

WHERE DID OUR RESEARCH JOURNEY WITH TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION BEGIN?

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC, 2015a) Final Report states, "all Canadians have a critical role to play in advancing reconciliation in ways that honour and revitalize the nation-to-nation Treaty relationships" (p. 237). We saw the Calls to Action (TRC, 2015b) as a starting place to explore *our role* in moving reconciliation forward. We made a commitment to read the 94 Calls to Action together. We asked: *Who is being called to action?* And, *what might they be called to do?* While much of the document called upon different levels of government and organizations to make change, we could also see entry points for the individual. We found that the role of the individual needed to be effortful and sought out, to hold the government and organizations accountable while actively fostering ethical relationships. We drew on our own experiences to situate our understandings, which in turn positioned us in a complex relationship with reconciliation. From this initial reading, we saw the importance and imperative of carrying our work forward in our lives and in our work as educators. *How do we support reconciliatory relationships and learning for reconciliation?*

To do this, we found further opportunities to engage with reconciliation as a form of praxis — using "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (Freire, 1970/2000, p. 51). We were not totally sure how to do this at first, but felt a shared commitment to bring the Calls to Action document to life in our daily experiences. We participated in graduate courses with

Indigenous foci — an Indigenous research methodology course and a land-based teaching and learning course around four directions teachings. We became involved in community initiatives, facilitated workshops around opening safe spaces and learning conversations, and participated in ceremony. Our circles continued to expand while the pervasive complexities, emotion, and hope of this work were constantly revealed and felt. Having each other for support was invaluable. We felt our pause for reflection honoured ongoing efforts to “encourage and engage in respectful dialogue on many issues that hinder or foster reconciliation” (TRC, 2015a, p. 39).

We continue our conversation together, asking: *What successes, insights, and tensions exist in our praxis? What might collective enactment look like and what forms might it take in education?* In what follows, we position ourselves in education for reconciliation, discuss how duoethnography (Norris & Sawyer, 2012) fits with our intentions, share our reflective dialogue, discuss emergent themes, and conclude with a discussion of what next. From our ongoing learning, we recognize the vulnerability needed to address complexities and to engage authentically, and we wish to honour the slowness embedded in a thoughtful process. We share our conversation as an invitation for others to reflect on their own beliefs, biases, and understandings. We also hope to inspire other students and educators to participate in dialogue that will bring meaning to their own contexts.

WHAT IS RECONCILIATION?

Wikipedia (n.d.) describes reconciliation as “the restoration of friendly relations,” “the action of making one view or belief compatible with another,” or “the action of making financial accounts consistent; harmonization” (“Reconciliation”). To problematize the taken-for-granted definitions with a view toward reconciliatory education, we ask: *have the relations ever been truly friendly, such that they can be “restored” to a previous desired state? How can we make “worldviews” compatible? Is there still an urgent need to harmonize the financial accounts at the federal and provincial levels to ensure equitable funding for Indigenous education, language programs, community services, and more?* From the TRC’s Final Report (2015a):

The Commission defines reconciliation as an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships. A critical part of this process involves repairing damaged trust by making apologies, providing individual and collective reparations, and following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change. (p. 16)

As we take up this work, we are mindful of the multiple definitions, interpretations, and implications. We bring a respect for the truths shared and a commitment to the actions needed for reconciliation to make the much-needed changes in our world. We agree that “The urgent need for reconciliation runs deep in Canada. Expanding public dialogue and action on reconciliation be-

yond residential schools will be critical in the coming years. Although some progress has been made, significant barriers to reconciliation remain” (TRC, 2015a, p. 7). The need for reconciliation pre-dates the TRC’s inception and the legacies of colonization will be part of our Canadian identity forever. It is what we do with the notion of reconciliation that stands to make a difference in the stories we tell and the lives we touch, shaping our relationships for the better.

Towards education for reconciliation

Canadians must do more than just talk about reconciliation; we must learn how to practise reconciliation in our everyday lives – within ourselves and our families, and in our communities, governments, places of worship, schools, and workplaces. (TRC, 2015a, p. 20)

Education is a central theme in the TRC’s mandate. As both of us study and work in a university setting, and have backgrounds in educational contexts, we are drawn to consider our life experiences and how the intent of the document will live in our classrooms, educational research, and personal lives. We see thoughtful responses being taken up, such as Butler, Ng-A-Fook, Vaudrin-Charette, and McFadden’s (2015) examination of their practices as researchers and settler educators, and Bissell and Korteweg’s (2016) two-fold digital narrative project focused on relationship building with settler teacher candidates and Indigenous students. In wider settings, ministries of education and educational institutions have written and committed to mandates emphasizing Indigenous education (for example see Alberta Education, 2016; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016; University of Calgary, 2017). Many of the initiatives prompted by the Calls to Action are recent; therefore, the success of these efforts has yet to be realized.

In scholarly communities, we notice the intertwined narratives around: Indigenous education, decolonizing education, and education for reconciliation. While we see similar purposes in these forms of education, we note the subtle differences. Indigenous education works to honour culturally-informed practices, languages, and traditions (Battiste & Barman, 1995; Cajete, 1994). While many of these traditions were subject to attempted assimilation and obliteration by the church and state (Milloy, 1999), contemporary contexts of Indigenous education promote healing, reclamation, and resurgence (Denis, 2007; Simpson, 2011). Decolonizing education (Battiste, 1998; Haig-Brown, 2009) problematizes the explicit and hidden normalization of Eurocentric colonialism in the education system and works towards socially-just curriculum and practices. That said, we understand the overarching purpose of education for reconciliation to be centered on healing and renewing the Indigenous-Settler relationship (Cannon, 2012; TRC, 2015a). We see shifting discourse towards education for reconciliation visible in the fields of environmental education (Korteweg & Russell, 2012) and social science education (Hildebrandt et al. 2016; Tupper, 2014), where we find progressive conversations around the

importance of land, place, and treaties. Our review of the literature, however, suggests that little has been written about the experience and complexities of renewing relationships from a student or teacher perspective.

Regan (2010) argued that there is great pedagogical possibility for disrupting narratives and renewing relations at this time, and emphasized the importance of unsettling ourselves as part of the collective project. In her words, “Unsettling the settler within necessarily involves critical self-reflection and action in our lives – a difficult learning that is part of the struggle we must undertake” (p. 237). We, too, see the importance of questioning our lived-experiences and exposing our vulnerability. In addition, we appreciate the narratives of educating the heart, and see the work of reconciliation as a project of being human – validating emotions and spirit as part of knowing. Regan (2010) said, “Connecting head, heart, and spirit in ways that value vulnerability and humility enables us to accept harsh truths and to use our moral imagination in order to reclaim our own humanity” (p. 237). Through collaboration, we hope to privilege work from the heart and contribute to wider conversations of renewing relationships and honouring complexities towards education for reconciliation.

METHODOLOGY: DUOETHNOGRAPHY AS A RECONCILIATORY MOVE

Duoethnographies inspire compassion and a sense of humanity as they call us to action.
(Norris & Sawyer, 2012, p. 11)

Reconciliation is about stories and our ability to tell stories. I think the intellectual part of ourselves wants to start looking for words to define reconciliation. And then there is the heart knowledge that comes from our life experiences.
(Lorena Fontaine, cited in TRC, 2015a, p. 293)

To guide our narrative process, we employed tenets of duoethnography that capture the multifaceted layers of our past, present, and future experiences. Duoethnography, as described by Norris and Sawyer (2012), is a “participatory, dialogic, and non-prescriptive” (p. 12) manner of conducting research. Given our inclination to share stories from our lived-curricula in a fluid manner, the method fit well with our already established *modus operandi*. Our conversations engage elements of *currere*, dialogue, difference, and reflexivity (Norris & Sawyer, 2012). We situate ourselves as the research sites, while unpacking and repacking meaning together. Positioned differently, our exchanges expose the complexities of our disparate perspectives and enable us to disrupt and displace the dominant stories that we hold, and that hold us – as a collective act of resistance and hope.

On a wider scale, we consider duoethnography to be an appropriate move

towards a reconciliatory practice. Although this method sits within a Western epistemology and carries the inherent limitations of Eurocentric research, we appreciate: the space for conversation, the move away from making fixed claims, and the purposeful unsettling of taken-for-granted opinions. As Sawyer and Liggett (2012) explained, “the goal is to surface, critique, and reconceptualize our perceptions” (p. 630) of the phenomenon being considered through the process. Regan (2010) stressed the importance of both interpersonal and intrapersonal work for transformation to occur. This method allows us to work together, to interrogate ourselves, and form collective understandings. As personal transformations take place and questions about wider cultural narratives surface, the conversations require us to be vulnerable, while building trust and respect. Ultimately, a deeper relationship is formed.

ENGAGING IN MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE

Using duoethnographic conversations as a space to “interrogate and reinscribe [our] previously held beliefs” (Norris & Sawyer, 2012, p. 9), we invite readers to consider their own positions and convictions as we engage in dialogue around our own contexts. We enter into discussion by first questioning our conceptualization of self in view of reconciliatory reawakening, as a means to orient ourselves to the topic. In doing so, we revisit personal experiences and re-conceptualize ourselves through the duoethnographic process. Next, we explore the ways we are embodying and enacting *conceptions of reconciliation*. Finally, we re-interpret our understandings of *reconciliatory praxis*: from deep reflection to conscientious action. While this journey is deeply personal, we also believe that the dialogic process invites the reader to reflect and connect to reconciliation through our stories, with and against their own experiences. Answering the Calls to Action, we recognize that:

Reconciliation must become a way of life. It will take many years to repair damaged trust and relationships in Aboriginal communities and between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. Reconciliation not only requires apologies, reparations, the relearning of Canada’s national history, and public commemoration, but also needs real social, political, and economic change. (TRC, 2015a, p. 238)

We expose the messiness of the learning as a reality of our process and hope to inspire others to become involved. We aspire to be part of that change, through reflective words and thoughtful actions.

Conceptualization of self in view of reconciliatory reawakening

Markides: The concept of *reawakening* is common in reconciliation discourse, similar to Leanne Simpson’s (2011) use of *resurgence* — requiring political atonement for loss of land, language, culture, and self-governance. This terminology of reawakening and resurgence signals the need to *reclaim* what has been lost,

stolen, forbidden, omitted, marginalized, and/or prohibited. Maracle (1996) named education as a racist institution, privileging white culture while annihilating others. In her words, “The expropriation of the accumulated knowledge of Native peoples is one legacy of colonization. Decolonization will require the repatriation and the rematriation of that knowledge by Native people themselves” (p. 92). I find this daunting; some knowledges will have been lost forever. Colonizers have worked for hundreds of years to quash cultures, languages, traditions, beliefs, peoples, and more. In a CBC Massey Lecture, Wade Davis (2009) described the rapid loss of languages worldwide. Language holds the nuances and history of a people’s culture. Sylvia McAdams (2015) listed language, land, and culture as pivotal to maintaining nationhood. Like many of the Calls to Action, the revitalization of language and culture (and potentially nationhood) appear impossible for just one person. So how do we, as individuals, conceptualize and enact reconciliation?

MacDonald: In you saying, “impossible for just one person,” I realize that my own process has been heavily focused on interrogating my understandings, my responsibilities and my work. It is essential for me to remember that renewing relationships involves being part of a community, which is a complex matter in and of itself. How do I move past the self-doubt? How do I move past the politics? I come to this dialogue with an open heart and an open mind, and willingness to work through difficult issues. Despite my best intentions, I continuously worry that I may not completely understand the privileges that I grew up with and how they continue to work on me. I believe it is in a space of vulnerability and sharing that reconciliation work can best occur. I see our research, classes, and the various initiatives with Indigenous topics to be a gift. I am not embellishing when I say they are changing my life and how I conceive myself in relation to the world. The idea of renewing relationships and reawakening the spirit that Elder Bob Cardinal of the Enoch Cree Nation (personal communication, February 4, 2017) shares with us, resonates with me. My engagement with his teachings is providing a more fulsome understanding of how truth and reconciliation is not just about the relations between people, but equally about our relations with more-than-human co-inhabitants. As I read through the TRC (2015a) Final Report, this relation to land comes up as common theme as a crucial part of the process: “If human beings resolve problems between themselves but continue to destroy the natural world, then reconciliation remains incomplete” (p. 18). This statement is an imperative consideration for my work as an outdoor educator.

Markides: Yes, I agree with the need to foster all manner of relationships. We benefit from opportunities to find and build community in life and learning. When I travelled to the Rising Up: Indigenous Graduate Student Conference in Winnipeg, I was heartened by the strength and comradery I experienced as part of the presenter group. Indigenous and non-Indigenous presenters shared their research on a variety of subjects, including Tahltan language nests (Mor-

ris, 2017), the role of Elders working within correctional institutes (Quantick, 2017), and the recognition and traditions surrounding two-spirit people in Indigenous communities across North America (Pruden, 2017). Similarly, we have felt a closeness to the people we have met through our Indigenous coursework. In these communities, I see reclamation and reconciliation being enacted — *becoming possible*. I know that not everyone agrees that these types of conferences, classes, or research endeavours should involve both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants. My belief is that we need everyone to be involved if we want to see real change in our systems and our society. Since the conference, I learned that a second Indigenous graduate student conference took place concurrently in Winnipeg, but that the other conference was not open to non-Indigenous participants. I have been dwelling on this with feelings of unease and tension — asking: *whose voices should be heard / privileged? What is afforded / occluded by exclusivity? What is afforded / occluded by inclusivity? And, why do I feel so strongly about it?*

MacDonald: Your questions have me reflecting on how the meanings of reconciliation might differ depending on one's position and community, and where one might be on their own path. These topics are shrouded in depth and complexity. For me, my path comes with honouring feelings of unease and tension about being a settler, while also wanting to learn more about Indigenous ways. For too long, I have been stuck here. It seems I have the repetitive conversations with myself — I want to move past critique to move forward in a good way, but lack the insight around how to do this respectfully. At the same time, I know dwelling in critique is part of a decolonizing process. I just had the same sinking feeling with your conference experience in Winnipeg. In my mind, it is an ideal model of coming together and I feel encouraged that these events can be successful. However, I also understand that tensions run deep and different communities are at different places on their own journeys of healing and understanding. With this, I can see the need and desire to have a conference closed to non-Indigenous people. I detect that Indigenous peoples need space to explore their cultures, languages, traditions, and beliefs, etc., to strengthen their voice on their own terms. The right to do this, after all, has been hidden and forbidden for centuries. With that, I see resurgence and reconciliation as two different concepts. The former needing to find ground before the latter can be possible. I also think about reconciliation in my own community, and recognize that work is needed to dispel stereotypes and the workings of racism to educate both sides, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike, before a rising together might be a possibility. I see layers of misunderstandings, and without any mediation of viewpoints from both sides, reconciliation will never be possible.

Markides: The disquiet of these relationships can be both perplexing and

forbidding. You have given me much to think about, as I continue to dwell on my unrest with the exclusive conference. First, I think it is inevitable that people will work collaboratively in their own circles to reconnect with each other, traditions, languages, ceremonies, and teachings, so long as they are not oppressed or persecuted for doing so. I think my uneasiness comes from my own experience of feeling *not Indigenous enough*, and wondering, *would I be welcomed at that conference or turned away?* In my youth, I struggled with tensions of *knowing* of my Indigenous heritage, but not being able to learn about it or talk about it – a long-term result of colonization. My family members knew and/or believed that it was better for us not to know about our Indigenous ways and tried to distance us – their children and grandchildren – from the stigma of *being Native*. This affected my relationship with so many family members – grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. I grew up knowing shame of ancestry, but not understanding it; *why should I be ashamed?* The unfortunate reality was that a lot of the racism and discrimination came from our own communities; non-Indigenous and Indigenous people perpetuating the blood quantum scrutiny imposed through the Indian Act of 1876 – *conquered and divided, divided and conquered*. My blood boils when I think of what has been lost in my family alone. Then I think of the losses experienced by all Indigenous peoples and I am enraged. The problem I have with an exclusive conference for Indigenous people is that it promotes the colonial gatekeeping that has got us into so many of the problems we have today. My family story is not unique. I have heard stories from people raised on reserves but not taught their language or traditions, children removed from their communities who are adopted and raised by non-Indigenous families, and countless other examples of people not believing they had a right to claim their Indigeneity. *Who will be counted as Indigenous enough?*

MacDonald: I appreciate you sharing more openly your concerns with the exclusive Indigenous conference. Given your family experiences, I see how this exclusivity may have caused, and re-surfaced, confusion and unease. From my position, if Indigenous people desire a conference to celebrate culturally relevant issues or to discuss experiences of oppression, I cannot argue but give space until they are ready for me to join the circle. Until then, I will seek out opportunities with others who may be at a different place on the path of healing and understanding. This year, being a part of the course “Holistic Approaches to Life and Living” with Dr. Dwayne Donald, Dr. Christine Stewart, and Elder Bob Cardinal, I was inspired by the welcoming atmosphere and teachings focused on good relations. The teachings are for everyone, stories do not take sides, and I feel part of something special – an exemplar for what reconciliation should look like. With every class meeting I feel more connected. Like you, I thrive in the ideals of this type of non-exclusive environment and want to surround myself in all that gives life to this. My desire is that our collective *circle* will continue to expand. However, our conversation here brings back my unease.

I want to honour the space and time of others, educate about the difficult truths, and establish meaningful relationships. Each of these roles is fraught with layers of complexity. I feel I always need to walk a careful line. From my experiences in different Canadian communities, it seems that assumptions and biases continue to hinder the ability to form meaningful relationships with Indigenous people. Therefore, I do not see cultural understandings and relations at a level close to reconciliation, but I am lost at knowing how to address this. I worry about disclosing the common narrative I continue to hear in my communities — afraid that I will offend, cause disruption, or perpetuate the narrative I want to overcome. At the same time, opportunities to talk openly with others, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike, have helped expand my understanding that *I am a visitor* on these lands. In addition, our process here makes me more aware that people of settler descent, too, have been subjected to the workings of colonialism. For example, throughout my schooling, I approached learning in linear ways and this seeped into the methods of my early teaching practices. Likewise, my daily urban life brings me into contact with consumer ideologies. Unlearning these ways needs to be part of the settler journey. More balance is needed. With this sentiment, perhaps we should move on to how we embody and enact this complexity as educators, emerging scholars, and community members.

Embodying and enacting conceptions of reconciliation

Markides: Agreed. I worry my sharing about the conference may ruffle some feathers, but I needed to discuss the topic further to try and understand my strong emotional reaction. Our dialogue has helped me to better understand myself in these issues. This practice might not be the best path for everyone; but for me, I can attest to tremendous growth and learning through this work with you. Significantly, the yearlong course with Dr. Donald, Dr. Stewart, and Elder Cardinal has been one of the greatest experiences of my life. The sense of community we have created in a short time speaks to the robust nature of the teaching and learning. We share an openness and interest in the Indigenous Knowledges and four directions teachings. I appreciate that there are no big egos; we come together with reverence for the teachings from Elder Cardinal. We place our trust in him and he holds us in care — a sacred relationship between students and teacher. Another treasured event was when we co-presented at the Rouge Forum Conference (MacDonald & Markides, 2016). It was one of our first efforts to consciously enact reconciliation based on our learning from our duoethnographic research. I remember being nervous, questioning our *gall* to present on matters Indigenous — *who were we to talk about reconciliation?* — while knowing that the matters are *more than* Indigenous. *Reconciliation is for everyone.* We shared our work — the process and findings — and engaged the group in conversations related to the Calls to Action. What transpired was surprising and bountiful. One group took a critical look at our work and the TRC (2015a) document itself, while the other group opened up about their

understandings and apprehensions about reconciliation. Some participants shared their stories and histories; others gave candid accounts of being nervous to teach about Indigenous topics as soon-to-be teachers. The work and conversations took on lives of their own, bringing people into the dialogue and relationship, *as we took steps toward reconciliation*. I had not expected our activity to be so powerful; but in that moment, I learned a lot about the fear, commitment, and care experienced by others. This was a beginning point for me, a realization – we need to provide safe spaces to open conversations about reconciliation and explore the possibilities for education, especially for preservice and in-service teachers.

MacDonald: I understand your trepidation. For me, embodying reconciliation centers around honouring the various emotions that arise. It is important not to take short-cuts around the discomfort but to consider why such feelings emerge. It has been important for me to name the challenges and tensions I experience, and not avoid them because they are too uncomfortable. Our conference workshop provided a “safe space” for this exploration. As we considered how to support pre-service educators, I left wanting to emphasize that reconciliation is a *process*. It will not happen all at once, but requires individual and collective work to occur simultaneously. In another workshop we facilitated, I was struck when a teacher asked what could they do if they had to teach a lesson on Monday about residential schools and reconciliation? I have a hard time imagining that these topics could be packaged appropriately to be pulled out on Monday. My responsibility as an educator is to carry this work with care. I also get the impression that many people do not know where or how to begin. *What are entry points to this work?* As we work through these puzzles, I often feel like I am in kindergarten again. I likely say the wrong things and constantly make mistakes. We are encouraged by Elder Cardinal to slow down and not to fret if we stumble (personal communication, February 4, 2017) – the stumbling too is a teaching. With his words, I am reminded to be gentle on myself as I work to unlearn deep-seated colonial ways. I reflect on our course experiences and how my understandings of place and being in relation have evolved. With the guidance of our teachers, I felt a shift from being in a place of discomfort to a place focused on building meaningful relationships. I keep turning to Donald’s (2016) work explaining the wisdom teachings around his notion of ethical relationality as “an ecological understanding of organic connectivity that becomes readily apparent to us as human beings when we honour the sacred ecology that supports all life and living” (p. 3). The more I learn and internalize these teachings, the lighter I feel. I think about the sacred kinship relations and I find myself listening and observing more attentively. While conducting the place-study and moon-study assignments, I grew to appreciate the mysteries of the moon. Equally, my time spent studying place at Nosehill Park helped me reimagine how I might teach more holistically in my own context.

Markides: It is interesting how this work stays with us. We have both described the *weight* of the conversation. You have remarked about feeling *lighter* when considering the interconnectivity of all living things. In our early coursework, I remember you talking about the life force of rocks. Your reverence for all earthly things stood out to me then and now. I value the reach of the assignments in our Holistic Approaches to Life and Living course. We make our own meaning from the experiences of both the moon-study and the place study. I noticed early on that I am in a better place when I am outside attending to the moon. In the summer, I am camping — spending time outdoors, keeping active, and enjoying quality time with my husband and kids. We live well together: watching for wildlife, talking as we drive, and taking in the beauty of the vast countryside. When life gets busy, I miss seeing the moon — it reminds me to slow down and take stock of what really matters. Being in *my place* for the place-study, I have been making peace with the river. It will be five years this June since the flood waters spilled over the banks of the Highwood River, but the effects of the flood are still felt — still present — throughout the town. During the heavy rains of spring, we watch the waters rise with apprehension and lingering fear. It can be a hard way to live. I am now much more attentive to the changing land, and even more watchful of the ebbing and flowing water. My *place* by the river is bittersweet and beautiful. *I should have been more attentive to it before...* This learning is a process — a journey with many friends and teachers. As you have described, everyone is at different places with reconciliation. There are people who appear to navigate the terrain more easily than others. Some are more critical too. With over a year of duoethnographic dialogue, we are no more *experts* than when we began. However, I would say that we have grown in our capacities to initiate discussion and to consider differing points of view. These experiences have helped us to lead discussions in many circles, including presentations at teachers' conventions and in our volunteer commitments with *Walking with Our Sisters — Calgary*. I, too, am discouraged when teachers ask, "What can we use in our classrooms on Monday?" This mentality is a direct reflection of the flawed, western system that packs professional learning into convenient (but often empty) one-hour or single-day packages. In terms of *education for reconciliation*, I believe we first need *reconciliation for education* — a shift in how the education system is conceptualized. This may be a place for resurgence and reawakening. I hazard to say that one side of our conversation has been speaking to the other side of our conversation, unbeknownst to us. The learning we experience in our Indigenous coursework appears to address the needs we see for *process-oriented teachings* in pre-service teacher education programs and in-service teachers' professional development; in your words, we may "reimagine how [we] might teach more holistically in [our] own context."

MacDonald: I appreciate you pointing out that one side of our conversation is speaking to the other. There is both weight and lightness, simplicity and complexity. I value our exchange and find myself constantly negotiating when

to step in and when to step back. When to be bluntly honest and when to gently suggest a different perspective. I think a lot about my use of language. I am always negotiating how to best live this every day, and not only when it is convenient for me. Part of enacting reconciliation then is *making choices* — do I spend my energy in conversations with people who are not open and just want to argue, or do I find experiences that ignite my spirit? I absolutely agree that education as ready-made products and practices is the fault of the established system, not the individual teachers. Drawing on my different experiences in outdoor education, I arrived at my interest in these issues from a place of curiosity. Outside the four-walls of the traditional classroom, teaching and learning occur more organically. I am asked to respond to students and the environment in different ways. I have long believed in the importance of place-based learning; but through newfound Indigenous ways of knowing and being, I am confronted with another truth — the natural environment is much more than a mere place for me to explore with students. This realization calls my teaching processes and program outcomes into question. *How might I guide students to relate holistically to the places we visit?* Learning about reconciliation, I try to keep my ego in check. It would be silly for me to guide an outdoor trip once a year in a place I do not know, and pretend I know the land. Instead, I talk to locals, learn stories, and form partnerships. I know there is much more work ahead. Place-based knowledge and skills cannot be taught in a 3-day course, but require extended time learning *with* all sentient beings.

Markides: I think your questioning of *when to step in* and *when to step back* is the process of reconciliation at work within you — negotiating and re-negotiating your ways of knowing, being, and doing. Your struggle is real and provides a vital exemplar of how we must grapple with forces — external and internal — to bring about change. I admire your honesty and courage. This again may be the “stumbling” that Elder Cardinal recognizes as important to learning — the kind not to be rushed through or avoided — rich and meaningful in the experience. Might we consider this an example of reconciliatory praxis?

Reconciliatory praxis: From deep reflection to conscientious action

MacDonald: I think our time with Elder Cardinal and engagement with other course activities is a model for reconciliatory praxis. This model has not only deepened my cultural understandings, but has made a difference in who I am and how I see the world. Hearing stories from the Elder, being part of a circle with Indigenous and non-Indigenous peers, and participating in experiential learning opportunities have all greatly influenced me. It has transformed how I think about and endeavor to live a balanced life. It has changed how I want to teach. It has improved how I endeavor to treat myself and how I approach relationships. I pause to reflect on my high school experience and the lack of recognition or interaction with Mohawk students. We were not in respectful Treaty relationships. I was not even conscious of the nation-to-nation differ-

ence, of Treaties, or of the agreement Treaties set out. Even as my curiosity towards Indigenous worldviews grew and I learned of the significant difference in ontology, axiology, and epistemology, I was not cognizant of Treaties nor did I make an effort to be in a relationship. This was not for lack of interest but I did not know how to begin. Therefore, when I started graduate school, my knowledge of Indigenous worldviews was mostly from academic text. I relied on the cognitive and solitary modes of learning that were familiar to me. The land-based course, however, was more enriching because it opened up other ways of knowing (physical, emotional, and spiritual) and emphasized being part of a collective. We did not dwell in the difference, merely read *about* treaties, nor discuss notions of reconciliation, but we lived them out.

Markides: I must admit, my knowledge of treaties has been quite superficial for most of my life. Treaties were introduced in social studies as part of our history – as documents from the past. We coloured maps to show the treaty regions as they overlay a template map of Canada. It was an empty activity that fostered an empty understanding. To me, treaties were the stagnant documents that locked First Nations groups into life on reserves. I could see they were unfair deals, especially considering the vast lands for which they were signing over their rights. The deals seemed disproportionate. *Why would anyone give up so much, for so little?* As an adult, I understand that events in history can be told from many perspectives. Some stories become commonplace, with circumstances and details that are twisted over time such that people begin to believe that Indigenous people *needed* treaties to save them from their savage and primitive ways. King (2003) pointed out the ironies of how U.S. and Canadian governments have come to view treaties with ir/reproachable regret, as though “Native rights had been ‘gifted’ to Native people” (p. 137). Seen as a generous gesture for so long, some people will tell you that Indigenous peoples are no longer *owed* anything. *Assimilate already.* This sentiment is toxic, and yet prevalent. I appreciate that we have not dwelled in these contested spaces, but continue to receive new teachings that provide insight into past, present, and future. For me, reconciliatory education is less about blame than it is about relationship building. I am grateful that our learning has focused more on understanding each other’s worldviews rather than rehashing the wrongs of the past and the broken promises of the present. Elder Cardinal’s teachings are gentle and hope-filled. I learn more from this positive example than I do from approaches based in blame and retribution; hence, the *wisdom* in the wisdom teachings. Despite all of the mistreatment and significant legacies of our colonial past, Indigenous teachers continue to model respectful ways for being in the world and with each other – invaluable teachings.

MacDonald: The visual of your overlaying maps makes me recognize how these agreements are often seen as historical and separate from us presently. Much of my early social studies education began with the arrival of Jacques Cartier and my only memory learning of First Peoples was linked to the fur trade.

We never considered the original relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, speaking about Indigenous cultures in past tense. We have already spoken about the various complexities at work here, and the multiple tensions I face unlearning colonial ways. While I feel paralyzed by systemic issues — feeling too small to have an influence — I feel openings as I learn my responsibilities as a treaty person. Venne (2011) shares the oral understanding of the treaty process as learned from her Cree Elders. I am drawn to the resilience and commitment of Indigenous peoples and the importance of land throughout her narrative. She stated: “One of the main treaty rights of the non-indigenous person is to respect the land. This is not being done.... The non-indigenous people are forgetting to have respect for the land and all its relationships” (Venne, 2011, p. 7). I return to the importance of relationships. It will be a lifelong, and deeply layered, process to unlearn colonial ways, but there are ways I can practice being a good treaty person each day — both in my human-to-human and human-to-more-than-human relations. The pedagogical possibilities here seem endless, inviting others to join the circle, and honouring that multiple relationships do exist. This is a real difference between worldviews and necessity to understand treaty relationships. In terms of praxis, how do you see spaces being opened for renewing relationships?

Markides: Through the place-study assignment with Elder Cardinal, I have cultivated a greater relationship with “my place” along the Highwood River. I have spent time there more consciously. I reflect on the relationship too. It has been deep learning that reveals itself slowly. It has nurtured my interest in nature photography and my interest in nature photography has nurtured my relationship with place. It has been an entry point that feeds my passion for the plants, wildlife sightings, and seasonal changes. I am more attentive now. It is through this study that I have come to appreciate the importance of place-based relationships. *How can we make informed and mindful decisions related to land use without first knowing and caring for the land?* For me, a place-based relationship is intimate and requires: commitment, maintenance, and responsibility. I have also gained a greater sense of belonging — to *this* place, *my* place, along the river. Perhaps it is feelings like this that inspire figures of speech around “putting down roots” and “being well grounded.” On a deeper level, I can imagine that having a strong connection to place may affect all aspects of a person’s life. It would have also significant implications for communities who have lived this way for thousands of years. I see this type of land-based teaching as an entry point into greater cultural understanding — an entry point for developing empathy for another worldview. I am interested to know how you envision land-based education as reconciliatory praxis.

MacDonald: I find your questioning of land-based education as reconciliatory praxis interesting because this is what drew me to pursue doctoral studies. I was led here by other outdoor environmental educators (Root, 2011; Scully, 2012) who were asking similar questions and by the powerful experiences I

was having with students on wilderness trips. I drift away from this focus, but continuously return. Each time with slightly different perspective. There is something profound for me in this process. My linear ways of understanding have been disrupted, and I see the importance of constantly circling back. The more awareness I gain and knowledge I collect, I am able to re-story past experiences and shape new meaning from my earliest memories. For example, when I look back at photos from my childhood of unassuming family trips to the lake, I now see those experiences as decolonizing. In these moments, we were in relationship with the land and our extended kinship circles. I have gathered a similar sense working with Elder Cardinal. He addresses the group with a story but his story is understood differently depending on how we listen and our prior experience. We all take something different away and our ability to listen at deeper levels improves over time. It has been my experience that his stories return unexpectedly to me when I am doing other tasks. In these moments, the stories take on deeper meaning in my life. The Elder continues to teach. I mention this because it is vital to my re-visioning of land-based learning. I think it is possible to use experiential learning to re-story our understandings and relationships with the land and each other. Towards reconciliation, we might consider that the land, through all of its mysterious ways, is *or can be* explicitly positioned as the teacher.

EMERGENT THEMES FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

Expanding the circle

We see a growing need for safe (and also risky) spaces for conversations. There are deeply-rooted stereotypes, systemic problems, and other power dynamics that make navigating these conversations difficult, and at times, impossible. Many layers of influence affect people's readiness and/or openness to reconciliation. Little Bear (2000) described how a holistic worldview is at odds with a fragmented or partitioning worldview. In the reconciliatory process, there are competing needs, visions, and priorities — an inherent bringing together of different worldviews. At times, we find it challenging to negotiate conversations in different contexts within our wider communities; these discussions require tact and involve risk, knowing when to speak up and when to keep quiet. Where are our energies best spent?

In light of the issues, entanglements, and potentially contentious subject matter, we found it imperative to create safe spaces for dialogue; but what does it mean for a space to be *safe*? Some of our greatest learning has come from the difficult and/or unsafe topics and emotionally taxing work. Who decides what is *safe*? And, *should it be safe*? Mindfully, we continue to seek opportunities to create these spaces for discussion — to expose and address needs in educational circles.

Land-based and community-based learning opportunities

We also see a need for grassroots learning opportunities. Through our courses, participation with community groups, and invitations to participate in ceremony, we have benefited from developing relationships and learning in Indigenous circles — gifts, not rights. It has been invaluable and life-changing to learn from and with Indigenous people, rather than about them. We dwell in the holistic teachings from Elder Cardinal. He meets us where we are at in our journeys — in a responsive, dynamic, and unfolding relationship. Experiential teachings disrupt the Western norms, pushing us outside of our comfort zones and expanding our understanding of Indigenous worldviews. The learning takes time. In many of the teachings, place-based learning has been a central focus, acknowledging the interconnectivity of all entities. If we start by considering all decisions and actions with the knowledge that the land is sentient, it changes our positioning. We become oriented towards more sustainable and more honourable ways of being, knowing, and doing.

NOT SO FINAL THOUGHTS: WHAT NEXT?

Our dialogue reflects the voices and works of the scholars, educators, and Elders who have touched our lives. We recognize that the aforementioned themes are from our perspectives and that the meaning-making will be different for everyone. The interpretations we have made are personal, yet they inform our next steps. Once we have been given teachings, we have a responsibility to carry them forward.

Among the many questions that arose from our work, three questions stood out in interest and importance. *How might we collectively enact the Calls to Action?* In our contexts, we hope to expand our dialogue to engage more people and perspectives. We see that various stakeholders in various sectors are making efforts toward reconciliation; yet we worry these initiatives will be misguided or reduced to tokenisms — we will have to do more than acknowledging the territorial land on entryway posters if we want to make change. It is a beginning, not a means to an end. The way we see it, reconciliation has no end.

How might we best honour and (begin to) redress the complexities of reconciliation? This requires that we recognize and respect that individuals and communities are at different places in their journeys of healing and reconciliation. In our efforts and actions, we can continue to create spaces for discussion, facing issues of racism and privilege openly. We also honour that these conversations are challenging, difficult, emotional, and uncomfortable for some, requiring inner and outer work.

How do we teach holistically in our own contexts? As educators, we want our teaching practices to be informed and impactful. We ask ourselves, and each other, what can we do and how can we do it well? How can we fulfill our ethical obligations to All Our Relations and honour the seven generations past, and to come?

We maintain our commitment to the process. Reconciliation is more than a single event. To be fully realized, everyone will need to engage in genuine forms of learning, relationship building, and advocacy. We have all been called upon – by the TRC, residential school survivors, and legacy holders – to live well, together. This requires us to ask: *Where do I see myself in reconciliation? What responsibilities do I have?* Hopefully, with enough time, education, and effort we will begin to see systemic change. As education for reconciliation becomes more commonplace, perhaps we will see a reconceptualizing of our education system – reconciling the structures – towards reconciliation for education. In these ways, we would want our children, all children, and future generations to be educated in love and in community, with and on the land.

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TRANSFORMING GRADUATE STUDIES THROUGH DECOLONIZATION: SHARING THE LEARNING JOURNEY OF A SPECIALIZED COHORT

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ABSTRACT. This study traces the learning journey of primarily non-Indigenous educators who challenged the legacy of colonization in schools, and worked to decolonize their practice, through their participation in a specialized graduate cohort. Drawing upon sharing circle conversations, we highlight themes that emerged from our research. Educators reported their sense of agency to transform and change their practice increased with the support of a critical and caring learning community. In nourishing their learning spirits, educators were able to begin to decolonize education, an ongoing challenge that requires valuing Indigenous people, languages, and land, and building inter-cultural understanding. This study is an example of how graduate programming can begin to address the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

TRANSFORMER LES CYCLES SUPÉRIEURS PAR LA DÉCOLONISATION: EXPLORATION DU PARCOURS D'APPRENTISSAGE VÉCU PAR UNE COHORTE SPÉCIALISÉE

RÉSUMÉ. Ce projet de recherche explore le parcours d'apprentissage vécu par un groupe d'enseignants majoritairement non-autochtones. Cheminant au sein d'une cohorte spécialisée à la maîtrise, ceux-ci ont remis en question l'héritage colonial du milieu scolaire et ont travaillé à décoloniser leur pratique. Nous mettons ici en lumière les thèmes qui ont émergé au cours de notre recherche, en se basant sur des discussions tenues dans des cercles de partage. Les participants ont souligné que le sentiment de pouvoir transformer et changer leur pratique a augmenté avec le soutien d'une communauté critique et bienveillante. Attentifs à leur volonté d'apprendre, les enseignants ont été en mesure d'amorcer la décolonisation de l'éducation, un défi constant qui nécessite la valorisation du peuple autochtone, de ses langues et terres et le développement d'une compréhension interculturelle. Ce projet de recherche est un exemple de la manière dont les programmes de deuxième cycle peuvent commencer à répondre aux appels à l'action présentés par la Commission de vérité et réconciliation.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) affirmed that education is an important pathway towards reconciliation, through an increased emphasis on acknowledging Indigenous people, languages, and land, and building inter-cultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect. Recommendation #10 in the Calls to Action of the TRC's report specifically relates

to decolonizing teacher education and developing transformative pedagogies (TRC, 2015, p. 2). Our graduate program aligns with these goals as we have developed a specialized cohort that explicitly focuses on decolonizing education. Through our research, we have found that educators need support and a caring community to unlearn the legacy of the colonial education most of us have received. Decolonizing education includes (re)examining historical narratives, confronting the attempted genocide of First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) peoples, understanding the legacy of residential schools, and the continuation of the separation of Indigenous parents and children through the auspices of child welfare systems, challenging negative myths and stereotypes about Indigenous peoples, as well as learning, sharing, and valuing knowledge with and about Indigenous peoples. We recognize that the work of decolonization is an ongoing process. In order to better understand our own decolonizing practices and the impact of our program, we are embarking on an ongoing multi-year, multi-group study. Here we share our learning journey with and alongside the first group of educators in the Indigenous-focused cohort (2014-2016), who nourished their own learning spirits as they learned about affirming the learning spirits of others, and deepened their understandings and agency in their efforts to decolonize their curricula, practices, and work at transforming and changing all levels of the educational system.

CONTEXT

Education has been said to be an emancipatory tool that can change the world. However, if we listen to the voices of Indigenous people, we need to be mindful that the type of education that is provided is important. From this perspective, the educational institution may not only be seen as a positive force, but a negative force; the history of residential schools in Canada unequivocally shows that education may be hurtful and damaging to Indigenous youth, their families, and communities (Knockwood, 2001; Milloy, 2006; TRC, 2015).

Marie Battiste (2013) shares her memories of the colonial education she received:

I remember little about my Eurocentric education or the conventional approaches that I had been part of. I tried to stay under the radar of the teacher, not to be noticed or labeled dumb. Little is there I care to remember. Many memories I have long ago let go. But what I think is important is my own path toward understanding the collective struggles of Indigenous peoples framed within a patriarchal, bureaucratic enterprise of government, with education used as the manipulative agent of various intended outcomes, some well-intentioned, some not, but all strategic. These collective struggles are the transforming points of my learning and vectors from which I grew into new responsibilities. (p. 17)

In acknowledging the school system's destructive assimilation project that often limits and fails to affirm Indigenous children and their community's knowledge systems, Battiste finds a strength from which to be responsive and

responsible and imagine education anew. Colonialism has systemically eroded and devalued Indigenous people, languages, and land (Kovach 2009; Loomba, 2008; Smith 1999). This legacy of cultural genocide was further reinscribed through the residential school system (TRC, 2015) and child social services (Blackstock, 2012). Transformation of the colonial system through decolonization operates in two ways (Battiste, 2013): First, reactively – by challenging the negative overt and covert beliefs and practices surrounding Indigenous people, and rejecting the discrimination the colonial project institutionalizes through education and other governmental systems (Battiste, 2013); and secondly, proactively – by constructing a positive narrative of Indigenous people, their knowledge systems, and their value as people (Battiste, 2013). Battiste (2013) writes, “educators must help students understand the Eurocentric assumptions of superiority within the context of history and to recognize the continued dominance of these assumptions in all forms of contemporary knowledge” so that they may help to decolonize the education system (p. 186). For educators, this recognition is also needed to be responsive to the calls to decolonize education and find their new responsibilities, including nourishing the learning spirits of those they teach.

The Canadian Council of Learning’s (CCL, 2009) final report on the state of Aboriginal Education provides alternative models of learning that nourish and contribute to the well-being of Indigenous people, physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. In consultation with FNMI peoples, the CCL developed distinct graphics to represent the learning and teaching systems of diverse Indigenous peoples. These models represent healthy educational relations in contemporary times, based on the wisdom of community members, and might be considered best practices. Building on Indigenous people’s traditional educational systems, which valued the roles and responsibilities of all community members, these findings act as guidelines to heal and nourish the learning spirit of all learners. Nourishing the learning spirit is a lifelong process:

Learning...as Aboriginal people have come to know it, is holistic, lifelong, purposeful, experiential, communal, spiritual, and learned within a language and a culture. What guides our learning (beyond family, community, and Elders) is spirit, our own learning spirits who travel with us and guide us along our earth walk, offering us guidance, inspiration, and quiet unrealized potential to be who we are. In Aboriginal thought, the Spirit enters this earth walk with a purpose for being here and with specific gifts for fulfilling that purpose. (Battiste, 2010, p. 15)

As learning is lifelong, learners may find different guides at different times of their lives and be guides themselves. Educators, if they are to contribute to the well-being of youth, can begin to respond to the calls to decolonize education by being nurturing guides (Anuik & Kearns, 2017). It is with the spirit of decolonization and nourishing the learning spirit that we designed a program rooted in a hope not only to help support a critical mass of educators to transform their practice, but also the educational system as a whole.

OUR PROGRAM: DECOLONIZING GRADUATE EDUCATION IN FACULTIES OF EDUCATION

The Indigenous-focused Master of Education cohorts

Our passion to engage in decolonizing work, led us to create a specialized graduate cohort in Indigenous education. The cohort is situated within a faculty of education with a commitment to social justice, a long-standing relationship with Mi'kmaq community members (Paul, Lunney Borden, Orr, Orr, & Tompkins, 2017), and a commitment to decolonization (Paul et al., 2017; Kearns, 2013). Among our faculty were professors who had the capacity to lead this work. Some of us are Indigenous or speak an Indigenous language, others are non-Indigenous professors, all of whom have spent a significant part of their teaching careers in FNMI communities, or have worked in rural, or urban settings with some Indigenous youth. Building on the Association of the Canadian Dean's (AECD, 2010) *Accord on Indigenous Education* to support Indigenous focused education, the faculty seemed well situated to imagine a specialized Indigenous-focused graduate program. In order to imagine what decolonization in a graduate program might entail, we, the authors, drawing from our years of experience in Indigenous education, came together and brainstormed on whiteboards, markers in hand, what the goals of the program might be. The initial goals of the cohort are to:

- Examine the historical and contemporary effects of colonization on schools;
- Be aware of the pathologizing of Indigenous people that so frequently happens by society, the media, and other institutions;
- Understand how teaching and learning is conceptualized in Indigenous contexts;
- Explore multiple ways to understand colonization (anti-racist perspectives, decolonization, deconstruction and reconstruction);
- Theorize and problematize the concept of culture;
- See colonization as a continuing story (neocolonization, recolonization);
- Become familiar with Indigenous methodologies that inform curriculum development, leadership, and research;
- Examine case studies of successful educational practices in FNMI communities;
- Use Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing to challenge mainstream understandings of teaching and learning.

A call of interest was put out and we received an interest from over 20 participants who were teaching FNMI students across the country (See Figure 1; the 18 dots on the map represent the various communities in which graduate students are teaching). We generally cap the program at 20 to be able to develop better personal and professional relationships in our program, both in person and in our on-line learning environment. The graduate program consists of 12 core courses, with project, capstone, or thesis options available.

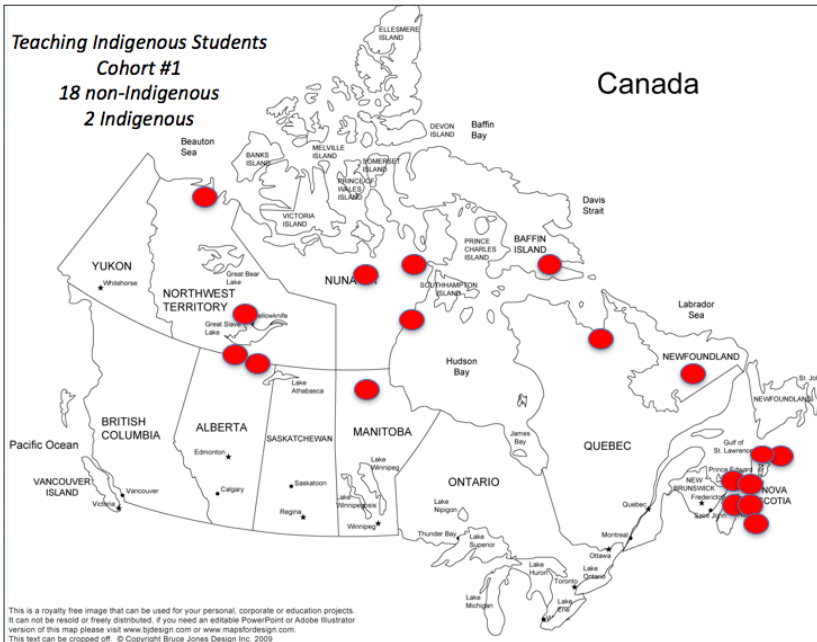


FIGURE 1. Cohort 1 map

The program is designed with part-time graduate students in mind. It is intended to be completed over a 24-month period with graduate students completing two courses in the summer and taking one course in each semester of the Fall / Winter / Spring terms. Two face-to-face courses take place on campus during the first summer of the program and provide the foundation for the subsequent 10 synchronous online courses that students from the cohort will continue to take together. This program is situated in the leadership stream of the Master's program. The 12 courses include: Foundations of Education, Introduction to Research, Leadership and Administrative Theory, Dynamics of Change, Professional Development and Supervision of Instruction, and Critical Research Literacy, Administration of FNMI Schools, Cross-cultural Issues in Education: Working with FNMI Families and Communities, Infusing Indigenous Perspectives in Math and Science Education, Literacy in the Content Areas, Indigenous Languages and Community Wellness, and a Directed

Study (Capping Experience). One of the overall goals of our Master of Education program is to cultivate educational inquirers and researchers, believing, like Lytle and Cochran-Smith (1992), that a teacher researcher stance towards pedagogy increases teacher agency. With that in mind, each graduate student develops an action research / teacher inquiry research plan which they enact in their final capping experience.

To date, our program has developed three Canada-wide specialized graduate cohorts for educators who are teaching Indigenous students and/or interested in Indigenous-focused pedagogy (2014-2016 Cohort 1; 2015-2017 Cohort 2; 2017-2019 Cohort 3). Cohort 1 had a majority of non-Indigenous graduates, while Cohorts 2 and 3 have a majority of Indigenous graduate students. We believe that the strong uptake to the Indigenous education cohort speaks to the need for educators working with FNMI students in diverse contexts across the country to deepen their understanding of decolonizing education.

Setting the tone to learn in a “good way”

As a faculty, we have been using self-study research (Kearns, Mitton-Kükner, & Tompkins, 2014; Tompkins & Orr, 2009) to examine how our relational and decolonizing pedagogy has enabled us to be successful in creating transformational spaces for social justice learning to occur. Palmer (1993) reminds us that effective learning for adults requires open, bounded, and hospitable spaces. He urges us to consider carefully the ways we invite people into the learning space, while reminding them that we will be asking them to travel with us to places where difficult conversations take place. Our explicit program design, beginning with the two face-to-face courses, allows us to build relational pedagogy. As one graduate student, Bobby, noted in a sharing circle conducted in 2016, “without that start, and the bonds that we’ve built, during those two first classes – I know I wouldn’t have been able to keep it up and I’m sure I’m not the only one.... it carried me through.” The program engages with Indigenous storytelling, via methods such as Storywork (Archibald, 2008), nourishing the learning spirit (Battiste, 2010; CCL, 2009), and St. Denis’ (2007) anti-racist framework. This approach helps to guide our explorations of schooling that examine issues of power, privilege, positionality, cultural capital, as well as colonization. We use a wide variety of learning strategies, including experiential learning, cooperative learning, small group discussions, talking circles, videos, guest speakers, and multiple ways of representing knowledge to engage learners. We consider ourselves facilitators, and, true to the root of that word, we see our job as making talking to each other, *facile* or easy. We know that deep professional learning will not happen if our adult learners feel judged, so we enter into the classes with a spirit of generosity that allows us all to be learners. We heed Battiste’s (2013) words that we are all, non-Indigenous and/or Indigenous, “marinated in Eurocentrism” (p. 6) and so we are really learning how to be in relationship with each other in a good way.

THE RESEARCH: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

A decolonizing framework is foundational to our graduate studies work and to our research. The importance of recognizing history with a view to understanding present conditions and future possibilities for Indigenous “self-determination, decolonization and social justice” (Smith, 1999, p. 4) is paramount. Smith reminds us that deconstructing Eurocentric, Imperialist, colonial versions of history and revealing the Indigenous counter-stories and perspectives is part of a decolonizing framework, but so is responding to the historical conditions that contribute to a vicious cycle of negative stereotypes that continue to perpetuate poverty, violence, and a lack of basic human dignities, such as clean water and safe housing. We are reminded that the work of decolonization is complex, multifaceted, and needs many people to work in a number of areas. Kovach (2009) says: “Indigenous researchers have acknowledged colonial history of Indigenous oppression and the political nature of Indigenous research” (p. 28).

In seeking to take up our responsibilities, this research aims to examine how specialized cohorts in Indigenous education, with their explicit focus on deep professional learning, might strengthen the capacity of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators to be effective in their contexts, whether that is teaching FNMI students in band-operated schools, public schools, or at the postsecondary level. Joyce and Calhoun (2010) noted in their research on professional learning that learning opportunities that are focused, sustained, and supported lead to increased teacher capacity in schools. This research has implications on multiple levels for seeking to understand how our work impacts teaching and learning. In our research, we thus ask:

1. How does a program with a clear decolonizing focus influence teachers’ practices, community engagement, sense of agency, curriculum possibilities, leadership, and possibilities for transforming school culture?
2. How has this program nourished the learning spirit (Battiste, 2013) of the educators themselves and the students teach?

We are beginning to answer these questions with the insights from our first cohort. In recognizing the complexity of adult learners, we acknowledge that many people who enter graduate studies are balancing work and life responsibilities in addition to graduate work, and not everyone’s path will be the same. So, although we started with 20 students initially, 12 students graduated within the 2014-2016 trajectory; some have since completed their M.Ed (2017), while others are on track, but are pursuing a thesis, and others had to step away from the program temporarily and are working on completing the last few credits required for graduation.

Our research methods and methodology align with Kovach (2009), who adheres to a constructivist view of knowledge, and employs a decolonizing perspective. The methods we employed to conduct our research draw upon Kovach’s

(2009) work, in particular her use of “sharing circles” (p. 35) which she uses as part of her method in conducting Indigenous-focused research. Students were first introduced to talking circles in our courses, where we were mindful to introduce everyone to protocols for speaking, listening, being fully present, and cognizant of everyone’s voices being equal in the circle (instructor and student). The research sharing circle was modeled on how we often engaged in our classroom discussions, where everyone had the opportunity to share and give feedback. Participants were invited and consented to have their voices recorded for research. This approach was informed by the Mi’kmaw practice of *mawikinuutimatimk* (coming together to learn together) which recognizes that everyone has something to learn and something to share (Lunney Borden & Wagner, 2013).

After the final presentations of the 12 graduating students from the first cohort, we used a sharing circle to initiate a discussion on how this program nourished their own learning spirits and helped them support and nourish the learning of FNMI students within their own contexts. We have used pseudonyms for the participants, and note the context in which they teach, their career stage and their role in the system, and if that has changed:

- Krista is a mid to late career educator, former guidance counsellor, currently working in a government leadership role in Nunavut;
- Ben was a teacher when he began the cohort and who quickly moved into a principalship, now in his second year, and is in the Northwest Territories;
- LeeAnn is an early career high school teacher, in a small town in Nova Scotia located close to two Mi’kmaw communities;
- Sharon is a mid-career college instructor in a large community in the southern part of the Northwest Territories;
- Shawn is an early career educator who began the cohort as an elementary teacher in the Northwest Territories and recently accepted a job as a vice-principal in a First Nations community in British Columbia;
- Larry is a mid-career educator teaching middle school in the Nunavik region of Quebec;
- Brianne is a mid-career secondary science educator who teaches in a Nova Scotia provincial school, which serves a high number of Mi’kmaw students;
- Suzanna, Erica, and Denise are all mid-career educators, who have taught at the elementary and secondary levels, and who teach in different Nova Scotia provincial schools, which serve a number of Mi’kmaw students;

- Bobby is a mid-career elementary educator teaching in a large fly-in community in Nunavut;
- Roxanne is a late career educator in Western Canada who is the principal of the school in which she previously taught as a teacher.

We received ethical approval from the university before proceeding with the sharing circles. We taped and transcribed the recording. We each read and coded these transcripts individually and then came together to crystalize our shared understandings and create themes. We also participated and shared our own learnings, since, as Kovach (2009) stipulates, reflexivity is important within qualitative research within Indigenous inquiries. Data for this first part of the study also comes from Program Evaluation Surveys that were e-mailed to the 12 students and were independently returned.

We thought it would be important to follow up with the students within a year of graduating to further reflect on the program and consider if or how it helped them decolonize in their own educational sphere of influence. We thus conducted a second sharing circle that six of the graduates were able to attend. Several sent regrets and we will follow up with them individually at a later date.

In conducting our research, we were mindful to consider and do research in a relational way, in a good way, and as Kovach (2009) asks us, to hear the voice of the Elder: “Are you helping us?” (p. 36). We hope we are responding to the best of our abilities at this time, though we may find different paths and have new and deeper understandings later. In conducting research to understand how we are and can better consider the decolonizing project, we are mindful of our desire to help and not harm Indigenous people and Nations.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Here we share some of the themes that have emerged from our sharing circles in 2016 and 2017 with the first Indigenous-focused graduate cohort. It has been our privilege to journey with this dedicated group of professionals. In asking how the Indigenous focused cohort impacted the participants and their practices, a number of stories were shared on aspects of nourishing the learning spirit, teachers’ practices, community engagement, teachers’ sense of agency, curriculum possibilities, and leadership possibilities for transforming school culture. Participants also expressed a sense of hopefulness. These themes emerged through our analysis of the recordings of the sharing circles. Each of these themes is described in more detail below.

Nourishing the learning spirit

In debriefing after the final presentation in the summer of 2016, Larry reflected:

Two years ago we were like little tiny seeds...our instructors poured a big glass of water on us and... ideas started to germinate... all of us in this cohort have just blossomed...we talked this morning about a variety of different ideas [to decolonize education] and it just goes to show you what collaboration does, and... what the planting of a little idea can do. In these past two years.... “who benefit[s]?” “Our students.” And I think that speaks volumes about what we’ve accomplished between the summer of 2014 to the summer of 2016. (Sharing Circle [SC], 2016)

Larry shared a real sense of growth and having ideas blossom, and those ideas in turn helped the students that he taught, but he also implied that the learning shared by the group helped all the students these educators reach and teach. Brianne also shared that she has “grown so much as a teacher...I feel so blessed to have had this opportunity to share this journey with you all...I’m very, very thankful. The connections and the relations were awesome” (SC, 2016). The learning community helped nurture her growth as an educator as well.

Transformation takes place over time. Denise recognized that everyone entered the program with some similar goals claiming, “we all had this same goal of trying to be better, better educators for our students...I can remember the first class in the summer...not even realizing [how much I didn’t know] about colonization and decolonization,” and by the end of the program she said “now I just feel...so much more capable of including all of the students I teach everyday” (SC, 2016). Denise introduced talking circles in her classroom where Indigenous youth represent only a small number of her students, but she found this holistic practice was good for all her students, as did her two research mates, Suzanna and Erica, who tried the same practice in their classrooms at their different schools. Suzanna shared that “changing one or two little things that you do in your practice everyday...makes you a better person... [a better educator]” (SC, 2016). Erica stated that she was “thankful” and that she is “hoping to bring a lot of what [she’s] learned to make positive changes within our school” and wants “to continue on with our project...hoping to make that spread school wide” (SC, 2016). The cohort found ways to support each other to try and incorporate more Indigenous practices, and they learned that this type of nurturing was good for all youth, as well as themselves. As Roxanne said: “everyone was supportive, and so willing to share, I want to say a big ‘thank you’” (SC, 2016). Roxanne’s spirit was nourished and energized by being able to connect with others and find a supportive community. In fact, upon reflecting almost a year later, Roxanne said:

I find with nourishing my learning spirit I’m a lot more open. I find there’s a lot of hope. I seem to be very sensitive after taking this course [program]. A big part of my project was having Elders in the school, and we kind of pulled from that to a culture room that we started and now we have a classroom that looks like a log cabin. That’s where a lot of the culture happens now. (SC, 2017)

Elders had been invited into the school prior to her work in our program, but since graduating, a permanent place had been created in the form of a cultural / cabin atmosphere classroom. So the Elders are welcome in the school and the youth can easily connect with them. Reflecting back on her time in the program, she recalls: “I would rush home and look forward to this course.” Now that the program has ended, she shared that she missed it and feels a professional “void” (Roxanne, SC, 2017). In connecting to another participant’s sharing, Roxanne said:

When you mentioned the PLCs [professional learning communities], Lee-Ann... The teachers are up to their eyeballs in literacy. Our last two PLCs I got a hide for the school and we started doing beading. All of the teachers, and the guys too, we started making moccasins. It’s a work in progress, but they just really enjoyed that. I was surprised they look forward to our PLCs now; it’s moccasin making not literacy. They needed that break...that time to just talk about things and enjoy themselves, I guess wellness. (SC, 2017)

Roxanne has used her own feeling of well-being and being nurtured to create spaces for her students in her school to be engaged with Elders, but has also created practices to enable her staff to be nourished. She is using Indigenous cultural practices and honouring their power in her school’s PLC. Arguably, these cultural practices are a form of literacy, but ones not always recognized by those who adhere to traditional concepts of literacy (López-Gopar, 2007). Indeed, practices and traditions from the First Peoples of this land are nourishing the spirits of our cohort members and beyond.

Teachers’ practices and curricular possibilities

One of the program’s intents is to help empower and strengthen educators’ abilities to decolonize their practices and curriculum, to have people question history and the narratives and images we are presented with about Indigenous people. To that end, LeeAnn shared:

My historical knowledge definitely increased. It [this program] opened my eyes because I did a major in history and it opened my eyes to how much was missing from those courses that I took as a history major in terms of Indigenous history and colonization in Canada. That really changed things for me. I feel like when teaching social studies now, I have a much different perspective and many resources and videos that were shared...I use on a daily basis. (SC, 2017)

LeeAnn was open to (re)learning history and perspectives different than the ones she had learned from mainstream curricula. To that end, she is now critical of the curricula that she presents to her students:

I look at my curriculum differently now. Each lesson that I teach...I have a different perspective on why I’m teaching what I’m teaching...and how to make it more inclusive, to represent Indigenous learners, but also just the learners in my class from various communities, wherever they come from. (LeeAnn, SC, 2017)

LeeAnn's practices as an educator have shifted in that she is a much more inclusive educator. She is aware of different narratives and the diversities of the youth in her classroom. Sharon, an adult educator at the college level, has also found her teaching practices have changed and she has been able to try new curricula as well. She explains that since completing the program, she has

...initiated two culture camps, one in the first term, and one in the second term, and this past one I have asked students to take part more. For example, I have students making caribou stew, I have students share their knowledge of traditional Inuit games. One student brought his drum and shared a song. (Sharon, SC, 2017)

As a non-Indigenous educator, Sharon has opened up the educational space for her own students to share aspects of their culture and for that to be honoured in their educational journey. As Donald (2009) explained, when we let go of the idea of an educator being all knowing, an expert at everything, and we take the opportunity to learn from as opposed to learn about Indigenous people, authentic and engaging curriculum changes can take place. If we embrace the idea of an educator that can learn alongside others, more can be shared.

The confidence of having a critical cohort committed to decolonization helped support an important change at the school level with regard to resources. Systemic changes are indeed needed to decolonize education. The efforts taking place in different classrooms and in different schools are certainly heartening, though there is still a long way to go.

Engagement with community

Colonial education prioritizes Eurocentric ways of knowing, being, and doing, while carefully avoiding any acknowledgement of local Indigenous communities' language(s), knowledge, and ways of being. Long serving Inuit educator and Elder Peesee Pituluak laments "You shouldn't have to look outside the classroom window to know you are in Nunavut" (personal communication, July 21, 2009). Too often FNMI communities are (un)consciously seen from a deficit point of view by non-Indigenous educators. It is indeed a decolonizing moment when Indigenous communities and families can be seen from an asset perspective and as a potential place of curriculum-making and relationship-building. Graduate students in this cohort talk about how they are able to see Indigenous communities and/or Indigenous families relationally. Roxanne speaks of her leadership effort to bring in more Dene language into the school curriculum.

With us here, as far as hopefulness and decolonizing, the language feature [is vital]...we now have a Dene teacher who comes to the school and teaches the Dene language. I find here we bring in culture any way we can. Even the division seems to be moving forward with the FNMI education. (SC, 2017)

Roxanne shows that although the community and its people are standing right in front of educators, sometimes a Eurocentric educational system prevents them from seeing the possibilities of partnering with Indigenous knowledge holders. As a long-term resident of the community, she describes how this cohort has helped her see previously hidden possibilities for engagement. “I know I have taught in the community and been in the community for years, but the cohort really opened my eyes up and made me think differently” (SC, 2017). Once the paradigm shifts, community engagement and community representation in the school can increase.

Likewise, Ben sees the possibility of the community and importantly the land being a place of valuable learning for his Dene students.

I highly encourage them [the staff] to have a connection to the Dene Curriculum for the NWT. I think this is the hope to bring students back to more traditions. This week is a great example. I'll be driving the van down to the river and doing some basket weaving, skinning animals, out trying to catch beaver, rabbit, moose, or bear, exposing them to that as much as possible. There is a balance you need to find; it can't be all culture all the time.... There is lots of hope on keeping the younger generation in touch with their culture, to slow down and keep it alive as much as possible. There is an inevitable connection to the western world now, there's no going back. It's just keeping that traditional culture alive and well.... I would be hoping to do that as an agent for decolonizing education. (SC, 2017)

Educators' abilities to see and incorporate aspects of Indigenous culture in their schools and curriculum are an important part of decolonizing education. Ben came to these realizations in discussion with his colleagues in the cohorts, particularly Roxanne. Sharon also was able to make more community connections, and while she cannot travel to the diverse FNMI communities from which her students come, she knows that they themselves bring community knowledge with them into the classroom. Where previously she might have left that Indigenous community knowledge at the door of the classroom, she now intentionally makes decolonizing spaces. As discussed in her work with the culture camps, Sharon notes that she had to initiate this activity and in so doing she is interrupting the Eurocentric agenda of post-secondary institutions.

Once the colonial narrative has been interrupted, it is difficult, if not impossible to return to it. Krista comments on how she examines engagement with community and inclusion of community voices in school processes with more of a critical stance. She looks for the presence and participation of Indigenous people and is more aware of their absence and willing to challenge those omissions. She explains:

I spent the last week working with a Pan-territorial group to create some recreation-programming curriculum. It's funny when I looked at the lens that I approached that with now. I was like 'you didn't start with Indigenous indicators or Indigenous people to create this curriculum?' I don't think I would have had that awareness before. (SC, 2017)

Teachers' sense of agency

As teacher educators deeply involved in teaching for and researching about social justice, we know the incredible power of teacher agency. We note many participants in the Indigenous cohort face high levels of school and community challenges, due in large part to the enduring colonial legacy. Many teach in remote communities where there are few if any second-level supports, such as access to school board mentors or visiting consultants. It is therefore heartening to see the increased sense of teacher agency these educators speak about. The economic, social, and historical conditions of the communities in which many teach have not changed, but they themselves have been changed by their participation in this cohort. Shawn speaks of his excitement and confidence.

First off, StFX [Saint Francis Xavier University] totally changed my life. Every day that goes by I notice a huge difference in how I approach education. As a Vice Principal now, it's very exciting to be a part of a lot of different committees and choices. In terms of nourishing the learning spirit of others, where I live right now, we just finished a children's cultural celebration and I was dancing in part of that. I was helping out...I always had a passion before, but StFX helped me do that in more professional and sophisticated manner. (SC, 2017)

The deep professional learning that was part of a cohort intentionally focused on decolonization over a 2-year period has been considerable. Roxanne speaks to the depth of her new knowledge as well: "My knowledge base has really increased since I've taken these courses, with the books that we have read, and the experiences that you as instructors brought to the courses" (SC, 2107).

With increased knowledge and skills come an accompanying confidence that allows the participants to act as a supporter and advocate in Indigenous education. For example, LeeAnn was, by her own admission, feeling intimidated enrolling in a Master's program and unsure of her ability to be successful (personal communication, July 16, 2014). The learnings in the cohort, however, have given her the confidence to be an actor in her classroom, and in the school. "Now I feel more comfortable trying new things in my classroom and I didn't have that before [the program]" (LeeAnn, SC, 2017). For Krista and Shawn, the agency they now feel comes from their sense of knowing that they stand on deep teachings from Elders, the writings of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars who advocate for critical pedagogy, and the support of Indigenous and non-Indigenous colleagues who have worked with and alongside them. Krista states

I can say that for me I went into the program knowing that learning about Indigenous education was the right thing to do, and now I can justify it pedagogically. Not to brow beat anyone, like Shawn said I don't want to alienate anyone, but when a dialogue happens... it's important in academic circles to be able to refer to [for example] Marie Battiste. (SC, 2017)

Krista can now articulate with confidence to others what she believes to be true about Indigenous education. Shawn concurs,

Every day that goes by I notice a huge difference in how I approach education...I was using some Heiltsuk in the classroom. I always had that passion before, but StFX M.Ed program helped me do that in a more professional, sophisticated manner..."

Leadership and possibilities for transforming school culture

Graham Smith (2000), Maori educator and scholar, speaks of the power that comes from a leader knowing what is to be done from amid several choices. As this cohort was nested within a leadership stream, all graduate students were exposed to decolonizing models of leadership. Traditional Eurocentric leadership theory has tended to use models that focus on the individual leader and then to see leadership embedded in hierarchical structures. An explicit goal of the leadership core courses was to help the graduate students focus on shared and distributed models of leadership and leadership as process. As such, the participants named and saw their teaching as leadership. LeeAnn expressed, "I approach my teaching much differently since completing the program" (SC, 2017). Lee Ann sees herself as using her leadership beyond her classroom outwards to the school community. When she has been able to do this, she has noticed the positive effects. "The interest [in including First Nations' perspectives] is contagious. People will pick up on that and come to you. I definitely notice that with people in my school and family members" (LeeAnn, SC, 2017).

Shawn, in his new role as vice-principal, spoke of how he is asserting his leadership to create a process to discard outdated and colonial resources. He assisted in reviewing very outdated resources that depict Indigenous peoples in stereotypical and inaccurate ways. He says now: "I'm way more inclined to step up to the plate in terms of pedagogical discussions concerning resources, and that's something I definitely learned from StFX that I am passing along" (SC, 2017).

Sharon recognized her teacher leadership and is willing to embark upon changing the climate in her classroom, to the extent possible in her role as instructor:

Through this course I realized that we need to make the learning place that we are in feel more like family and like home. Students are really connecting to it and I think the stats prove it this term, they are staying and they are really engaged in their courses. It's really exciting. When I think about hopefulness, I think that I am going to try to keep including the students and appreciate and affirm them for who they are. (SC, 2017)

In so doing, Sharon noted that her modeling of how to set up classes in a more relational manner is influencing other faculty to adopt similar ideas. As such, she is demonstrating the ability to lead by example, which is a very powerful element of authentic leadership.

Many graduate students use their formal and informal leadership roles to advocate for decolonization in their schools. Ben, relatively new to the principal's role, demonstrates how he enacted leadership to transform how the school viewed the home language:

there's a lot...the one thing I want to focus on is the language in the schools. The most challenging part for me is that I had to accept the fact that I had to start learning the language, that's never been easy for me even learning French on my own. Having students see me do that on the morning announcements or saying good morning — it's the little things that I think matter. I never would have done that if I wasn't in this program. (SC, 2017)

The power of valuing Indigenous languages is paramount. Battiste (2013) reminds us that cognitive imperialism, residential schools, and colonization have all impacted Indigenous languages; some have been lost, others are in danger of not surviving, and some continue to be integral to Indigenous communities. As non-speakers of Indigenous languages, especially those in leadership roles, whether we bring in Elders or speakers into schools and/or an attempt to speak an Indigenous language and show respect of the deep knowledge that comes from Indigenous languages, honouring Indigenous languages is integral to transformation and change. The TRC's (2015) Calls to Action (#14 specifically) have emphasized the importance of Aboriginal languages and affirm the importance of their *preservation, revitalization, and strengthening* (p. 2).

Hopefulness

The educators in our study said again and again that the support they found in the program and with their peers gave them more hope in doing their work. Overall, reflecting back on the process, high school teacher LeeAnn said:

I feel like I have a higher level of hopefulness, as Roxanne had said. I feel more eager and positive in looking for more ways to incorporate Indigenous knowledge into the school. I feel like maybe I wouldn't have been seeking that out as much. I feel like the program gave me tools and resources, and I think a sense of eagerness and a positive approach towards that. It's not something that is seen as an add-on, it's something you want to do. You want to be continually incorporating that knowledge into your lessons and into your school and you approach that with a real positive attitude. (SC, 2017)

LeeAnn is acting as a change agent as part of who she is now and how she sees the world. Others too have had more hope brought to the fore. Krista was the school guidance counselor for the two years she was in the program and recently became a suicide prevention advocate. She reflected:

Another thing that it's done is it's brought me closer to the Inuit educators that I work with. I am more confident and less shy in working with them, which increases my learning from them. In terms of hopefulness, with suicide prevention — when I think about how I felt about suicide prevention a year ago and how I feel today, it's totally different. (SC, 2017)

As teacher-educators in the program, we find this remarkable. Many of our graduates work in communities with a lot of trauma, where the intergenerational impact of residential schools is evident, where there is environmental degradation and suicide rates are high. The experiences some of our educators have been through and what they have experienced and witnessed is hard, and some of them shared that it broke their hearts and made it hard for them to continue to teach at times. So we cannot underscore the importance of listening and being present to one another throughout the cohort. The relationships built in the cohort really helped participants to connect with Indigenous people in meaningful ways. When Krista spoke of hope, even though she is dealing directly with suicide prevention, in a jurisdiction where the suicide rates for Inuit youth are higher than the national average, she explained that she feels that a new space is opening up and people are being more open to Indigenous people and knowledges, and she felt the pride will help contribute to greater well-being. Battiste (2010) wrote that “[t]eaching is the psychology of hope, and hope is a cause and consequence of action...it believes that vast problems can yield to several small solutions” (p. 175). For educators in our cohort, taking small actions has given them considerably more hope.

REFLECTING ON OUR LEARNING

We are reminded that decolonizing work has a spiritual dimension to it, as Mi’kmaw Chief PJ Prosper so eloquently stated, “moving from the head to the heart” (personal communication, March 4, 2015). The experience of working with and alongside Indigenous people has deeply impacted our educators. The voices of our 12 non-Indigenous graduate students attest to the power of deep, intentional, and relational graduate education. Perhaps part of the way we unmarinate ourselves from colonization is through ongoing long-lasting conversations and experiences. If working towards reconciliation needs to be taken up by non-Indigenous people, then experiences where they are in contact and open to the knowledge systems of FNMI communities are integral to that process. In deepening their understandings of FNMI peoples and communities, feeling supported in their work, these educators are better able to nourish the children they teach, and continue teaching in challenging heartfelt situations.

Our graduates found support within the cohort to decolonize their sphere of influence. This is not to say that they did not meet with resistance. In response to the question, ‘are you facing resistance from colleagues?’ Ben replied:

Absolutely. It [the program] gives me the confidence to be able to argue that what I am saying is right. Although [the staff] they bring up a lot of good points... [why do] we focus on culture so much when some students are two or three levels below the literacy and math level? [Before] I wouldn’t know what to say, I probably wouldn’t be in this position without the program. It had given me the tools to say, ‘I understand that, but it’s important to have the strategies to incorporate the culture into the literacy.’ (SC, 2017)

In taking up a leadership position, Ben now has the confidence and ability to speak back to concerns around programing. Shawn also shared that having studied “decolonization for two years,” he is much more able to take on a “leadership” and “advocacy role” now that he understands the “dynamics of change” and places a real emphasis on “inside” as well as “outside” the classroom practices (SC, 2017).

Reflecting on our own experiences as teacher-educators, we too have grown alongside our students. We have a better understanding of and are humbled by the complexity and diversity of the contexts in which our students teach. We have had our own learning journeys nourished by the relationships we have been drawn into through our interactions with our graduates. The vulnerabilities exposed in the stories they shared of their classrooms, communities and contexts, deeply touched our hearts, minds, bodies, and spirits. As teacher-educators, there is often an expectation that we have all the answers; however, if answers emerged, they came out of the collective dialogues made possible through the level of relationality in our cohort. These teaching experiences have also created a space for us to share more of who we are as Indigenous teacher educators and allies in ways that are not always possible in more mainstream settings. We too have found more hope in the power of graduate studies to decolonize education.

In Davis’ (2010) collection, entitled *Re/Envisioning Indigenous – Non-Indigenous Relations*, there is an image of a bundle of twigs; one twig is fragile, but many are strong. Mohawk Elder Jake Swamp’s teaching about the twigs reminded Davis that there is “an urgent appeal for all to pick up our responsibilities as human beings for the sake of survival of all life...a desire to see longstanding injustices resolved and a mutual, respectful future realized” (pp. 9-10). In working towards reconciliation and decolonizing education, we acknowledge there is much work to do that will require a critical mass of educators to work on various aspects of decolonization in various places and spaces. Our cohort participants are seemingly more able to take on and continue this decolonizing work. In recognizing and valuing Indigenous people and cultures, the cohort participants are better positioned to show leadership and play an active role in reconciliation. When non-Indigenous people have acquired cultural humility and when Indigenous people feel that their voices can be respectfully heard, we will truly be in a place where dialogue can occur and reconciliation can take place.

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UNLEARNING COLONIAL IDENTITIES WHILE ENGAGING IN RELATIONALITY: SETTLER TEACHERS' EDUCATION-AS-RECONCILIATION

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ABSTRACT. Before the TRC's Calls to Action, we were a collaborative teacher-education partnership of Anishinaabekwe and White settler researching and teaching reconciliation as pedagogical practice with five cohorts of settler teacher-candidates. Engaging theories of settler-colonialism, decolonization and Indigenous studies, we outline the obstacles and struggles in settler teacher education, such as exposing the legacies of colonialism in education, cultural harms and systemic racism in curriculum, and ongoing ignorance as entitlement by teachers. In addition, we focus on the complexities of methods for improving respectful relationality with Indigenous students and community as well as our hopes in helping new teachers commit their professional practice to focus on supporting Indigenous children and youth.

DÉSAPPRENDRE LES IDENTITÉS COLONIALES EN S'ENGAGEANT DANS UNE RELATION : LA FORMATION DES FUTURS ENSEIGNANTS « COLONISATEURS » COMME MODE DE RÉCONCILIATION

RÉSUMÉ. Bien avant que des appels à l'action soient formulés dans le cadre de la CVR, nous avons débuté une collaboration en tant que partenaires pédagogiques, une enseignante d'origine anichinabée et l'autre, « blanche colonisatrice ». Nous avons effectué des recherches et enseigné la réconciliation comme pratique enseignante à cinq cohortes de futurs enseignants « colonisateurs ». En s'intéressant aux théories portant sur le colonialisme, sur la décolonisation et à des études autochtones, nous présentons les obstacles et les défis relatifs à la formation d'enseignants « colonisateurs », tels que les legs hérités du colonialisme dans le milieu scolaire, les préjugés culturels et le racisme systémique dans les programmes ainsi que l'ignorance permanente comme droit des enseignants. De plus, nous nous attardons aux difficultés en lien avec les méthodes utilisées pour créer des relations respectueuses avec les communautés et étudiants autochtones. Finalement, nous abordons nos espoirs d'aider les nouveaux enseignants à s'engager à supporter les enfants et les jeunes d'origine autochtone au sein de leur pratique professionnelle.

Indigenous¹ scholars and education researchers have established the urgent importance of honouring Indigenous cultures, histories, perspectives, and knowledges in all levels of education, including teacher education (Battiste, 2013; Bishop, Berryman, Cavanaugh, & Teddy, 2009; Dion, 2009, 2007; Donald, 2012, 2009). More teacher education researchers (Kanu, 2011, 2005; Strong-Wilson, 2007; Tupper, 2014, 2013) are urging Canadian faculties of education to heed and demonstrate real efforts with the specific education calls to action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC, 2015b) Final Report. The TRC has stipulated that transformed education systems are needed to address the academic success of Indigenous students first, while also moving mainstream or "settlerstream" (Korteweg & Bissell, 2015, p. 15) Canada towards reconciliation by addressing the mass "cultivated ignorance" (Godlewksa, Moore, & Bednasek, 2010, p. 419) of generations of school children. Settler teachers and, by extension, teacher educators thus occupy an important place in the TRC's calls to action for education (TRC, 2015a). They need to carry the core responsibility of implementing reform efforts to develop curriculum that represents accurate historical truths, respect Indigenous knowledge (IK) systems and perspectives, as well as promote holistic Indigenous pedagogies for greater understandings and well-being for all students in K-12 education (Association of Canadian Deans of Education [ACDE], 2010; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007b; Ontario's Social Studies, Grs. 1-6, and History / Geography, Grs. 7-8, Revised Curriculum, 2018).

Years before the TRC's calls to action (2015a) and after completing a longitudinal study into one school board's Aboriginal Education programming (Korteweg, 2010), Tesa Fiddler and Lisa Korteweg came together as an Indigenous-settler teacher education partnership. Fiddler – an Anishinaabekwe, teacher-educator, and Indigenous education specialist – and Korteweg – a Euro-White settler, teacher-researcher and university professor – decided to collaborate and co-teach a specialized Honours BEd course, entitled *Indigenizing Perspectives and Practices in Education* (IPPE). Since 2011, we have been actively inquiring into the multi-pronged challenges of unsettling or disrupting non-Indigenous / settler teacher candidates' (TCs) ignorance of Indigenous peoples and embedded Canadian settler-colonialism (Dion, 2009; Regan, 2010; Snelgrove, Dhamoon, & Corntassel, 2013; Tupper, 2013) while modelling a holistic, respectful, culturally responsive or Indigenous-focused pedagogy with Indigenous community. We researched and re-designed this BEd course over six years to understand how teacher education programs could address settler reconciliation while aiming to improve education for Indigenous students and their families. A challenging process, we had to disrupt and expose our TCs' ignorance as settler-colonial complacencies, rather than permit them to assume a professional teacher identity that cloaks ongoing colonialism (Marom, 2018). Explicitly decolonizing their nascent teacher identities was the way forward towards a new ethical relational stance (Donald, 2009) with Indigenous peoples and by learning to honour IK

and perspectives (Battiste, 2013; Bissell & Korteweg, 2016; Kanu, 2011), in a pedagogical approach that we term education-as-reconciliation. In this article, we provide an overview of our partnership, the IPPE course design, and the many dilemmas we encountered with educating settler teacher candidates on their responsibilities to enact reconciliation in their teaching.

INDIGENOUS-SETTLER PARTNERSHIP IN DECOLONIZING TEACHER EDUCATION

The IPPE BEd course was borne out of our deep conversations about the difficulties, absurdities, and ongoing tragedies of Indigenous students' experience in provincial and urban school systems while we collaborated closely on the Ontario Ministry of Education's Urban Aboriginal Education Pilot Project in Thunder Bay (Korteweg, 2010). Lisa was the lead researcher (or principle investigator) while Tesa was a research assistant in the graduate team, but closer to a co-researcher in her role and capacity. As a partnership, we represent two distinct personal and scholarly journeys in parallel. We are situated in different cultural locations and institutional positions as teachers, scholars, and teacher-researchers. But, we came together to demonstrate to ourselves and teachers how an collaborative partnership of Indigenous-settler could connect while juxtaposing our identities in such a way that our differences — cultural, racial, socio-economic, educational, knowledge systems — were highlighted without subjugation, erasure, dominance or denial.

Lisa does not represent all Euro-Western perspectives in education just as Tesa does not represent all Indigenous perspectives. However, in our partnership, Tesa is the best authority of what non-Indigenous TCs need to know about IK systems, cultures, and FNMI families in order to teach Indigenous students in a culturally safe and responsive manner. Lisa is a strong role-model on what a decolonizing settler-teacher pathway could exemplify. By sharing her teacher autobiography, Lisa would regularly disclose stories of her own ignorance, settler mistakes, and White complacency failures, in order to teach a critical humility of settler decolonizing by honouring the teachings of IK holders, community members, and Elders. Tesa is an excellent role-model in implementing culturally safe teaching practices with Indigenous students such as holistic caring, genuine relationship building and community invitational approaches in classrooms. Together, we continuously demonstrated to our TCs how to encourage, listen for, and engage Indigenous student voice and stories of inherent IK strengths of Land,² language, culture, community (2L2C).

We were compelled to focus our teacher education efforts on the non-Indigenous or White settler problem (Epp, 2008) and directly address teacher strategic ignorance (Tupper, 2013, 2014), avoidance of uncomfortable critical discourses (Marom, 2017), and confront White Canadian teachers' "perfect stranger" stance (Dion, 2007 p. 330; Higgins, Madden, & Korteweg, 2015)

in our pedagogies, curriculum, and course organization. Working to disrupt settler-teacher perceptions explicitly in course texts, group discussions, and through embodied-experiential activities in Indigenous-focused contexts, we were prepared for discomfort, tensions, and complexities as we revealed “truth” accounts of Indigenous children’s current lives and school experiences. Anticipating that these settler-colonial “truths” might alienate our TCs from actively relating to Indigenous students, we worked to remain equally supportive and committed to demonstrating that settler-teachers can change their perspectives, enact positive influence, build stronger genuine relationships with Indigenous families / communities, and improve learning conditions for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) students in classrooms as education-as-reconciliation.

Citing the core challenge of the TRC as the “broad lack of understanding of the unjust and violent circumstances from which modern Canada emerged,” (Sinclair, 2015, para. 14), Justice Sinclair made it clear that education will be fundamental to reconciliation. Settler awareness of Canada’s oppressive and racist treatment against Indigenous peoples is an unlearning process of settler-decolonizing, enacted through in-person experiences and interactions with Indigenous students in Indigenous community spaces. Our model of education-as-reconciliation was a generative process demonstrated by our own Indigenous-settler interactions during our co-teaching and while continuously referring to our relationships with Indigenous students and their families / communities.

Rooted in a commitment to restitution of Indigenous rights, reclamation of IK and self-determination, we connect with a research lineage in critical education focused on the relationship between curriculum, racism, colonialism, and mainstream or whitemainstream dominance (Grande, 2008; Kanu, 2005; St. Denis, 2011; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999; Tupper & Cappello, 2008; Willinsky, 1998). The study of our IPPE course is also attentive to Indigenous critiques on how decolonization and reconciliation efforts need to be Indigenous-focused and politically enacted rather than passively stated to assuage governmental interests or perpetuate a seemingly nice, polite Canadian status quo (Belcourt, 2017; Betasamsoake Simpson, 2014; Gaudry, 2016; Lee & King, 2017; Todd, 2016; Tuck & Yang, 2012). These Indigenous scholars contend that reconciliation means non-Indigenous Canadians must be held accountable by addressing ongoing settler-colonial dominance and oppression as well as supporting Indigenous self-determination in institutions such as education.

Through our Indigenous-settler teacher-educator partnership, we continuously dialogued about the reiterative design, teaching, and development of this BE course over a 6-year span (2011-2017) of five cohorts. While intentionally engaging in conversation to process our weekly observations of the IPPE classes, we also gained insights into our own hopes and concerns for decolonizing Canadian teacher education. Specifically, our analysis focuses on how settler TC

reluctances-resistances to education-as-reconciliation were often epistemological contestations to avoid challenging the national narrative of (White) Canadian identity as peaceful, fair and good (Saul, 2008). Additionally, some of the TCs were committed to a teacher professional identity based on a mythos of Canadian neutrality in order to avoid any disruptions to a Eurocentric settler status quo in curriculum and pedagogy (Battiste, 2013; Marom, 2018; Tupper, 2014). Such manifestations of settler TC resistance-reluctance were the ongoing primary challenge of the IPPE course through all its offerings. Hope, however, was revealed to us regularly as an increasing number of the TCs described a growing commitment to Indigenous students / families as the focus of their “best” teaching experiences, along with an ability to perceive and appreciate the vital contributions of Indigenous peoples in all aspects of society.

THE IPPE COURSE

The Honours specialized course (IPPE) was a time intensive experience of 108 contact hours, along with 36-40 hours of service learning or informal teaching placements in Indigenous contexts: a total of six times the contact hours of normal BEd courses in the professional teacher certification year's program. The course design and delivery were anchored in a recognition that BEd students' ignorance of Canadian-Indigenous history and current misunderstandings of Indigenous cultures, knowledge systems, and languages all had to be addressed as the focal points of the IPPE curriculum. In order to shift TCs out of an epistemological complacency, we experimented with approaches and modified activities that would emphasize the strengths and richness of Indigenous cultures and contributions, rather than forefront the truths of colonial devastation and tragedies upon Indigenous communities—past and ongoing (Kovach, 2009; Tuck, 2009). Designing a course curriculum that would evoke multiple disruptions and complexities as TCs confronted their own settler-colonialism was relatively easy. However, the concurrent pedagogical challenges of how we would unsettle our TCs' implicit biases and normalized racism against Indigenous peoples in order to break through their hesitations, reticence, or active resistances and compel them towards actions were both exhausting and energizing as they fueled our teacher-researcher partnership.

We designed focal point assignments that would immerse the settler TCs in:

- 1) cultural experiences in Indigenous community settings or Indigenous dominant spaces for learning (settler) cultural humility (Lund & Lee, 2015),
- 2) outdoor classes that were purposefully sequenced to demonstrate Land as first teacher (Chambers, 2006; Styres, 2011) or land-as-pedagogy (Simpson, 2014; Wildcat, McDonald, Irlbacher-Fox & Coulthard, 2014),

- 3) service learning in Indigenous education contexts or Indigenous-focused classrooms (36-40 hours), and
- 4) regular *sharing circles* in our classes that allowed the TCs to process affective or emotionally-charged responses while witnessing instructors' and peers' articulations of epistemological shifts, critical moments of personal awareness, and reflexive applications to their daily lives.

As a core focus of the course curriculum, we made conscious efforts to rely on and have our TCs engage with first-person voices or representations by Indigenous writers, leaders, role models, artists, scholars, knowledge holders or keepers, families, and Elders. We read young adult novels by Indigenous authors, such as *My Name is Seepeetza* by Sterling (1992) – Sterling's IRS survivor account as a fictionalized autobiography – and the *Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* by Sherman Alexie (2007), another fictionalized autobiography of Indigenous youth identity conflicts between White settlerstream school and Indigenous family / community. We also assigned multiple videos or documentaries, including the PSAC video-*Justice for Aboriginal Peoples: It's Time*, as a powerful 5-minute encapsulation of Canada's history of more than 500 years of colonization upon Indigenous peoples; and the CBC documentary series, *8th Fire*. In addition, we compiled a large repository of articles, videos, teaching practices, and lesson plans on a digital course platform that included 500 resources and 21 topics to expand TC awareness on all matters Indigenous or, at the very least, to preclude the inexcusable yet oft-repeated rationale that many teachers hold: they cannot teach this material or content since they never learned it during their own K-16 educations or they cannot source appropriate resources. We continuously worked against this entrenched settler-colonial mentality by emphasizing indigenized strengths, resiliencies, and first-person representations of communities, culture, language, and Land (Kovach, 2009; Simpson, 2014; Tuck, 2009). Overall, we focused our teaching to help shift the TCs out of epistemological complacencies, to grapple with decolonizing their assumptions or inherent biases against Indigenous peoples, while opening them up to the possibilities of better relations and cultural safety for Indigenous students, whose numbers are only increasing in Canadian classrooms.

By creating contexts of embodied, experiential relationality in Indigenous community settings and opening supportive spaces, we wanted to provoke a next phase, after settler disruptions, to shift our TCs' pedagogies towards an Indigenous focus: to practice respectful interactions with Indigenous students, families and (local) communities to start genuine relationships, to honour the resilience and strengths of FNMI peoples, and to enrich classrooms and curriculum first for Indigenous students' cultural safety (Bishop et al., 2009; Bishop, 2003; Ly & Crowshoe, 2015; Nakata, 2011; Toulouse, 2013, 2008). Recognizing that decolonization is an emotionally charged and critically chal-

lenging process, especially during the formative time of competing professional identities and clashes of political discourses on what can be viewed as a “good” (social justice) teacher (Marom, 2017), we aimed to provide as many concrete immersive experiences for the TCs in Indigenous community events and with Indigenous students. We wanted to persuade by demonstrating richly engaging and rewarding Indigenous-focused experiences or indigenizing pedagogical practices for action and praxis in the IPPE course (Battiste, Bell, & Findlay, 2002; McCarty & Wyman, 2009). Our clear mission was the overall goal of improving Indigenous children’s lives in schools who continue to face serious alienation, systemic racism and oppressive unjust conditions, a much more painful and dire situation than any emotional toll on settler TCs grappling with their roles and responsibilities to decolonize their teaching as moral imperative for reconciliation.

A constant through-line or theme in all assignments and classes was to consistently ask the TCs to define their emerging teacher identity as a question of “who are you as a teacher of Indigenous students and how will you provide a culturally safe, inclusive, and pride-instilling environment for Indigenous students in your teaching?” This theme or call to action in our co-teaching of IPPE took a toll of emotional labour as we had to regularly monitor the TCs’ feelings, their White fragility (DiAngelo, 2011) or confidence levels (Milne, 2016), as well as attend to their affective processing of intense feelings such as guilt, embarrassment or frustration (Brophy, 2017; Korteweg & Root, 2016; Tanaka, 2015). We had to maintain an ongoing effort to re-engage our TCs in believing that as teachers of Indigenous children *first*, they needed to help transform the Indigenous-Canadian relationship and promote education-as-reconciliation that would answer the TRC’s calls to action. Seeking a balance of provoking real points of discomfort in revealing truths of history between Indigenous and Canadian, while providing a safe enough affective environment in the university classroom was challenging. And in this era of the (post-)TRC, when Canadian teaching is evidently political in its impacts and consequences on Indigenous children’s lives, we believe it is our responsibility as teacher-educators to help TCs understand that any teaching is political in its effects and consequences on the Indigenous-Canadian relationship. While debunking and shattering their naive settler myths of Canada as a fair, equal nation that celebrates all children (Burman, 2016; St. Denis, 2011), we had to inveigle settler TCs to commit to actions of settler identity-as-reconciliation, focused on high quality, rightful, and accessible education for Indigenous students / communities.

A RECONCILIATION METHODOLOGY OF CHALLENGING SETTLER STICKY POINTS AND SLIPPERY SLOPES

To examine the complexity and range of responses that we received, observed, and studied from a total of 120 preservice or TC participants during the teaching of the IPPE course (2011-2017), we collected data from weekly reflections, sharing circle debriefings, discussion board postings, formal assignments, service learning-as-teaching logs, and Indigenous community immersion entries, alongside our own conversations, field notes, and storying while debriefing (Kovach, 2009) and storywork (Archibald, 2008) of TC interactions, observations and classroom events. We then transcribed and uploaded this data into a qualitative software program to code for themes of reoccurring statements or stories by the TCs across the five cohorts. As we reviewed each year's cohort data, there was a clear pattern of overlapping highs and lows in the decolonizing narratives or settler unlearning processes. Over the five cohorts we observed regularities of TC narratives or pivotal moments of "touchstone stories" (Strong-Wilson, 2007, p. 116), those experiences that shaped their perceptions of and relationships with Indigenous peoples. There were also patterns in the ways that the TCs engaged in a self-examination of their own previously unquestioned "molded images" (Dion, 2007, p. 331), or representations that perpetuated ignorance, cognitive imperialism (Battiste, 2013) and settler-colonialism. These TC engagement patterns during the IPPE course emerged out of the data as a landscape of key conceptual shift points for the settler TCs where they were impeded, tipped or decidedly moved towards a greater reconciliatory stance in their teaching and teacher identity formation.

We conceptualize these shifting points as similar to den Heyer's (2009) sticky points, those difficult moments or uncomfortable points of contention that emerge or stick out when divergent narratives or values clash, resulting in a cultural interface of complexities (Nakata, 2011) when complacent White settler normativity is unsettled (Regan, 2010), interrupted, or exposed. The complexity occurs when the TCs realize that there is a conflict of teacher narratives where *who* they want to become as settler / Canadian teachers clashes with responsibilities and commitments they should enact with Indigenous students, communities, and Indigenous content. As we observed the data, the metaphor of stickiness seemed to best capture how the TCs' responses were ideologically complex, as they struggled to reconcile themselves with the myths of well-meaning, fair, or "proper" settler teachers and the accurate truths of settler-colonialism. These sticky points of disruption revealed how willing or resistant the TCs were to opening themselves up to teaching-as-reconciliation through re-learning and contending with Canada's real history of colonization against Indigenous peoples, engaging with decolonizing their own teacher identities, or expanding their active, genuine engagement with Indigenous students and families. We were also working against the slippery slopes of settler-colonialism, trying to entice our TCs to stay the course and

see the rich values of Indigenous-focused curriculum and pedagogy, along with the rewards of building genuine relationships with Indigenous students and communities. We knew our TCs were continuously pulled towards the slippery slopes of “settler moves to innocence” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 10), those inherent strategies of trying to reclaim a position of neutrality, and/or denying unearned privileges in an education system based on anti-Indigenous racism. The majority of our teaching became the monitoring and redirection of our TCs away from these moves to innocence towards a more holistic, relationship-focused pedagogy of education-as-reconciliation. Our purpose became the study of locating significant or sticking points of settler-decolonizing; moments of disruption where TCs could be nudged towards transformational shifts, culturally responsive actions, and relational practices of engagement. We highlight a sampling of TC anonymized quotes, to represent these settler-teacher sticky points and to demonstrate that there are variations in TC responses to education-as-reconciliation.

Sticky point 1: Why do we have to take this course when Indigenous education really has nothing to do with me (as a Euro-White settler-Canadian)?

We knew that the overwhelming majority of settler TCs would not have had any prior meaningful engagement with Indigenous peoples, education or content; hence, the mass settler ignorance that demonstrated itself when resistances (Donald, 2012; Kanu, 2011; Tupper, 2013) to the course took on many forms. Some TCs unabashedly stated in first class introductions that they did not actively choose or want to take our course, but were forced to as the last course option available. Others confessed that they were anxious and uncertain about what our course would do for them because they had never studied any Indigenous content in their teachable subjects. Still others asserted how out of place they felt in the IPPE course as they had never met any Indigenous peoples or been exposed to any Indigenous content given their upbringings in southern Ontario.

The settler assumption for many of the TCs in the first month was thus that the IPPE course had little personal relevance, unless you were from a town with a significant or visible Indigenous population, or you were a specialist in Indigenous studies. These assumptions and (lack of) motivation to enroll in our specialization course did not change during the 5-cohort cycle of the IPPE course delivery. Even after the TRC’s (2015b) Final report, along with high media attention to Indigenous social movements – such as Idle No More – and issues – such as the Ontario Coroner’s inquest into the seven First Nations student deaths in Thunder Bay, and the MMIWG national inquiry – the TC enrolment and university support for the IPPE course were already waning.

Sticky point 2: How are we, as non-Indigenous teachers, supposed to teach their traditions and their culture?

As instructors of teacher education courses on Indigenous-focused content and pedagogies, we heard a lot of common resistances about “them,” an objectification of Indigenous peoples in the first few weeks of our course. Persistent questions of disrespectful ignorance included: Who are they? What do we call “them”? How do we avoid making a mistake or doing things *improperly*? What are their spiritual beliefs? What is their culture? Could we just bring in an Elder so that we can all absorb their ancient wisdom and let them teach this content correctly? Luckily, many of our TCs were startled out of this colonial mindset when Tesa led the first class with smudging, circle teachings outside on the Land, and story-telling of her own life and educational experiences, generously shared with humour and gentle wisdom. This holistic initiation immediately immersed the cohorts in Anishinaabe ways of knowing and grounded the course with the purpose of teaching Indigenous children first, decentering settler perspectives as the mainstream, while moving towards and acknowledging a pedagogy-for-reconciliation.

In the first month of the course, many TCs expect us to tell them that Indigenous cultural teaching is a checklist of the top ten teaching strategies — do not make eye contact, bring a tobacco offering, use oral learning strategies, make activities all hands-on — assuming that there is *one* First Nation culture that applies to all communities (a pan-Indigenous and inappropriate approach). There is a strong expectation that we will hand our TCs a teachers’ guide as a formula or curriculum-as-thing to then apply in their own classroom teaching absent Indigenous relationships, connections to communities, or engagement of families (see Madden, Higgins, & Korteweg, 2013). Our TCs also repeatedly returned to the Eurocentric strategy of critical thinking as debate to try to determine what is culturally appropriate for “those people” when in the prevailing pedagogy, Canadian teachers are supposed to be nice, fair, or polite (apolitical) professionals who teach to appreciate a multicultural mosaic classroom and avoid contention or political conflict by celebrating all cultures to make everyone comfortable (Burman, 2016; Dion, 2009; Marom, 2016; St. Denis, 2011).

During the first term of each course offering, we found ourselves having multiple private conversations with different TCs about their insecurity to develop genuine relationships with Indigenous students or, conversely, an overtly instrumental view of their teaching in Indigenous education. We soon realized how these two affective states seem to be two polar ends of settler-teachers’ vacillation between a stance of fear as a “perfect stranger” (Dion, 2009) to a stance of strange confidence that they know enough of a subject to escape any accountability or controversy in their settler teaching. This vacillation manifests in multiple ways. Some TCs suggest that they do not know enough to address Indigenous students’ distinct needs. Others are

complacent regarding the need to teach in a responsive, relational way with Indigenous students, different than for “all my [mainstream] students.” In addition, TCs would present as over-confident subject-expert teachers with little lived cultural humility (Lund & Lee, 2015) saying things such as, “I took this Native Studies or Ojibwe language course in university, so, I have enough credits to teach this subject so I think I could take that job...” For many of these overtly confident or instrumental TCs, their response to assuming a decolonizing identity as a teacher of Indigenous students became stickier or more conflicted as they realized their outsider positionality and rare experience in relating to Indigenous peoples:

I grew up in Thunder Bay...the population of Natives [sic] here is very high and there is a reserve next to the city. I am considering working in a northern Native reserve after I graduate because there's lots of work up there and I'm having success in my placements. But I am a little nervous to go up north because I have heard many stories about “nightmare” experiences of teachers who can't wait to leave. I hope that this course will prepare me to integrate more easily into a First Nation community and to handle the challenges. (Cohort 1 reflection, September 2011)

We were aware that the IPPE course could be used as an instrumental means for some settler-teachers to gain an economic advantage in the glutted teacher market of Ontario schools. This slippery slope of giving settler TCs a specialized, value-added course could become the TCs' advantage in an increasingly competitive field, especially when school boards have not explicitly reserved Indigenous education or subject positions for FNMI teachers. This was an ongoing ethical dilemma in our IPPE teaching as we worried that we were continuing to reproduce White privilege or add more White entitlement into the field of Indigenous education.

Sticky point 3: “This Indigenous history is so bleak and terrible, how am I supposed to teach this?!”

Many TCs can be overwhelmed by the truths of both the IRS system as well as current conditions for Indigenous students in all levels and jurisdictions of Canadian education. We found that quite a few of our TCs would exhibit “white fragility” (DiAngelo, 2011), disengage or express resistance when they realized that these complex issues of decolonization and reconciliation along with the overwhelmingly tragic colonial history of Canada could not be easily distilled into “nice” fair lesson plans or explained to friends / family over a dinner. Our TCs would often express their preference for a history curriculum where “we just celebrate everyone's cultures as a multicultural history of Canada” (TC written reflections and class statements). Many wanted to revert back to a whitewashed, celebratory narrative of Canada as European immigrant history, erroneously lumping Indigenous peoples into a multicultural mosaic myth (Burman, 2016; St. Denis, 2011). In this double move of erasure and displacement, the TCs would avoid a truthful telling of Canadian history as

violent conflicts, government inflicted tragedies or cultural genocide against Indigenous peoples (Daschuk, 2010; Dion, 2009; Gaudry, 2016).

Centring historical truths as the foundation of the IPPE curriculum, especially at this moment of the TRC and Canada 150, meant that the TCs would experience multiple and complex affective states. **These states presented as epistemological resistances and shocked awareness through learning the “real” story of Canada’s treatment of Indigenous peoples over its 150-year history of cultural genocide by multiple governments.** By the end of the course, our goal for the TCs was to become active agents of education-as-reconciliation who both help shift our collective contemporary history-in-the-making and teach a new nation-to-nation (N2N) or Indigenous Nations-to-Canada narrative.

The most extraordinary learning experiences of the Indigenous history of Canada were organized by Tesa for each cohort. Tesa invited Elders/IRS survivors who agreed to present in our classes, due to their trust in and friendship with Tesa. Each Elder-survivor told stories of first living well with their families on the Land, speaking their language, and strong intergenerational relations with grandparents and extended family. Then, they recounted the surreal trip away from their families, the tragic shock of the IRS entrance, followed by years of pain and abuse. There was nothing more powerful for learning the full truths of Canada’s history than these first-person stories by real IRS survivors. As our TCs reflected on this sharing, they were amazed by the rich history of language, kinship, and Land, while crushed to learn of the trauma of First Nation children forcibly removed from family love and community connection.

We knew that the teaching of Canada’s IRS history through survivors’ stories in person in our classes would elicit grave and difficult emotions for our TCs to contend with on both personally and professionally. “I am afraid to address these [IRS] issues and histories directly with Indigenous students because I don’t think I can keep my emotional composure and I’m worried about the emotional impact it would have on them.” (Cohort 2, weekly reflection, November 2012)

Sticky point 4: “If you know how to do outdoor or place-based education, then you already get Aboriginal Education, right?”

Any decolonizing settler-teacher education curriculum has to begin with Land because the primary act of colonization is stealing Indigenous land while instilling a neo-colonial ideology that legitimizes the occupation of Land by settlers, away from the rightful Indigenous homeland caretakers. During the 6-year period that we taught IPPE, there were multiple Land-based controversies that came to crisis points in Northern Ontario and received mass media attention: the jailing of the Kitchemaykoosib Inniniwug Chief and council for obstructing the mineral exploration drilling on their lands; the Attawapiskat shelter crisis

and Chief Teresa Spence's hunger strike; the Ring of Fire chromite project development (Matawa Tribal Council communities); and Grassy Narrows' ongoing mercury poisoning crisis (Korteweg & Root, 2016). Our course could have just been a series of case studies of current Land-based controversies impacting Indigenous communities in northern Ontario and unravelling all the settler-colonial implications as educational moments (Korteweg & Russell, 2012).

In connection to these controversies, we focused on the sticking point of Land – rather than reproduce settler attachments to wilderness or special places. We needed the TCs to confront and replace the dominant Eurocentric conception of wilderness with the truth of Indigenous peoples' homelands and Land protection. The IPPE course curriculum continuously emphasized Land as first teacher (Styres, 2011): Land as knowledge source and pedagogy, where the elements, ancestors, more-than-human animals, spirits, language, and stories are all interconnected with the people, over millennia or time immemorial as a system of relations and knowledge that continue living to this day (Battiste, 2013; Simpson, 2014; Styres, 2011). In the IPPE cohort, we had a good number of nature-sensitive, environmentally-focused TCs who would arrive with firmly established place-based identities that valued summer camps, wilderness canoe trips, and communion with special places (Korteweg & Oakley, 2014; Newbery, 2012) but who had not yet considered any real or respectful relationships with Indigenous peoples. These TCs were sometimes shocked to contend with their settler privilege of wilderness access or special place-based communion at the expense of Indigenous peoples' sovereignty on their own territories (Korteweg & Oakley, 2014; Newbery, 2012). This issue hit particularly hard for many of the TCs with a specialization in Outdoor education. Most of these TCs had attended residential summer camps throughout their childhoods but had not yet faced any issues of cultural misappropriation:

Growing up, I went to camp every summer. At my camp, we were all given tribal names (Cree, Mohawk, etc.) to distinguish the different age groups. We also participated in various Indigenous-based activities such as sleeping in teepees, participating in a *pow-wow*, and doing overnight canoe trips with old style gear like *wanigans* and *tump* lines. I have learned to appreciate Indigenous culture because of my summer camp. (Year 3, Winter term reflection, 2014)

Again, the TCs exhibited *sticky* responses to topics that challenged their assumed values or identity investments such as summer camps. Many of our TCs believed they had unique nature connections through summer camps and special wild places or wilderness trips that had re-affirmed their socio-economic class position and privileges to commune with nature. Their responses at these sticky points could be the threshold for either increasing their awareness of Indigenous perspectives of Land or decreasing their willingness to confront their own participation in cultural appropriation.

I feel so confused and kind of angry. We have been talking about colonization in class and it was suggested that when summer camps use Indigenous practices and artifacts, they are actually perpetuating colonialism. My experiences at camp have been so important in shaping who I am today. How can this special place that taught me so much about our natural environment also be teaching us all a way of seeing the world that does not respect Indigenous people? (Cohort 2, weekly reflection, October 2012)

To counteract this settler alienation of feeling displaced from their place-based identity, we followed an Anishinaabe approach of engaging with Land as pedagogy or first teacher (Styres, 2011), where the environment, ancestors, elements, language, IK, and stories all work together to help people re/member, learn, and share holistic respect with the Land (see Simpson, 2014). Each year, we participated in Indigenous-led, Land-based events such as the Fall Harvest, classroom visits with knowledge holders, harvesting or crafting birch bark, and the immersive overnight IPPE retreat at an Anishinaabe encampment. The retreat was mandatory each September to immerse all the TCs into a collective experience of Anishinaabe ways of knowing such as story-telling around the fire, medicine walks, handicrafts such as beading, singing with the hand-drum to emphasize reconciliation as *maamawe* – we are all in this together.

Sticky point 5: “I’m just as un-privileged as Indigenous peoples”: Grappling with White privilege and systemic racism

To address the systemic anti-Indigenous racism that most of our TCs had never faced, Tesa would not attend the specific class when Lisa would directly teach topics of White power / privilege, White fragility, and Eurocentric cognitive imperialism in curriculum (Battiste, 2013; Battiste et al., 2002). It was always important for Tesa to miss these risky and difficult sessions when Lisa would disrupt convenient complacency about White teacher-identity and reproduction of neo-colonialism in teaching.

Lisa takes responsibility for the weight and burden of instructing and processing with the TCs what settler-decolonization can be re-imagined as and what it should look like as transformative praxis (McCarty & Wyman, 2009). With Tesa’s guidance, Lisa would lead the TCs through critical self-examinations and deconstructions of the systemic and institutionalized racism that has benefitted all White Canadians, including White teachers.

After last week’s class [with Lisa] I have been thinking a lot about my own White privilege. I realize I never have to worry about people following me when I am shopping because they think I might steal; and how I can afford to make small mistakes (like swearing for example) without people judging me harshly; and no one ever says that I am a “credit to my people” because I am in university. In short, people tend to expect the best, rather than the worst from me because of the colour of my skin. Recognizing the extent of my own privilege also makes me understand just how many barriers First Nations students must experience each day. (Cohort 4, weekly reflection, January 2015)

We knew that our TCs were not adapting easily to these new understandings of contentious knowledge outside our university classroom. We regularly heard stories and fielded questions for advice on what to do with room-mates, family members and friends who were ignorant and/or racist in their views against Indigenous peoples. As one TC related:

I told my boyfriend about the Elder's presentation about his experiences at Residential School. He had never heard of Residential Schools or survivors. He was really shocked like me, and had a hard time believing that it was really that bad. I have to admit that my boyfriend is racist against Aboriginal people, even though he knew nothing about any of the things I have been learning in class. I've tried to talk to him a few times about this but he doesn't seem that responsive. I just don't know what to do or how to talk to him. (Cohort 2, weekly reflection, October 2013)

Controversies and TCs' bad feelings also arose when we would broach key topics such as being very clear that Indigenous children belonged first with their families, communities and Indigenous teachers as well as detailing and repudiating the stereotypes that White saviour foster parents or well-intentioned settler-teachers were the answer. We had TCs whose families were White foster parents to Indigenous children and felt personally attacked when we traced the harmful effects of the 60s Scoop and the ongoing exorbitant rates of Indigenous children apprehensions and placements in foster care. These TCs, though few in number, became very defensive and were unable to differentiate the systemic conditions of settler-colonialism and racism in/through curriculum and teaching along with other institutions such as child welfare, health, and justice. We wanted them to understand that the personal (teaching) is political in its effects and consequences; however, we did not want them to be emotionally paralyzed to the point that they retreated as insecure, disengaged, or individually insulted. While a few TCs found the distinction between institutionalized racism and systemic violence against Indigenous people difficult to face, there were significant openings and a hopeful willingness by many to grapple with their own personal complicities in these systemic conditions. As one TC stated:

I will never see Aboriginal people the same way again after hearing Indigenous students' stories — this personal storytelling format was a powerful learning experience for me. I grew up right beside Indigenous people in Thunder Bay, for my whole life, but didn't know enough so I easily accepted stereotypes. (Cohort 3, weekly reflection, November 2014)

THE HOPE FOR SETTLER TEACHER EDUCATION-AS-RECONCILIATION

Our ongoing research and iterative design in IPPE kept aiming to convince and commit the greatest number of non-Indigenous TCs to graduate from our course as decolonizing settler-teachers, striving for daily reconciliation. The goal was to develop teachers who meaningfully act against reproducing the harms of colonialism (see Aviation, 2012), while embracing more Indigenous-respectful

pedagogies and developing relationships with Indigenous students. Every fall, as we restarted the course, we were quickly reminded of how deeply entrenched settler-colonialism is in education by the repetition of colonial stock responses or persistent sticky points by multiple cohorts of TCs. While our classroom was a real site of settler-colonial contestation, it was also an enriched, experiential process of engaging in education-as-reconciliation with Indigenous community. The vast majority of the TCs were decolonizing their own settler-colonialism through multiple immersive experiences in the city's Indigenous community events and shifting towards a stance of openness to reconciliation as a process of (re)learning and building relationality. The TCs had the choice of any Indigenous community organized event where they were welcomed and invited to participate, regardless if it was a celebration, a ceremony or a protest. The goal of the cultural immersion assignment was to formally nudge our non-Indigenous TCs to pay attention to the Indigenous community in Thunder Bay, to be physically present, to listen and learn experientially as a minority, and to participate in Indigenous dominant spaces of IK. These experiences were some of the most powerful for our TCs' shifts of stance towards cultural humility, embodied holistic learning, and empathetic development.

For example, all our TCs had to grapple with the realities of more than 500 years of colonization against Indigenous peoples while others directly witnessed personalized accounts of the ongoing violence, hurt, and trauma in the community at exhibits, demonstrations, or vigils:

I attended the "Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women's Vigil" as part of my cultural immersion hours. I was shocked, disturbed, and very saddened by this event. I had absolutely no idea about how many Aboriginal women are missing or murdered in Canada. The police seem to do very little about these cases. I think about the families of all these women; there must be so much pain. (Cohort 3, cultural immersion form, October 2013)

TCs were not just exposed to the pain and suffering of Indigenous peoples during these community events but also to the dynamic and rich IK that continues and contributes to environmental sensibilities, community sustainability, and ancestral-spiritual connections with the Land and all creatures. Our TCs quickly realized how little they knew or had learned of these important, vital contributions that Indigenous peoples engage in every day and were humbled in the process of experiencing IK first hand.

On the Medicine Walk, I was amazed at how much knowledge this Elder held. He pointed out countless plants and their possible medicinal uses. He also shared his outlook on relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians, stating that we are all equal and have abilities to learn and contribute to the world together. I was so humbled. (Cohort 5, cultural immersion form, October 2016)

CONCLUSION

Teacher-educators cannot disrupt settler-colonial identities and perspectives of TCs without a tandem set of embodied experiences where they actively structure authentic, meaningful contexts that shift TCs towards engaging in genuine interactions with Indigenous communities. Teacher education-as-reconciliation does not serve Indigenous children and families / communities if it repels or defeats new teachers from engaging in the real transformative work of relationship-building and relational teaching. In our teacher education discussions and analysis, we continue to vacillate on the question of how to entice and shift settler teachers towards deeper engagement and positive work with Indigenous children, families, and communities while being honest and direct about the ongoing pain, violence, and injustices that remain in Canadian society and embedded in education systems. Any teacher education course that presumes to address education-as-reconciliation or Indigenous ways of knowing in curriculum will only be tenable in how it focuses on and promotes Indigenous children's rights and needs to cultural safety, individual wellbeing, and educational goals and competencies as defined by their families and communities. In an effective model, settler teachers are able to push through those difficult sticky points of confronting their own colonialism in order to become more personally committed and compelled to participate in, complain loudly about, and help transform their schools into improved, equitable education systems for Indigenous students. We know this is more than possible as our TCs demonstrated on a regular basis:

On my teaching placement, I presented to my Native Beliefs and Values class (Gr. 10) – almost all Aboriginal students – about the historical agreements such as the Royal Proclamation and the Treaties which give Indigenous people their distinct rights including education, and I contrasted this with realities of what was going to happen with [Prime Minister] Harper's proposed new First Nations Education Act. By building trust and relationships, I opened up the opportunity for the students to share their beliefs, bring in personal and family stories, and share with each other. The students then took the lead in deciding to write the MP a letter, and to invite him to the class so they could share their concerns. (Cohort 4, placement reflection, January 2015)

With our settler-TCs, reconciliation is about helping them recognize holistic and global values of teaching and learning for all children, shifting their own nascent and emerging teacher-identities towards a critical role to engage in reconciliation when schools are mired in an ambiguous search of Canada's next 150th narrative, framed by ongoing inheritances of the IRS but hopeful for an Indigenous strong future. Teacher education-as-reconciliation needs to be focused on the restitution and actualization of those vital and core principles of education in teaching that Indigenous communities have clearly stated in many policy statements and foundational documents – demonstrating respect and caring for each other; instilling and encouraging curiosity, inquiry and creativity; providing and modeling tools and methods of thinking; communicat-

ing and collaborating with one another; and honouring multiple perspectives, ways of being and divergent systems of knowledge. Finally, teacher education-as-reconciliation needs to shift settler teachers towards reconciliatory actions in schools that transform what have long been institutions of empire, power, and colonialism towards institutions of greater equity, stronger relationships, and committed justice with Indigenous peoples. There is no time to waste.

NOTES

1. In this article, we use the term, Indigenous, to be inclusive of the many peoples and knowledge systems of the First Peoples of Canada as well as to use a term with global and United Nations recognition (e.g., UNDRIP). We also use First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) to be more distinct and representative of the three constitutionally recognized Indigenous peoples of Canada (see Vowel, 2016).
2. Following the examples of Styres (2011), Korteweg and Oakley (2014), and Tuck and McKenzie (2015), “Land” is capitalized in this article to recognize the collective community of all animate and inanimate beings, of which humans are a part. Often “Land” is used in Indigenous epistemologies to describe the complex, interrelated, more-than-human connections of humans with the natural world, including plants, animals, rocks, lakes, elements, and ancestral and spiritual presences.

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UNSETTLING SETTLER SHAME IN SCHOOLING: RE-IMAGINING RESPONSIBLE RECONCILIATION IN CANADA

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ABSTRACT. This paper draws on “reintegrative shame” (engaging the offender(s) in discussions of the moral dimensions of the act), and scholars who position shame as transformative. This paper reasserts shame as an ethical matter arguing that reconciliation is a particular response to the historical shame generated from the establishment of the Indian Residential Schools in Canada. What would it mean to conceive of education as a site for working *through* shame? If we find a way to acknowledge our settler-shame, what might a responsible way of acting on it be? This paper considers these questions to present evidence for the importance of education as a space for making shame a social, ethical, and pedagogical project.

**REMETTRE EN QUESTION LE CONCEPT DE HONTE DES COLONISATEURS EN
ÉDUCATION : REPENSER UNE RÉCONCILIATION RESPONSABLE AU CANADA**

RÉSUMÉ. Cet article s’appuie sur l’approche de « honte réintégrative » (impliquer le (s) contrevenant (s) dans des discussions portant sur les dimensions morales des actes posés) et sur les chercheurs considérant la honte transformatrice. Cet article repositionne la honte comme question éthique, soutenant que la réconciliation est une réponse spécifique à la honte historique engendrée par la mise en place des pensionnats indiens au Canada. Quelles seraient les conséquences d’envisager l’éducation comme un lieu pour évoluer à travers la honte? Si nous trouvons une manière de reconnaître notre honte en tant que colonisateurs, quelle serait une façon responsable de l’aborder et d’agir? Cet article analyse ces questions afin de démontrer l’importance de l’éducation comme lieu de transformation de la honte en projet social, éthique et pédagogique.

The assimilation attempts made by settler-Canadians, and subsequent trauma endured by many Indigenous people are well documented (Chrisjohn, Young, & Maraun, 1997; Haig-Brown, 1988; Sellars, 2013; TRC, 2015a). However, until recently, Canada’s dominant historical narratives omitted the stories of former Indian Residential School Survivors, who experienced “cultural, psychological and emotional harms and traumatic abuses” as small children, resulting in “an

intergenerational history of dispossession, violence, abuse, and racism that is a fundamental denial of the human dignity and rights of Indigenous peoples” (Regan, 2010, p. 5). While researching the history of Residential Schooling in Canada for my dissertation, I was struck by the paradox of shame as both a dominant subtext and a concealed accessory to assimilation. There is some general understanding that through assimilation Indigenous children were taught to feel ashamed of their cultural identity, and there are several personal stories of survivors’ experiences that disclose moments of feeling shame, then and now; yet, shame as an explicit topic in the histories and enduring consequences of residential schooling is a stone largely left unturned. We have come to know through these stories and research that under the semblance of care and promise of education, colonial schooling delivered a curriculum that stripped Indigenous children of their identity, convincing them that their culture is not only inferior but also shameful. I suggest, if Residential Schools were the vehicles for imposing assimilation, then shame was the secret weapon that operationalized the command.

In this paper, I frame the history of colonialism in Canada generally, Residential Schooling specifically, and the more recent reconciliation efforts headed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) within a lens of shame. Most people are familiar with the negative impacts of shame; indeed, the dominant narrative is that shame is bad. However, a more complex understanding of shame, as elucidated by leading scholars on shame in psychoanalysis and criminology, asks those initially deterred to examine how shame might also be a moral force. In this introduction, I contextualize how shame has been differently experienced as bad for Indigenous Peoples and settler-Canadians, and why each experience of shame merits further research in relation to reconciliation. This paper explores the moral character of shame as a way to open the discussion of shame as an ethical matter. In the first section, I offer my critique of reconciliation, as it is currently conceived, which fails to address settler-Canadian responsibility and dismantle settler shame, a significant barrier to achieving any vision of meaningful reconciliation. In the second section, I introduce the “productive” underside of shame and look at how “reintegrative shame” could be a meaningful way for settler-Canadians to engage with the collective shame of Canada’s current and historical injustices. I thus reposition shame as an ethical matter that can open up space to incite an ethical response to the collective shame rather than generate more shame. Through this repositioning, I attempt to make a case for why schooling is an important space for the vision of ethical thinking required to address the limitations of reconciliation.

Shame is pervasive, yet uniquely one’s own. Shame is an affect or emotion that is considered to be a painful one, inducing desires “to cover, to veil, to hide” (Wurmser, 1981, p. 29). It is described by self-evaluation, and is linked to identity construction because it shapes behaviours and understandings of

worth (Tangney & Dearing, 2003). Shame becomes a transitive verb in its forms “shamed, shames or shaming,” used to describe the forceful action of driving someone into shame. Where shame is the name of the feeling, ashamed is the feeling of shame itself. I can be ashamed because I did something bad (this is behavioural and is the state at which shame can be productive, because behaviour can be amended), but shame can become an internalized belief, appearing fixed and permanent. Internalized shame is the belief that “I am ashamed because *I am* bad” (this is my identity — this is how others see me, real or imagined). Repeated exposure to shame can lead to internalization, where shame becomes a part of one’s identity, thus greatly affecting interpersonal relations (Harper & Hoopes, 1990; Kaufman, 1985), and interfering with our “ability to form empathic connections with others” (Tangney, Stuewig, & Mashek, 2007, p. 350).

The negative functions of shame are generally known, but Silvan Tomkins (1962) discerned that the catalyst of shame is care, noting that shame “operates only after interest or enjoyment has been activated,” (p. 134) and therefore paving the path in which psychoanalysts theorize shame. It is the relationship between shame and care that illuminates “our intense attachment to the world, our desire to be connected with others, and the knowledge that, as merely human, we will sometimes fail in our attempts to maintain those connections” (Probyn, 2005, p. 14). Gershen Kaufman (1985) added that shame originates interpersonally, that “whenever someone becomes significant to us, whenever another’s caring, respect or valuing matters, the possibility of feeling shame emerges” (p. 17). Whatever shames a person will be of great interest to them, and when that interest is “ripped away” (Probyn, 2005, p. xii) or threatened, shame can emerge.

Colonial settlers took control over Indigenous children in Residential Schooling by shaming all Indigenous beliefs and behaviours. Even the assimilation attempts were a form of shaming. Assimilation is the process by which a minority group is integrated into the dominant culture. Integration is a nice way of putting it. United, joined, combined — these words imply some form of choice in the decision to come together. “Indigenous” will always be seen as “lesser than” in the colonial mind. From the colonial standpoint, being Indigenous was not only considered “sinful” because of cultural activities or perceived ignorance to the “white-man’s superior ways”.¹ Worse, the sin was seen as innate — it was their identity — a colonial belief that became internalized by individuals and institutionalized through schooling. I see the institutionalization of shame as a process of internalizing shame, and inherent in the colonial project. Because shame has yet to be taken up explicitly, publicly and historically as an inherent part of schooling, the negative impacts of shame continue to be seen as an individual experience, and consequently suggests an individual responsibility for healing, which disregards the social responsibility of settler-Canadians.

It is certain that “Canada’s treatment of Aboriginal Peoples in general, and its creation and operation of Residential Schools in particular, was and continues to be nothing short of genocide” (Chrisjohn et al. 1997, pp. 59-60). For generations, many settler-Canadians descended into unrestrained displays of hostility toward the “Other” so it is no surprise that many Canadians feel ashamed of this history, and others feel shame in the present moment for recognizing the impact of this history on present day issues (Taylor, 2018). Unfortunately, “the paradox about shame,” Tomkins determined, “is that there is shame about shame” (as cited in Kaufman, 1985, p. xxvii). This feeling is so unbearable that it makes us want to disappear, it remains hidden, deep within ourselves. The history of Residential Schooling is consistently referred to as the legacy of shame (TRC, 2017a) that plagues Canada and one of the most shameful chapters (“New Heritage Minute,” 2016) in the nation’s history. Therefore, I contend that shame can actually prevent settlers from engaging with social injustices, and I assert that the Calls to Action (TRC, 2017d) to redress the legacy of Canada’s colonial history are also calls for settler-Canadians to respond to the related collective shame — a seemingly unbearable task.

An encounter with shame is uniquely one’s own and it varies in degrees of discomfort and pain, but all human beings share “the capacity for feeling it” (Probyn, 2005, p. xiv). While we experience it individually, we can share a collective responsibility to acknowledge it and take just action. Elspeth Probyn (2005) aptly cautions us that “when we deny shame or ignore it, we lose a crucial opportunity to reflect on what makes us different and the same” and therefore, “we must use shame to re-evaluate how we are positioned in relation to the past and to rethink how we wish to live in proximity to others” (p. xiv). In this paper, I take up the issue of settler shame because there is an urgent need for the majority of the population to dismantle shame’s cringing withdrawal to hide in order to carry out the Calls to Action (TRC, 2017d) that are required for any vision of reconciliation to transpire. Non-Indigenous Canadians have an ethical responsibility to confront this ongoing historical shame. I propose education as a potential site for working *through* shame.

John Bradshaw (1988) argued that “shaming has always been an integral part of the school system...Even though most modern forms of education no longer use dunce caps there are powerful sources of toxic shame still operating in the school system” (p. 61); the Residential School system in Canada is no exception. Schools present several opportunities for young people to experience shame, including the possibility of shame as an innate possibility in the learning process itself. When someone achieves a learning objective, learning is a positive experience, however challenging. When someone perceives themselves as failing (actual or feared), they can experience shame. If schooling is a place where shame can arise and sometimes is exerted deliberately (though perhaps not consciously), what would it mean to conceive of education as a site for working through shame? If shame is a significant barrier to reconciliation efforts, how

might beginning a journey of understanding shame through schooling help Canadian society move towards a more meaningful reconciliation?

REFLECTIONS ON RECONCILIATION IN RESPONSE TO THE INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL HISTORY

If the history of Indian Residential Schools in Canada is generally understood as shameful, what have been the public responses to this national shame? The Government of Canada responded by working to advance reconciliation to restore Indigenous-settler relations through formal channels. The Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF) and the TRC are two examples of government-funded initiatives. The TRC (2015b) recognized, "Silence in the face of residential school harms [as] an appropriate response for many Indigenous peoples," and that "We must enlarge the space for respectful silence in journeying towards reconciliation, particularly for Survivors who regard this as key to healing" (p. 18). The Commission collected statements of truth to generate an official record of the Indian Residential School legacy, promote public awareness, and create a recommendations report (TRC, 2017b) before holding its closing ceremonies in Ottawa on June 3, 2015. Publications of the *Final Report* (TRC, 2017c) and *Calls to Action* (TRC, 2017d) documents followed.

The *Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume One: Summary* claims "the Commission created space for exploring the meanings and concepts of reconciliation" (TRC, 2015b, p. 18). The TRC (2015b) mandate defines reconciliation as

an ongoing individual and collective process [of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships that requires] commitment from all those affected including First Nations, Inuit and Métis former Indian Residential School (IRS) students, their families, communities, religious entities, former school employees, government and the people of Canada. (p. 16)

In one arena, government initiatives act as fact-finding bodies that focus on "legal truths" for arbitration purposes as in a court of law. In another, they fund community-based healing events to support Survivors, their families, and communities in sharing narrative truths that acknowledge the violence and crimes that occurred. These government responses are one necessary form of reconciliation: they help to create a public record of the previously ignored history and silenced voices. Nevertheless, the governments that established the Indian Residential School system in the first place created these initiatives, exposing them to inevitable public scrutiny and criticism by both Indigenous and settler-Canadians.

Skeptics of truth and reconciliation commissions in their general forms, agree with Michael Ignatieff's (1996) assessment that the function of commissions "is simply to purify the argument, to narrow the range of permissible lies" (p. 113) but they are unable to reach healing. In her analysis of amnesties

and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder vocabulary in post-conflict states, Claire Moon (2009) asserted that new governments used this discourse to construct their legitimacy in legislating social healing, which led to individualizing social problems. National crimes cannot be reduced to the individual afflictions experienced by victims of governments whose policies were intended to harm them. This is an example of how a focus on social rebuilding can fail to account for the correction of other power inequalities that can impede reconciliation. Moon (2009) cautions us that reconciliation can reconstruct narratives in terms of “re-conciliation” to a former cordial state, which ignores truth telling in its inclusion of inharmonious histories. Reconciliation, then, implies that once upon a time, both parties lived in peace and harmony. This belief of reconciliation is a way settler-Canadians can deflect shame and uphold the narrative that historical injustice is in the past or that it was not all bad, therefore creating a “reality” that reflects only the positive or only what settler-Canadians are comfortable with.

In the context of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Indian Residential Schools in Canada, Roland Chrisjohn and Tanya Wasacase (2009) discussed the rhetoric of reconciliation and the problems with its application. Illuminating a misdirect in the application of the term, the authors asserted that “before two parties can *reconcile*, they must, at some earlier time, have been *conciled*” (Chrisjohn & Wasacase, 2009, p. 221). This simply is not the case with Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations in Canada’s history. Canada has consistently established and maintained policies that have worked towards the termination of Indigenous people, and the reactions of Indigenous peoples to those policies have been resistance. Chrisjohn and Wasacase (2009) continue to expose the duplicity:

The job of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, like that of a good marital therapist or (more appropriately in this instance) a concerned priest, is to mend the rift, heal the rift, and make two conjoin again as one. It is an interesting fable, but there is more history to *Star Wars* than to this scenario. The (ex)termination of Indigenous peoples and their unsundered pre-existing title to land and resources is central to the political economy of Canada; was, is, and will continue to be. (p. 222)

The authors challenge the reciprocal action between reconciliation in theory, however well-intentioned, and what it is actually capable of doing through government channels. What is the commission designed to do, and is this the best way to accomplish such intentions? Indigenous scholars are also asking a similar question. Taiaiake Alfred (2009) is equally critical of the commission’s merit and reconciliation itself as a concept: he saw “reconciliation as an emasculating concept, weak-kneed and easily accepting of half-hearted measures of a notion of justice that does nothing to help Indigenous peoples regain their dignity and strength” (p. 181). Arguing for restitution over reconciliation, he explained:

If we do not shift away from the pacifying discourse of reconciliation and begin to reframe people's perceptions of the problem so that it is not a question of how to reconcile with colonialism that faces us but instead how to use restitution as the first step towards creating justice and a moral society, we will be advancing colonialism, not decolonization (Alfred, 2009, p. 182).

The stark differences in Indigenous and settler-Canadian governance and social organization models, drove Alfred to question the logic of whether these two cultures are reconcilable in the first place. Adding to this disjuncture is the lack of defining reconciliation as a process, outcome, or goal. If the outcome of reconciliation is marked by better future relationships, how will we get there? Conceptions of reconciliation vary across scopes; what counts as reconciliation in one context might not count in another.

Reconciling relationships through art, education, and land

Critics of reconciliation argue that reconciliation could offer a more hopeful future for Indigenous-settler relations, but not as the government has imagined and enacted them thus far. Reconciliation is taking shape in many different forms across the country, and while some are legal, formal pursuits of redress, not all efforts are government initiated. Artist Jamie Black created The RE-Dress Project (2010-ongoing, <http://www.theredressproject.org/>) as an aesthetic response to the 1,000+ missing and murdered Indigenous woman and girls across Canada. Adrian Stimson contributed an installation of three windows filled with feathers and an infirmary bed from Old Sun Residential School in Gleichen, Alberta, titled *Sick and Tired* (2004) to the exhibit *Witnesses: Art and Canada's Indian Residential Schools* (Turner, 2013). Valerie Galley (2016) is pursuing reconciliation goals through the revitalization of Indigenous languages, which the federal government has failed to recognize and support. In a recent article for *Policy Options*, she wrote:

Today, there is no statutory legislation or overarching federal policy to recognize and revitalize Indigenous languages in Canada. The excellent work undertaken to revitalize Indigenous languages is being done entirely by community champions and language activists. Organizations such as the First Peoples Cultural Council of British Columbia, the Kahnawake Cultural Centre and the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation are some of the Indigenous organizations that have developed and perfected language revitalization efforts, which are resulting in fluency in these languages. (para. 6)

In the recently released TRC's *Calls to Action* (TRC, 2017d), there are recommendations that speak to language revitalization (#14 is for an Aboriginal languages act and #15 is for an Aboriginal languages commissioner), but there is no legislative requirement to fund the revitalization of Indigenous languages, however the Trudeau Government has been drafting the Indigenous Languages Act since 2016, and is anticipated to be introduced with fall 2018 legislation (Meyer, 2018). More emphasis is given to "education" in its broadest characterization as a form of reconciliation, as determined by the TRC.

The TRC (2015c) expressed an emphatic belief in the potential for education to “remedy the gaps in historical knowledge that perpetuate ignorance and racism” and that “Educating Canadians for reconciliation involves not only schools and post-secondary institutions but also dialogue forums and public history institutions such as museums and archives” (p. 117). In the past, history curricula have primarily focused on nation building, and textbooks neglected to provide context for the understanding of how Indigenous Peoples have been portrayed through the decades. Prior to 1970, Indigenous peoples were portrayed as savage warriors or irrelevant onlookers. The 1980s showed Indigenous peoples in a more positive light but emphasized poverty and social dysfunction without any understanding as to how these conditions emerged, and the 1990s showed Indigenous peoples as protestors advocating for rights. However, Canadians lacked an understanding of the significance of rights in relation to assimilation in the education system (TRC, 2015c). Because we fail to acknowledge the past about the residential school system in our textbooks, tourist guides, and cultural consumption, we uphold the reality that most citizens say they know nothing about it. For the last two years, I have confronted this reality with my group of teacher candidates in a foundations course that takes up the issue of omitted histories in our school curricula. Student responses to the coursework reveal their own shock, sadness, rage, and shame about: 1) the long history of abuse and; 2) their late, little or no knowledge about this history. It is clear that reconciliation means different things to different parties. What it means to individuals is an important avenue schools could explore — what does it mean to you, your family, or your communities?

Following the TRC mandates, I believe curriculum-specific materials and public education campaigns can inform Canadians about the history and ongoing impacts of Residential Schools. While these represent important steps towards reconciliation, they are just one of many steps to take. Educating Canadians about history and the social impacts of past colonialism as “content” is one thing, but where is the curriculum on critical thinking, on considerations of the systemic inequalities of power and *current* colonial issues and practices impeding visions of reconciliation? Where is the curriculum on learning how to express the feelings (of shame) that arise when one learns about these histories, or current injustices and what are their responsibilities to them? Adding to the significance of these omissions, as Paulette Regan (2010) articulated in the results of their research on how people learn about historical injustices, most non-Indigenous people “resist the notion that violence lies at the core of Indigenous-settler relations” (p. 21). After all, resistance or outright denial is easier to enact than confront the shameful reality that Indigenous-settler relations are more often than not, characterized by everyday violence. Only a year after the establishment of Canada’s TRC and the Formal Apology for Indian Residential Schools from Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Harper blatantly denied the existence of a history of colonialism in Canada in a speech at the

2009 G20 summit, thus again perpetuating the “dominant-culture version of history,” and yet another example of “the more subtle forms of violence that permeate everyday Indigenous-settler relations” (Regan, 2010, p. 10).

Waziyatawin (2009) and Alfred (2009) are focusing on land restoration and reparations as a fundamental step towards reconciliation. Settler society has prevented Indigenous Peoples from living on their own lands, therefore “true” reconciliation must involve the return of land. Waziyatawin (2009) assures us that there are ways to conceive of this that do not involve current settlers renouncing their individual property rights; the return of all Crown lands currently designated as federal, or national lands is a given, but it is a contested issue. Suggesting we must also return to the land, Celia Haig-Brown (2009) posed the question, “Whose traditional land are you on?” (p. 4) to her readers and to her students as a way of prompting Canadians to decolonize their lives. Looking to the land shows us the many ways we come to be part of a colonized country. She explained:

We have stories of how we came to be here: we need to trace those stories and our place in the process of colonization — whether it is as entrepreneur, refugee, Indigenous person, adventurer, or any one of a myriad of possibilities. None of the players in these stories escape the effects of colonization, but in each case, one takes the time to think through what these effects are and what their significance is. (p. 14)

Discussion around reconciliation in Canada has focused on remedying the previous omissions of history by sharing Survivors’ stories and formally acknowledging the history and impact of Residential Schools. A less common but blatant omission is the “erasure of Indigenous peoples from the lands,” (Haig-Brown, 2009, p. 16) and so reconciliation with the land is an important step towards redress for all Canadians. Reconciling with land requires one to think about both the land from which one comes, but also “the land and original people of the place where one arrives” (Haig-Brown, 2009, p. 16).

Another topic of reconciliation is Indigenous-settler relationships. However, if we describe reconciliation as an individual process of restoring harmony with oneself and a collective process “that brings adversaries to rebuild peaceful relations and a new future together” (Chambers, 2009, p. 286), we are ignoring the complexities of social and environment interactions, only to re-inscribe simple binaries that will further impede reconciliation attempts (Haig-Brown, 2009). As the critics of reconciliation have demonstrated, the discourse of reconciliation *will* look like in Canada, citizens might be inclined to question what it looks like in its current, imagined and future forms and what are their roles or possible roles in moving towards it might be. It is more complicated than restoring peaceful relationships, which some would argue is an illusion anyway. Regan (2010) called for settlers to “unsettle” (p. 11) the settler within, which is realized in part by matching human faces to the truths and impacts

of colonization, and also by dismantling the settler privilege that has upheld dominant narratives. Natalie A. Chambers (2009) adds to this idea of unsettling:

For settler peoples and their descendants to authentically participate and respond to the call for truth and reconciliation, we need to look, in all honesty, at our complicity in maintaining the status quo – the hegemonic colonial paradigms that historically, and in the present day, perpetrate unequal power relationships through the systemic privileging of settler peoples' knowledge, languages, and values. (p. 286)

When previously unknown or deliberately ignored facts about the histories of Indian Residential Schools become connected to human faces, we are confronted with a powerful and uncomfortable history of shame and otherness. This encounter with shame can lead to more shame, particularly settler shame that induces desires to look away rather than drive aspirations to reconcile.

UNSETTLING SETTLER SHAME TO RE-IMAGINE RECONCILIATION

In Regan's (2010) book, *Unsettling the Settler Within*, unsettling is a process that requires Canadians to unlearn our "historical amnesia" (p. 6) and settler narratives that ignore Canadian colonialism or portray it as a benevolent paternalistic attempt to assimilate Indigenous children into mainstream Canadian culture. To "unsettle" our comfortable assumptions about the past, Regan (2010) argued, is to confront colonial violence as part of our own settler truth telling and make space for counter-narratives as told by Indigenous peoples themselves. Unsettling calls for a re-imagining of reconciliation, "as a decolonizing place of encounter between settlers and Indigenous people" (p. 12). How do we begin to access this space of "settler truth telling" that Regan advocates for, and what would a caring curriculum look like; one that does not perpetuate settler shame, but rather addresses shame as an ethical way to begin to unpack the issue of colonial violence?

The dominant story of shame points to colonialism as an "Indian" problem, which places responsibility for reconciliation and healing in the body and being of Indigenous peoples. Regan (2010) wrote that it is easy for settler-Canadians to "judge the apparent inability of Native people to rise above" the conditions of poverty, abuse, addiction, and high rates of youth suicide and "easy to think that we know what is best for them" (p. 11). This singular focus on the Other, they say, "prevents us from acknowledging our own need to decolonize" (p. 11). In the film *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* (Christou, Chin-Yee, & Barnaby, 2013), Mi'gmaq director Jeff Barnaby unsettles his audience with his overt use of violence. My interpretation of this unsettling is to confront viewers and unsettle potential feelings of shame. The film is about Aila, an Indigenous heroine, and her vengeance against the abusive Indian Agent, Popper, who regulates the community and St. Dymphna's Residential School.² When Aila's mother's drawings spring to life in an animated sequence, *Rhymes* takes up the issue of "acknowledging the settler need to decolonize" and confronts its

non-Indigenous audience to encounter the decolonizing struggle of their own discomfort and shame.

The story is about the Wolf and the Mushrooms. Wolf is the settler, who either directly or indirectly colonized the land to its demise. Symbolized by the residential school, the greedy wolf devours Mi'gmaq children, who are mushrooms. With little left to devour and horrified by the seismic wake of destruction left by his actions, Wolf is so consumed with his shame that he eats himself, tail to stomach to heart, extinguishing himself entirely. In this story, I see Barnaby asking his non-Indigenous viewers the following question: if we find a way to acknowledge our shame, how can we act on it responsibly? Settler shame is different from settler denial in that the realization that the Residential School system and lingering experiences are indeed a “settler” problem (not an Indian one) carries such an unsettling discomfort that it can even produce more shame. Rather than *shaming* settlers or Canadian actors and the role they have played in colonizing the land, what would it mean to reconceive of reconciliation as an encounter with shame that advances into care? How might shame unsettle the moral settler to incite the move towards responsibility?

The potential to unsettle the “dominant-culture version of history” (Regan, 2010, p. 6) as it has been presented in education is significant, and it begins with including Indigenous counter narratives, like *Rhymes*, in the curriculum. Just as Barnaby hopes to unsettle his audience by reconnecting historical truths to human experience, so too can educators work towards unsettling shame to foster caring students. Barnaby uses extreme violence in the film to waken the discomfort that so many Canadians would rather conceal or deny, and in doing so, he risks shaming his non-Indigenous viewers further. This is the risk inherent in working with one’s shame, and also what makes it a potentially affective curricular intensity. Shame unsettles us. With this discomfort, the possibility to retreat into more shame emerges, but so too does the possibility to advance care. Educators cannot know which possibility will emerge, but if it means the reimagining of reconciliation that could advance into a deeper reflection on care and responsibility, it is a risk worth taking. The risk of working with shame parallels what many teachers know but are prevented from talking about — that real education always involves risk. As asserted by Gert Biesta (2015) in his book, *The Beautiful Risk of Education*, the real risk lies in ignoring the risk in education, for any attempt to know robs both teacher and student of the true experience of curriculum as always in the making. Furthermore, the inclusion of unsettling pedagogies in curriculum is necessary for decolonizing and transformative learning, which can inspire new ethical charges. If we wish to unsettle our comfortable assumptions about the past and open our hearts to a reconciliation that is to confront colonial violence as part of our own settler truth telling, we must risk interacting differently with shame.

Reintegrative shame and the move towards ethical responsibility

Following psychoanalysis scholars who theorized that shame can be productive because it can only exist with the initial expression of care or interest, I reassert shame as an ethical, rather than a behavioural, matter that can teach moral individuals how to think about their responsibility towards others. In order to understand how we might engage with the registering of care, education scholar Leon Benade (2015) makes the distinction between “stigmatic shame” and “reintegrative shame”: stigmatic shaming is the act of belittling, discouraging and marginalizing the offender, whereby “shaming [is] actively *done to* the offender” (p. 667, original emphasis). His definition of shaming and use of the word “offender” to describe a person who violated a social norm is in reference to reintegrative shame theory, as theorized by criminologist Jonathon Braithwaite. Stigmatic shaming has a long history of practice in Western societies, most overtly used in the justice system: provoking an emotional response of shame to the extent an individual will not commit further crimes (Braithwaite, 1989). The key is that shame “maintains the structure of society [through conformity] by ensuring that the internalized [dominant] norms and rules operate through the consciences of the individuals” and culture impacts individuals through the fear of rejection from the dominant group (Leitch, 1999, p. 5). Braithwaite (2000) asserted that most contemporary Western societies believe in learning by fear of punishment to refrain from misbehaving (ranging from criminality to minor wrongdoings). This belief is certainly supported by and learned in schooling, where the history of shame-based classroom management techniques is shown to depend on consequences, as opposed to other devices like positive reinforcement (see British Public School and Indian Residential School histories (in chronological order): i.e., Gathorne-Hardy, 1977; Miller, 1996; Chrisjohn, Young & Maraun, 1997; Milloy, 1999; Schaverien, 2015).

In contrast, Braithwaite (2000) hypothesized that societies would have lower crime rates if the belief about shame in relation to crime encourages the offender to desist (reintegrative), as opposed to stigmatizing the shameful of crime, which would only increase recidivism. Simply put, “societies that are forgiving and respectful while taking crime seriously have low crime rates; societies that degrade and humiliate criminals have higher crime rates” (p. 242). Reintegrative shaming, then, “is a process *done with* the offender (and several others),” (Benade, 2015, p. 667, emphasis in original) engaging in discussions about the violation with the victim(s) and community, where dialogue works to restore relationships. Braithwaite (2000) hypothesized that “it is exposure early in our lives to the idea of the shameful of murder that puts it off the deliberative agenda of responsible citizens” (p. 244). If there is an offence, he sees justice as consisting of community engagement and a problem-solving environment, rather than punishment. Through communication, participation, and respectful dialogue, the offender comes to understand the consequences of the offence, and hears and understands the disapproval of the community. This leads the offender(s) to make reparation with the community, which includes

reconciling with the victim(s) (Braithwaite, 1989). I acknowledge that drawing on criminology scholarship while maintaining a commitment to decolonization might appear to be contrary, especially given the over-representation of Indigenous people in Canada's criminal justice system. However, I advocate using reintegrative shame as a concept with settler-Canadians, because shame, I assert, is itself a colonial concept (Bewes, 2011). Given the longstanding history of shaming as a punitive practice in colonial schooling, what does it mean for education to hold both the TRC and criminology as sources of insight for understanding ongoing histories of shame and colonization? What are youth's ethical responsibilities to these histories once they come to know of them, and how will they cope with their own shame if it arises?

Benade (2015) detected that for this concept of restorative practice to be effective, "both the victim and the offender must overcome their shame so that they can engage with each other and the offending" (p. 663). Following a similar notion, Ahmed & Braithwaite (2012) examined children's capacity to manage emotions, particularly shame, furthering Benade's (2015) claim that "Emotional management is seen to be critical to the later development and exercise of social responsibility, and may be assisted by restorative justice programmes at school" (p. 663). The key to shame management, he reasoned, is to

reflect a form of social responsibility as it contributes to community restoration by repairing ruptured social relationships. The notion of shaming and acknowledgement of harm thus assumes norms of acceptable community behaviour, attitudes and relationships, and is therefore also an ethical matter. (Benade, 2015, p. 661)

Shame can manifest when we feel that we are not worthy or when we feel that we are not living up to certain norms (upheld by self and others). Because we are motivated to behave in coherence with our ethical ideal, can shame be the impetus for behavioural change? Can the desire to move closer to our ethical ideal help us consider the harmed other(s) in a caring way?

From an ethical perspective, the Other³ is a necessary condition for moral interaction. Likewise, shame hinges on the role of the Other as audience — it originates interpersonally and "it is ultimately linked to a desire for reciprocity;" thus, it is a medium of relationality (Werry & O'Gorman, 2007, p. 218). Drawing on Sartre's discussion of shame, Sandra Bartky (2012) flushed out the role of the Other in the process of internalizing shame:

Once an actual Other has revealed my object-character to me, I can become an object for myself; I can come to see myself as I might be seen by another, caught in the shameful act. Hence, I can succeed in being vulgar all alone: In such a situation, the Other before whom I am ashamed is only — myself (p. 85).

That is, once we have experienced shame in the presence of another individual, we can relive that experience over and over again by becoming our own audience. This is when shame becomes toxic, but you will recall that not all shame is internalized. If we are able to develop our capacity for healthy self-evaluation,

we might be able to 1) cope more effectively with shame in proactive defense against internalization, and 2) mobilize the adaptive functions of shame that help us grow and develop in our relations to others.

It is shame's relational quality and dependence on the Other(s) that makes it an interesting emotion to explore potential moral dimensions of behaviour, particularly as one encounters difference. How difference registers with one's ethical ideal will influence one's interpersonal relationships. After all, it is otherness (relationality – living in relation to others) that characterizes our social life. Where difference appears as a nonreciprocal relationship, Levinas and Cohen (1987) wrote, "The Other as Other is not only an alter ego: the Other is what I myself am not. The Other is this, not because of the Other's character, or physiognomy, or psychology, but because of the Other's very alterity" (p. 83).

Shame can generate as a personal failure in the eyes of the Other, where Other is not only to a singular other, but to all that is Other to oneself, or that which is outside of one's ideals of self. If we saw it to be our moral responsibility to examine how we relate to otherness, as Michael L. Morgan (2008) proposed, this standard would be a norm upheld by the reintegrative shaming process. I see this responsibility in Levinasian terms as an obligation, and yet Sharon Todd (2009) proclaimed you cannot teach responsibility. She explained:

the obligation we have toward others is not something one learns as a piece of knowledge. Responsibility is a response to the command of the other; it is a prescriptive to a prescriptive. In no way can responsibility be instilled or inculcated in a direct fashion and thus it cannot be systemized into any curricula or teacher manual. But this is not to say that it has no bearing upon education (p. 76).

I see shame as a pedagogical encounter that when responded to through dialogue with others, can provoke the kind of thinking and feeling in students for self that extends toward a responsibility *for* others. The process of reintegrative shaming *done with* the offender and wider community inherently includes not only the restoration of self, but also a restoration of otherness. Working with shame to incite ethical responsibility for one's (inter)actions with others is embedded in the natural desire to move closer to the standards upheld by the community; thus, shame might motivate our need to reconcile.

Shame might signal that we are in need of others to help us understand the source of our shame. Translated to the school setting, taking up shame in education goes beyond analyzing or altering the potential of shame embedded in the learning process itself. Shame is not to be avoided, but rather, understood and mobilized into something more productive than internalization. As a major influence in creating environments for the internalization of shame, how is schooling developing the capacity for shame in young people? External mechanisms of assessment, grading, selection, and discipline can promote

shaming in schooling, but whether a reintegrative shaming environment is fostered or not, students will still encounter shame. Young people will still face internal factors, such as deeply ingrained or partly unconscious feelings of low self-worth within the school setting. Why not take up shame as a curricular intensity that moves one to think and feel, as part of the curriculum? If not in school, where else will young people learn how to manage shame in more productive ways?

CONCLUSION

My approach to shame in this paper draws on, but also diverges from, the two main disciplines that have taken up shame and schooling as a mode of inquiry—psychoanalysis and criminology. Psychoanalysts are doing meaningful work in studying the effects of shame, particularly the long-term effects related to boarding school, and criminologists are seeking to advance understandings of the role of shame in reducing recidivism rates in criminal offenders. Adding to this literature, I call for the collection of youth's interpretations of shame as they learn to process their shameful feelings for themselves, particularly in the school setting. Rather than ask youth if they can recall early educational experiences of feeling ashamed, which have already happened, let us ask if they can recall experiences of feeling ashamed (both in and outside of school) that are happening. Further research will help to corroborate whether an understanding of shame can expand to include one of care, and whether and to what end, this transformation can impact perceptions of worth and future relationships differently. Insight into this topic of shame, reconciliation, and schooling has significant implications for not only education as an ethical and pedagogical site of working through shame, but also for research on education as a form of reconciliation in Canada. Where settler-Canadians and Indigenous peoples experience shame differently, how might the process of reintegrative shaming aid restorative justice practices in school? Indigenous Survivors, their families and communities have taken the public stage to share their stories and the impacts of the Indian Residential School system. Reintegrative shaming demands that the settler take the stage *with* victims in order to engage in discussions about the moral offending and restore relationships. Can settlers move from internalized shame to reintegrative shame? I believe they can because Indigenous people have been asserting their agency through acts of resistance towards shame since the beginning and continue to demonstrate their resiliency in this way. By developing a capacity for coping with shame, and maybe even mobilizing it from a younger age, future generations might become more resilient adults, maybe even more caring and responsible human beings. While there is no guarantee that an inclusion of reintegrative shame will achieve such lofty aspirations, the prospect of shame as a curricular intensity is a hopeful one, and certainly stands to interrupt the role of schools in perpetuating a cycle of shaming experiences.

NOTES

1. The terms in scare quotes have been employed here to mirror the language used at the time, which are not dissimilar to those of Sir John A. Macdonald (the first Prime Minister of Canada, who served during the time the federal government approved the first residential schools in the country). For an example, see http://eco.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.9_07186_1_2/369?r=0&s=1. The language he used when speaking about Indigenous Peoples and culture is difficult to accept today.
2. St. Dymphna is the patron saint of mental health.
3. I refer to Other as the conceptual “Other” as it is used in sociology and other disciplines to indicate the concept of individuals or a group that is different from or unknown to the “subject” group. The concept of the Other highlights how many societies create a sense of belonging, identity and social status by constructing social categories as binary opposites.

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TEACHING HISTORY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION: THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF NARRATIVITY, TEMPORALITY, AND IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT. This paper argues that history educators and teachers are uniquely implicated in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action through their responsibility to teach Indigenous and Canadian history, including the injustices of settler colonialism. After examining the politics of Canada's ongoing truth and reconciliation process, this paper articulates three conceptual challenges for history education in pursuit of reconciliation: narrativity, temporality, and identity. This paper concludes by suggesting possible pedagogical opportunities for each of these challenges, taking into consideration a historical thinking approach to teaching and learning now embedded in most provincial and territorial curricula.

ENSEIGNER L'HISTOIRE POUR LA VÉRITÉ ET LA RÉCONCILIATION: DÉFIS ET OPPORTUNITÉS DE LA NARRATIVITÉ, LA TEMPORALITÉ ET L'IDENTITÉ

RÉSUMÉ. Cet article soutient que les professeurs et enseignants en histoire jouent un rôle unique dans la mise en œuvre des appels à l'action formulés dans le cadre de la Commission de vérité et réconciliation du Canada en enseignant l'histoire autochtone et canadienne ainsi que les injustices perpétrées par le colonialisme. Suite à l'analyse des politiques canadiennes en termes de processus de vérité et réconciliation, nous abordons dans cet article trois défis conceptuels de l'enseignement de l'histoire dans la recherche de la réconciliation : la narrativité, la temporalité et l'identité. Nous terminons l'article en présentant des pistes pédagogiques potentielles pour chacun de ces défis, prenant en considération une approche de pensée historique en lien avec l'enseignement et l'apprentissage maintenant intégrée dans la plupart des programmes provinciaux et territoriaux.

Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has brought the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians to the forefront of public discourse, yet reconciliation remains a contested concept and an unclear process. Recent controversies suggest that many Canadians misunderstand or fail to acknowledge the history and lasting structures of settler colonialism in Canada. Senator Lynn Beyak's comments, which referred to

Indian Residential Schools as “well intentioned,” and the TRC *Final Report* (Truth and Reconciliation Commission [TRC], 2015a) as a disappointment because it “didn’t focus on the good” (Tasker, 2017, para. 12), are just one example of the failure of many Canadians to acknowledge and accept what the TRC (2015a) has called a “conscious policy of cultural genocide” (p. 55). Dangerous misconceptions, such as the idea that residential schools weren’t that bad, or that Canada only engaged in benevolent forms of colonialism, continue to be prevalent. At the same time, reconciliation has been adopted as a state supported process with public institutions, including schools, asked to do the work of reframing or repairing the damaged relationship between Indigenous peoples and settler Canadians.

Within this context, educators have been positioned to play a significant role in helping students and the public come to terms with Canada’s colonial past and how it shapes our present. As the Chair of the TRC, Justice Murray Sinclair, has stated, “education is what got us into this mess...but education is the key to reconciliation” (as cited in Walters, 2015). The high expectations of this proposition present several challenges for teachers and teacher educators. As Simon (2013) has argued, the ability of schools to reimagine the nation’s identity and historical narrative “may be more a matter of symbolic optics than social transformation” (p. 135). Regardless, the educational policy and curricular changes brought about by the work of the TRC have created a space for new pedagogical possibilities. However, before reforms are implemented, I argue that educators must be able to answer questions such as: What is reconciliation? How am I implicated in the legacy of settler colonialism in Canada? And, what role (if any) might educators have in movements of Indigenous resurgence?

History educators and teachers have a crucial and unique role to play in answering these questions and building a new understanding of Canada’s history. Yet, teaching Canada’s contentious past is no easy task and Canadian history education becomes more complex as state-mandated reconciliation efforts become an embedded principle of provincial and territorial curriculum. The recommendations of the TRC, as outlined by their 94 Calls to Action, have significant implications for K-12 public education. The 63rd Call to Action from the TRC (2015b) challenges the Council of Ministers of Education to “maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues” (p. 7) which includes:

- i. Developing and implementing K-12 curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
- ii. Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.
- iii. Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.
- iv. Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above. (TRC, 2015b, p. 7)

In responding to this Call to Action, history and social studies teachers must engage with both the challenges of how to effectively teach about Indian Residential Schools and Indigenous history, but also the ability to think critically about their position in relation to ongoing injustices of colonialism in Canada.

In this position paper, I explore the implications of the TRC's findings and the 94 Calls to Action for history and social studies education, with an aim of providing teachers and history educators with a clearer conception of the challenges and possibilities facing them. Further, I also challenge researchers in Canadian history education to engage with relevant concepts and ideas emerging from settler colonial studies and critical Indigenous studies, which have been under addressed in the field. In addressing an audience of teachers, researchers, and teacher educators, I bring to bear my experiences as a history teacher, history education researcher, and my identity as a white, settler-Canadian. I begin from the starting point that all Canadians are implicated in settler colonialism and that non-Indigenous Canadians must take this implication seriously by considering what responsibilities they share in a reconciliation process.

To better understand the complexities facing history teachers in the wake of the TRC findings, I articulate three major tensions or challenges revolving around conceptions of narrativity, temporality, and identity, concepts that I introduce here and explain in more depth further on. First, historical narratives found in schools tend to promote a nation building story that is often at odds with re-framing the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. Second, current discourse around settler colonialism in Canada tends to temporally place injustice solely in the distant past; helping students and teachers identify and recognize continuities of colonialism in our present structures cannot be ignored. Third, history education positioned in pursuit of reconciliation requires more than just teaching and learning about unjust actions, events and structures; it must compel teachers and students to reflect on their identities and consider what it would mean to reframe their ethical orientation to past, present and future, or develop what Simon (2005) has called "a renewed historical consciousness" (p. 94). Finally, teaching history for reconciliation requires all non-Indigenous teachers, such as myself, to engage seriously with how they might benefit from settler colonialism and how this relates to whom, how, and what they teach.

CONTEXTUALIZING RECONCILIATION

The concept of reconciliation in Canada is contentious and there is no agreed upon framework or definition. Critical Indigenous scholarship has made clear that reconciliation is not a neutral concept, nor is it accepted as a path to Indigenous sovereignty or resurgence (Alfred, 2009; Coulthard, 2014; Turner, 2013;). Glen Coulthard (2014) has argued that in the Canadian context, the term reconciliation has been invoked in three distinct ways: first, as a process

of Indigenous self-healing after experiencing symbolic or structural violence; second, as a process restoring damaged relationships between individuals and groups; and third, as a process of bringing divergent entities into accord or harmony. It is this third invocation that Turner (2013) has argued is of particular importance when thinking about the incompatibility of Indigenous sovereignty and the nation-state's desire for reconciliation. Turner has suggested the true meaning of reconciliation for the Canadian state is to render Indigenous claims to self-determination consistent with the supremacy of nation state sovereignty. In other words, reconciliation emphasizes Indigenous self-healing while controlling Indigenous nationhood, knowledge and systems of law in a "unilateral assertion of Canadian sovereignty" (Turner, 2013, p. 108). Both Coulthard and Turner agree that reconciliation, in its current form, is a deeply problematic term and process. Understanding the inherent problems of reconciliation is essential for teachers grappling with how to teach for, and about, reconciliation, as it becomes an embedded aspect of Canadian public education. I now turn my attention to the historical and political context of reconciliation in Canada, to explore the framework's origins, and how Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are discussing, deliberating, and acting on the findings of the TRC.

Transitional justice and reconciliation

Internationally, reconciliation processes have been understood using the discourse of "transitional justice," a concept that has been applied to post-conflict states undergoing state wide reforms in the wake of historical injustices such as genocide, mass violence, and human rights violations. The term historical injustice is broadly understood as representing harmful or violent historical acts, events, or structures that have ongoing legacies for people, groups, or communities. As Barkan (2000) has argued, "historical injustices are continuous injustices and should not be treated as bygones" (p. 344). Transitional justice theory is commonly used when examining efforts to redress historical injustices in post conflict societies, such as in South Africa at the end of Apartheid. Engaging with research in this field (Barkan, 2000; Neuman & Thompson, 2015) helps us consider how Canada's truth and reconciliation process compares to other nations' attempts at transitional justice.

Recent government policies and discourse have moved Canada towards reimagining itself as a nation undergoing transitional justice. Government actions such as official apologies, common experience payments, and commemorative efforts embolden this idea (Henderson & Wakeham, 2013; Matsunaga, 2016; Nagy, 2013). In a *Globe and Mail* editorial, Minister of Justice Wilson-Raybould was quoted as saying that Canada's reconciliation process could learn from South Africa as it offers "many important insights" and "many parallels" ("Editorial," 2017, para. 3). While this may be true, such claims raise serious questions over what the nature of Canada's "transition" is. Using the discourse of transitional justice has faced much criticism from Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars

alike, who have argued that there are major flaws in drawing comparisons between South Africa's reconciliation process and Indigenous demands for decolonization and sovereignty. Unlike South Africa there has been no major break or rupture in the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state. Coulthard (2014) has contended that because Canada lacks a clear and formal transition, "state sanctioned approaches to reconciliation must ideologically manufacture such a transition by allocating the abuses of settler colonization to the dustbins of history, and/or purposely disentangle processes of reconciliation from questions of settlercoloniality [sic] as such" (p. 108).

Short (2005) also has argued that in settler states, such as Canada and Australia, where there has been no restructuring of state institutions, or meaningful shift to Indigenous sovereignty, a reconciliation framework faces serious challenges in building common ground. Matsunaga (2016) echoed this claim by stating that by applying a "one size fits all model" of transitional justice, the Government of Canada intends reconciliation to only be about changing attitudes and beliefs, and in doing so avoids and silences conversations about greater structural change. In other words, transitional justice in Canada has become loosely understood as a process of reconciling relationships and changing perceptions, not about land, sovereignty, and justice. Despite this underlying problem, processes attempting reconciliation are underway and demand closer attention from educators.

Approaches to reconciliation in Canada

The differing approaches to reconciliation reveal that there is no consensus on what it is, or how to best proceed. Denis and Bailey (2016) have identified two major approaches to reconciliation in Canada which they refer to as the "mainstream / TRC vision" and the "radical" vision. They argue that mainstream Indigenous organizations, such as the Assembly of First Nations and Reconciliation Canada, support the framework and recommendations of the TRC for reform-based changes in pursuit of "local level healing and relationship building" (p. 140). This approach is often the most visible and accessible form of reconciliation, promoted by mainstream media outlets and government policy.

A more radical vision has emerged from scholars and activists affiliated with the University of Victoria's Indigenous Governance Program such as Alfred (2009), Cornthassel (2012), and Coulthard (2014), who have argued that in its current form, reconciliation is a form of pacification, assimilation, and ultimately re-colonization of Indigenous peoples and nations. The argument made is that reconciliation is asking Indigenous people to reconcile with colonialism, rather than to dismantle it. These scholars have advocated that reconciliation cannot take place without the restitution of land and assertion of Indigenous sovereignty, or in other words, decolonization. The contested notion of "decolonization" has been explored by Tuck and Yang (2012) who

have argued that using the term “decolonization” vaguely, as a reference to the process of changing beliefs and attitudes, or as a metaphor, is a set of evasions or “‘settler moves to innocence,’ that problematically attempt to reconcile settler guilt and complicity, and rescue settler futurity” (p. 1). In this view, reconciliation should not be mistaken for, or made synonymous with, decolonization, as it fails to address Indigenous sovereignty and functions instead to maintain the nation state.

These differing perspectives on reconciliation and decolonization offer very different implications for what reconciliation might mean, or can mean, for schools. Engaging teachers and students in this conversation may complicate how we teach and learn about Indigenous / non-Indigenous relations, but it becomes necessary considering the task at hand. Understanding the current attitudes and perceptions of non-Indigenous or settler Canadians also has value. Denis and Bailey (2016) conducted in-depth interviews with 40 non-Indigenous Canadians who attended at least one TRC event and found that these “engaged settler Canadians” (p. 144) were far more likely to support the “mainstream” version of reconciliation as promoted by the TRC including “relationship building and supporting Indigenous healing and cultural revitalization” (p. 144). It is important to note that the participants were described by the authors as “engaged,” and the perspectives of most Canadians, who did not attend any TRC events, is not fully clear. Furthermore, a recent report by Reconciliation Canada (2017) provided the results of an online survey using representative samples of Indigenous ($n = 521$) and non-Indigenous Canadians ($n = 1,529$). This study found that 62% of Indigenous respondents felt there is a great need for reconciliation in comparison with 46% of non-Indigenous Canadians. In response to a question about the need to develop cultural and historical awareness programs for K-12 curriculum, 66% of Indigenous respondents strongly supported such programs, compared with 41% of non-Indigenous respondents. This initial study shows that settler Canadians lag behind Indigenous peoples in their desire to see change. The report maintains a positive outlook, concluding that there is an alignment of views on the importance of reconciliation and a window of opportunity to make change (Reconciliation Canada, 2017). Despite this hopeful stance, significant problems remain in implementing the TRC’s recommendations.

A commonly identified problem that could be addressed through history education is Canadians’ lack of historical knowledge about Indigenous history and settler colonialism. The idea that Canadians know little of their shared colonial past is not new. In 1996, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) “suggested that Canadians are simply unaware of the history...and that there is little understanding of the origins and evolution of the relationship” (Simon, 2005, p. 94). Dion (2009) argued that “Canadians ‘refuse to know’ that the racism that fueled colonization sprang from a system that benefits all non-Aboriginal people, not just European settlers of long ago” (p. 57). Dion

contended that this refusal to know is an obstacle to confronting and challenging the racist past and how it lives on in the national consciousness. Dion further argued that settler Canadians often claim status as “perfect strangers,” imagining they know little to nothing of Indigenous people, history, or culture. The denial or erasure of settler colonialism in the nation’s collective memory was most powerfully demonstrated by former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, in his claim at a G-20 Conference in 2009 that “Canada also has no history of colonialism” (“Really Harper,” 2009, para. 1). Challenging the myth of benevolent colonialism, or non-existent colonialism, necessitates a concerted effort from K-12 educators, with specific attention from history teachers.

CHALLENGES FOR HISTORY EDUCATION

History education in schools offers an important and essential opportunity to challenge misconceptions and denials of Canada’s past and present. Seixas (2012) has argued that “formal state sponsored history education represents a crucial engagement with historical consciousness” (p. 126). I use the term historical consciousness here as partially explained by Seixas (2017), as “a subject’s historically situated orientation to the temporal world...expressed through narratives that embody a moral orientation” (p. 595). In this understanding, developing the historical consciousness of students involves addressing their relationship to past, present, and future, through a process of thinking historically in K-12 classrooms. Seixas (2012) explained that although extracurricular narratives impact students’ understandings of history, the nature of public schooling offers an important and unique opportunity for young people to engage with the past in a meaningful way.

The past decade has seen a significant shift in the way history is taught in schools in Canada. A historical thinking approach, as articulated by Seixas (2017) and promoted by the Historical Thinking Project (www.historicalthinking.ca), has been widely adopted across provincial and territorial social studies and history curricula. Historical thinking is based upon a set of procedural concepts derived from the academic discipline of history, such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, and historical significance. They are designed to help students understand what it means to “do history” and in the process, develop their critical historical literacy. Seixas (2017) has argued that the historical thinking concepts are generative for teaching and learning because “they function, rather, as problems, tensions, or difficulties that demand comprehension, negotiation and, ultimately, an accommodation that is never a complete solution” (p. 5). Students’ ability to think historically is then understood as their ability to demonstrate competence in negotiating productive solutions to the problems tied to the procedural concepts. This model, which is supported by a large and growing body of international research in history education, provides a valuable set of concepts for teaching about historical injustice and reconciliation in Canada.

The goals of K-12 history education have long been oriented towards cultivating national identity and cohesion, creating active and engaged citizens, and developing critical and disciplinary thinking competency. While these objectives, and their relative emphasis, are ever evolving, the desire for a usable past in state mandated history education is undeniable. Calls for history education to play a role in reconciliation carry on that tradition. In most provinces and territories reconciliation is now being added as a core component of the curriculum. For example, Ontario's former Premier Kathleen Wynne stated in a 2016 speech on Ontario's commitment to reconciliation that the government was working "to ensure our education curriculum teaches every child in Ontario the truth about our past and what it means for all of us today" (Office of the Premier, 2016, para. 18). As increased attention is placed on teaching the history of Indigenous / non-Indigenous relations, there is an urgency for history educators to consider the conceptual challenges not addressed in policy and curricular changes. Intertwining the field of history education with the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is a complex and contentious process. To better understand this complexity, I outline three significant problem areas that history educators must attend to, when engaging with the concepts of reconciliation, decolonization, and historical injustice. While these challenges are significant and remain unresolved, I argue that there is space, a need, and possibilities for history education to teach for reconciliation.

Narrativity

While the term narrativity has multiple meanings and a complex history of usage, I adopt it here to explore the ways in which historical narratives are constructed, reified, and challenged in schools, and in public memory. Telling, teaching, and learning the story, or stories, of Canada will always be contested by competing ideologies and identities. Recently, media commentators and historians criticized the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's (CBC) 2017 history miniseries, *Canada: The Story of Us*, citing misrepresentation, inaccuracies, and ignored narratives, forcing the CBC to apologize (Peritz, 2017). History in schools has long undergone the same scrutiny and criticism in its portrayal of different peoples, communities, nations, and identities. The inclusion of previously ignored racialized, ethnic, cultural, and gendered groups into the Canadian grand narrative has seen debate in the so called "history wars," although these multiple narratives have entered the curriculum and textbooks across the country with general acceptance and support from history teachers (Osborne, 2011). This is not to uncritically accept that a more inclusive approach is adequate, or not problematic itself. As Stanley (2006) has argued, a progress-oriented Eurocentric narrative, designed to support the nation state, remains dominant in schools despite a greater inclusion of previously ignored or marginalized identities.

New curricula, textbooks, and resources have imagined a more inclusive narrative arc, but for the most part the Canadian story still follows a progressive nation building structure. A more complex representation of Indigenous peoples and perspectives has been included, but this remains problematic for several reasons, including ongoing misrepresentations and failures to address notions of Indigenous sovereignty and resurgence that are not tied to the nation state. History education research has demonstrated that representations of Indigenous peoples in Canadian curriculum and textbooks have historically been presented in limited and problematic ways. Clark (2007) has identified categories of textbook depictions of Indigenous peoples across time, which included spectator, savage, exotic, problem, uniquely spiritual, protestor, and invisible. This othering of Indigenous peoples outside of the dominant national narrative is one challenge. Second, as Lévesque (2016) has argued, integrating Indigenous perspectives into the Canadian narrative is more than a matter of inclusion, it provides a unique challenge: “While most teachers – and publishers – are in the process of integrating more stories *about* Indigenous peoples, there is less consensus on *how* and *why* we should teach these” (para. 1). In other words, increasing the amount of historical content relating to Indigenous peoples in the prescribed curriculum does not consider why embedding this content within narrative structures designed to promote and maintain the nation state is problematic. In response to these problems, I pose the question: how should Canadian historical narratives, and their representations in curricula and texts, be revised or rethought with reconciliation in mind?

Temporality

I use the term temporality to engage in a conversation about how we understand our present relation to historical events and structures that have ongoing legacies. An engagement with temporality helps make clear what traditions and structures we see ourselves as part of, and which ones we do not. Political discourse around reconciliation has often detached and placed colonial injustice solely in the past. As former Prime Minister Harper stated in the official government apology for the Residential Schools, this was “a sad chapter in our history” (Government of Canada, 2010, para. 1). This way of talking about historical injustice reveals one way Canadians think about the history of colonialism in Canada. Harper’s statement, much echoed in the media, temporally frames settler colonialism as an event of the past, one that is disconnected from our present society and current institutions. A discourse that temporalizes historical injustice as a “dark part” or “sad chapter” in our history works to deny or silence both broader historical narratives and ongoing injustices. In this view, reconciliation becomes a contradictory process that both acknowledges collective guilt and an ongoing debt to survivors, while at the same time sharply isolating the injustice and abuse as an error of a previous time emerging from an unconnected set of institutions and structures.

This is not to argue that attitudes and perceptions have not changed. The Indigenous-settler relationship has evolved, but the discourse around reconciliation often denies continuities in settler colonialism that have not gone away. The denial of colonial continuities in Canadian institutions and society more generally presents a major barrier in rethinking and reframing relationships. This denial works to imagine historical injustice as a set of discrete historical events that can be redressed in the present through apology and financial compensation. As Wolfe (2006) has argued, “settler colonialism is not an event, it is a structure” (p. 388). If, as Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars continue to argue, colonization is not over, but an ongoing structural relationship, then there are important implications for how we teach and learn about Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations. Addressing this will require teachers and students to think about the continuities of colonialism, as well as the changes. To this challenge, I extend Coulthard’s (2014) argument, to pose the question: How can teachers avoid allocating the abuses of settler colonialism to the dustbins of history?

Identity

Asking non-Indigenous educators, such as myself, to consider how they are attached to, or implicated in, settler colonialism is another tension within this process. This is partly because, as Dion (2007) has discussed, there is a paralysis of fear pervading non-Indigenous teachers when it comes to teaching about Indigenous peoples: “The fear of offending, the fear of introducing controversial subject material, the fear of introducing content that challenges students’ understanding of the dominant stories of Canadian history” (p. 331). Helping non-Indigenous teachers and students reflect on, and rethink, how their identities, both individual and collective, are connected to Canada’s history of colonialism is essential. For non-Indigenous Canadians, this is not to promote a sense of guilt, but to help them understand the ways in which they benefit from colonialism, despite perhaps only living in Canada for a short period of time. Regan (2010) referred to this process in her book, *Unsettling the Settler Within*, arguing that for reconciliation to occur, it is settler Canadians who must confront their mentalities, attitudes, and lack of understanding of Indigenous history and ways of knowing. Asking a teacher or students to confront their identity and its implications has potential to be difficult, uncomfortable, and risky; yet, it remains an essential component of developing a stronger sense of how historical injustice informs the present. Thus, I ask, how might teachers and students ethically reflect on their individual and collective identities and how they are implicated in the colonial project?

OPPORTUNITIES FOR HISTORY EDUCATION

As increased attention and time is being placed on teaching about the historical and contemporary relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians, I argue that there is urgency for an increase in specific research relating to history education and reconciliation in settler colonial states. Cole (2007) has argued that history education deserves an important seat at the table in any state that is undergoing a process of transitional justice, claiming it can enhance critical thinking, empathy skills, and provide students with the “ability to disagree about interpretations of the past and their implications for present social issues” (p. 126). Pursuing these learning outcomes is both challenging and essential. Much existing research has focused on the possibilities for, and impact of, history education in post-conflict societies emerging out of civil war, human rights abuses, or genocide (Cole, 2007; Paulson, 2015). Relatively few studies exist on history teaching as a reconciliatory or reparative act in ongoing settler colonial states such as Canada, with a few notable exceptions (Cannon, 2018; Dion, 2007; Donald, 2009; Ng-A-Fook & Milne, 2014; Tupper, 2014). Research that brings the historical thinking approach and scholarship in Indigenous education into conversation has begun to emerge, though as McGregor (2017) notes there has been little overlap between the two fields. Further investigation is needed on how existing movements in history education, such as historical thinking, might be mobilized or adapted in relation to the challenges made by the TRC’s Calls to Action.

The existing state of research and practice in history and social studies education in Canada provides fertile ground for this conversation. As Seixas (2017) has noted, most provinces and territories in Canada have now shifted their history and social studies curricula to focus on disciplinary concepts of historical thinking, while simultaneously incorporating more Indigenous content. In considering how history educators might respond to the challenges I have identified, the historical thinking concepts provide an important entry point and model for engaging with historical injustice. However, I do acknowledge that merging historical thinking with Indigenous ways of knowing presents additional epistemological issues that have previously been raised (Seixas, 2012; McGregor, 2017), though I do not address these concerns here. I also consider research that has explored the teaching of historical trauma and “critical pedagogies of remembrance” (Simon, 2005; 2013; Zembylas & Bekerman, 2008), as they also present pedagogical tools for engaging with the Calls to Action and the challenges they present. For each problem area I have already defined, I suggest potential avenues for history educators considering how to teach and think about historical injustice and reconciliation.

(Counter) narrative opportunities

Constructing and imagining historical narratives that encompass reconciliation presents one of the most important challenges for history teachers. Deciding how we teach and learn the story of colonization matters greatly. As discussed earlier, narratives in Canadian school history have attempted to include and integrate multiple perspectives while still maintaining the importance of a multicultural and inclusive national identity. However, all forms of nation building narratives present a problem for some visions of reconciliation. If, as some Indigenous scholars have argued, the true goal of reconciliation should be for Indigenous peoples to be sovereign from the nation of Canada, then a nation building narrative is inadequate, no matter how inclusive it attempts to be. As Nagy (2013) contended, “reconciliation through decolonization is decidedly not a Canadian nation building project” (p. 20). This is extended by Alfred (2009), who has argued that reconciliation should be about dismantling Indigenous ties to the Canadian state entirely, alongside the restitution of land. In this view, any approach that celebrates multiple or interconnected Canadian narratives is insufficient. Further, Short (2005) has argued,

tying justice for indigenous people to a nation building framework effectively places a (colonial) ceiling on indigenous aspirations and incorporating Aboriginality into the cultural fabric of a settler nation inherently weakens Indigenous claims based on their traditional separate-ness from settler culture. (p. 274)

This is also potentially true for constructing a new narrative for Canadian history usable in K-12 classrooms that attempts to incorporate Indigenous content, voices, and ways of knowing.

Narrative possibilities that attempt to challenge the nation building story have been imagined. Anderson (2017) has developed a framework that identifies three potential narrative structures for history education, including a progressive Eurocentric master narrative, a multicultural, progressive-mosaic master narrative, and a counter narrative that examines multiple identities and challenges conceptions of nationalism and nation building. Anderson defined her third “counter national narrative” as not a template, but rather an approach that captures “competing, omitted, or silenced national narratives through parallel or alternative forms of Canadian identity” (p. 21). This approach aims to address decolonization and include Indigenous epistemologies by focusing on ways to counter the dominant or master narratives that rely on nation building and Enlightenment notions of progress. Marker (2011) has also argued that the commonly used narrative frameworks are inadequate, stating that “for Indigenous peoples, the history of Canada as a nation state is a colonizing way of thinking about people, relationships, and land” (p. 110). Instead of centering a narrative on the nation state, Marker and Anderson have suggested that all stories might focus on our relationship with the land.

Using such a counter narrative approach to teach Indigenous perspectives and voices has potential, though care must be taken not to reify Indigenous peoples as *other* or assume that there is one preordained Indigenous counter narrative that can be mobilized by all teachers. Alfred and Cornthassel (2005) remind us that there is a danger in an age of state sanctioned reconciliation that colonialism becomes the only story of Indigenous peoples. Finding a way to address multiple overlapping and competing narratives remains a significant challenge for history teachers. Students might work to reconstruct the history of Canada through a counter narrative from a perspective that purposefully aims to de-center the narrative of the nation state, yet the narrative of the development of Canada over time should not be outright rejected. It is clear that questions remain over how narrative might be operationalized in history classrooms in a way that is clear and meaningful to students and teachers.

The historical thinking concepts provide one way for teachers and students to address Indigenous narratives, perspectives, and voices. For example, students might explore causes and consequences of the Indian Residential School system that would encourage them to examine the underlying structural context of settler colonialism or examine primary source evidence such as the Bryce Report (Bryce, 1907) or oral testimonies of survivors. More broadly, the historical thinking concept of historical significance asks us to consider whose stories we tell and why they get told. Students could use this problem “to articulate the narratives that may be legitimately constructed around a particular event, resonating in a larger community” (Seixas, 2017, p. 598). By opening up history to be understood as a human constructed narrative, not a set list of facts, historical thinking provides an essential starting place for challenging existing narratives that may exclude, erase, or silence Indigenous voices. These approaches could help develop a broader understanding of the narrative of settler colonialism or seek to challenge it with counter narratives from Indigenous perspectives. Finally, as Simon (2013) reminds us, reimagining or renegotiating historical narratives requires “asking non-Aboriginal Canadians where we fit into Aboriginal history, not just where Aboriginal history fits into the history of Canada” (p. 136).

Temporality: Moving injustice out of the past

A second key challenge for Canadian history teachers and students is understanding how historical injustices, such as the Indian Residential Schools, are placed into historical time, or temporalized. Helping students make sense of settler colonialism requires an examination of how it has changed over time, but also a close attention to continuities that remain. This is fundamentally a question that can be addressed using the historical thinking concept of “continuity and change.” Colonial violence or injustice towards Indigenous peoples should not be understood as a discrete event in history that can be allocated to a sad or dark chapter in the textbook. Challenging teachers and

students to think about how colonialism exists today is key. In order to do this, teachers must understand settler colonialism in Canada as a structure that has multiple intertwined elements, of which Indian Residential Schools were one part. Recognizing the changes since European colonization began is important, but so is identifying continuities about how and why colonial structures remain in place today. This helps challenge the idea that reconciliation is about reconciling the past, not the present. As Nagy (2013) has argued, “to locate the residential schools legacy in contemporary structures and policies sends a message to Canadians that residential schools cannot be compartmentalized from the Indigenous-settler relationship as a whole” (p. 19).

Likewise, examining the continuities and changes of the reconciliation process can also help students understand the changing relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. Further to this, continuity and change can be used as an entry point to how time is organized and visualized in the discipline of history. As Marker (2011) has pointed out, many Indigenous people utilize circular conceptions of time rather than a western linear understanding. Providing different perspectives on time and its organization helps challenge the notion of ongoing progress that is often tied to national narratives in the history curriculum.

Identity and the ethical dimension

This final area of opportunity is perhaps the most difficult and contested. Whether history education should even play a role in moral questions and engage in affective pedagogies remains a point of debate. Seixas’ (2017) conception of “the ethical dimension of history” provides one entry point into this discussion. In this concept, students engage with the problem of how we should best negotiate and respond to “past crimes and injustices whose legacies — either benefits or deficits — we live with today” (p. 602). Asking students to identify legacies of settler colonialism in contemporary society through this lens is one approach teachers might take. In examining contemporary legacies of historical injustice, it is impossible to avoid addressing individual and collective identities. This raises important concerns about how students and teachers might respond to the difficult knowledge of their implication in the reconciliation process.

This concern is taken up by the work of Simon (2005, 2013), which focused on the possibilities of collective remembering in the face of historical trauma. Simon (2005) argued that listening to and remembering testimonial accounts of historical trauma has the potential to shift public memory “with the possibility of shifting the stories non-Aboriginals tell of themselves and hence possibly renewing the terms on which to build a redefined relationship” (p. 95). Zembylas and Bekerman (2008) explored this notion further, envisioning “a pedagogy of dangerous memories,” arguing that the challenge is “whether educators can use past historical traumas to re-socialize children in a manner that

is not locked into predefined scripts and collective memories” (p. 126). This exposure to testimony of historical trauma as an affective pedagogical move is positioned as helping students work through what Britzman (1998) called “difficult knowledge” (p. 117). For Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, what constitutes difficult knowledge when learning about settler colonialism will be specific to different individuals and communities.

What is clear in both a historical thinking approach or a critical pedagogy of remembrance approach is that the identities of students and teachers are at play. In confronting injustice such as the Indian Residential Schools, Nagy (2013) has argued that “settlers need to recognize the direct, historical relationship between settler privilege and Indigenous relative deprivation. The unsettling of privilege ties further into the decolonization of identity” (p. 60). Regan (2010) also argued that by challenging myths of national identity such as Canada’s peacemaker status or the belief in benevolent colonization, settler Canadians can question how their identity is implicated in reconciliation. Engaging in ethical questions around identity and the legacy of trauma and injustice is no easy task for history teachers and students, yet I argue it is essential in engaging in the work of reconciliation.

CONCLUSION

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Final Report and 94 Calls to Action present unique challenges and opportunities for history teachers. As new policy begins to impact teaching practice, several important questions around how to best teach Canada’s contentious past with reconciliation in mind need to be addressed. Reconciliation has been put into action in hopeful and positive ways, but more research is needed to better understand how schools are responding to these reforms, to better support teachers, teacher educators, curriculum designers, and most importantly, students. At the same time as the TRC’s report has been disseminated, history and social studies curricula in most provinces and territories has recently seen significant revisions with historical thinking becoming a core component (Seixas, 2017). This development provides teachers and students conceptual tools and approaches to thinking about historical injustice, settler colonialism, Indian Residential Schools, and the politics and process of reconciliation. Though problems do exist for applying historical thinking to Indigenous history, this model in combination with Indigenous perspectives, voices, and ways of knowing presents a way for all teachers to engage with the topic of reconciliation and historical injustice, rather than shying away from it.

This paper argues there are three conceptual challenges to teaching for and about reconciliation and historical injustice: narrativity, temporality, and identity. These challenges require history teachers and educators to engage with how Indigenous perspectives intersect or challenge other narratives, how to teach

about past and present colonial injustice, and how our collective identities are implicated in the ethical dimensions of the past. Addressing these challenges will be complicated; the possibilities I suggest require a significant amount of time and consideration from teachers. A limitation of the suggestions I make here is that teachers, who are responding to the Calls to Action and political reforms to education, must be provided with adequate support and resources to engage these ideas, in an education system that is often already overstretched. Additionally, I do not fully address the different ways of knowing that Indigenous educators might bring to these issues, both inside and outside the school history classroom. In any conversation on reconciliation, Indigenous voices must be involved. Despite these constraints and shortcomings, I maintain, throughout this article, that history and social studies teachers are uniquely positioned to play an important role in responding to the educational challenges set by the TRC's Calls to Action. History educators in teacher education programs also have a responsibility to ensure that Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers alike feel prepared to engage with their students about the history of Indigenous peoples on this land, Canada's history of colonialism, and the possibilities and constraints of truth and reconciliation.

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RELATIONAL ENCOUNTERS WITH INDIGENOUS LITERATURES

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ABSTRACT. This paper makes a case for attending to the resurgence of Indigenous literary arts in taking up the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action in teacher education. I argue that Indigenous literary arts can help to foster relational understandings between readers and Indigenous communities: stories have the capacity to open up processes of relationship and responsibility. To develop this argument, I draw upon perspectives from teachers and from Indigenous writers, with whom I shared conversations on the question of why Indigenous literatures matter. Through an interpretive process of interweaving these perspectives, this article shows that Indigenous literatures can inspire and motivate educators to take on this work and learning despite its attendant challenges.

À LA RENCONTRE DES LITTÉRATURES AUTOCHTONES

RÉSUMÉ. Cet article met en relief l'importance de s'intéresser au regain de la littérature autochtone pour répondre aux appels à l'action formulés dans le cadre de la Commission de vérité et réconciliation du Canada en matière de formation des enseignants. Je soutiens que la littérature autochtone peut favoriser l'émergence d'une compréhension relationnelle entre les lecteurs et les communautés autochtones. En effet, les histoires ont la capacité d'enclencher des processus de relations et de responsabilité. Pour développer ce raisonnement, je me suis basée sur les points de vue d'enseignants et d'écrivains autochtones avec lesquels j'ai discuté des raisons qui expliquent l'importance des littératures autochtones. Entremêlant ces perspectives grâce à un exercice interprétatif, cet article montre que les littératures autochtones peuvent inspirer et motiver les enseignants à relever le défi et apprendre, malgré les défis qui leur sont associés.

I begin this paper with the premise that the arts have the power to both propel and lure people into the work entailed in responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC, 2015a) *Calls to Action*. When it comes to the work of supporting teachers in developing their capacities to engage with Indigenous perspectives, I turn in particular to Indigenous

literary arts. Literary texts can catalyze an important kind of encounter for non-Indigenous readers: namely, an encounter between readers and their own relationships with Indigenous peoples. I will set out the parameters of these considerations, but first it is important that I introduce myself and what I bring to this writing.

I am a woman of Métis and European ancestry and a member of the Métis Nation of Alberta. To this writing, I bring my background as a scholar of Indigenous literary arts and of Indigenous education, as well as my background in secondary school teaching in Canada. My own perspectives on teacher education are informed by the interdisciplinary work I do around fostering better understandings and relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples through the arts. In thinking through what it means to respond to the *Final Report* (TRC, 2015b) and *Calls* (TRC, 2015a), I bring an ongoing focus on Indigenous resurgence work as a guiding framework. Taking up the Calls to Action of the TRC is work that can be done under a number of guiding conceptual frameworks — decolonization, reconciliation, or Indigenousization, for instance. In engaging with Indigenous literary arts, I find it particularly generative to look at community resurgence.

Indigenous artists are engaging in resurgent creative processes that are storying their communities in significant ways. Looking to scholars like Simpson (2008, 2011), I understand resurgence as the regeneration of Indigenous ways of being and knowing from strong roots into strong futures, in defiance of colonial forms of erasure. Understanding the resurgence of Indigenous cultural expression in this light, I see Indigenous artistic practices as acts of resistance, survival, renewal, and celebration that are vital to the self-determination of Indigenous communities. The arts can be a powerful site of sovereignty, as people work to understand and represent themselves in their communities. But what happens when Indigenous arts are brought into classroom spaces that are not exclusively Indigenous, or largely non-Indigenous? How might non-Indigenous teachers understand and relate to these artistic and community processes? Such sites are where Indigenous resurgence work is brought into relationship with non-Indigenous learning. It becomes important to ask how respectful relationships can be fostered between resurgent Indigeneity and non-Indigenous Canadians.

In this article, I draw upon conversations I shared with school teachers and with Indigenous writers in 2015 in order to examine varied perspectives on Indigenous literatures. Through these examinations, I show how the literary arts can enable the work of the TRC's (2015a) *Calls to Action*. Specifically, I argue that Indigenous literatures are able to call readers to relate and to respond — to draw them into a sense of relationship with and responsibility to Indigenous communities. These relational understandings have the potential to foster more respectful relationships between non-Indigenous Canadians and resurgent Indigenous peoples.

In what follows, I first outline some of the context surrounding teacher education and Indigenous perspectives — the particular setting in which I consider responding to the TRC's Calls to Action. Next, I explain the interpretive framework that shapes how I understand my conversations with writers and teachers. Following that, I introduce the conversations themselves, after which the next few sections develop the main body of my argument by interweaving perspectives that teachers and writers shared with me in our conversations. Finally, I offer a brief conclusion that sums up my arguments on Indigenous literatures and relational encounters.

CONTEXTS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

When I use the term “teacher education” and refer to Indigenous education in teacher education contexts, I write from my professional experience, which involves two primary tasks. One is working with pre-service teachers (Bachelor of Education students) to develop their ability to work respectfully with Indigenous people and perspectives in their future school-based teaching. The overwhelming majority of these students are non-Indigenous. The second is working with diverse graduate students (in Master's- or Doctoral-level programs) to develop their ability to interweave Indigenous perspectives into their ongoing professional practice or academic work — many (but not all) of these students are teachers or educational leaders. In this paper, I am primarily thinking of the former kind of teacher education — that of future classroom teachers — but will occasionally address broader educational settings.

Prior scholarship has investigated the complexities of bringing non-Indigenous teachers to learn about Indigenous histories, perspectives, cultures, and peoples, as well as the contexts and social issues that affect the relationships between Indigenous peoples / perspectives and formal education in Canada today. For instance, this kind of teacher education involves examining Indigenous histories, foregrounding the validity of Indigenous knowledge systems, confronting the scope of colonialism in Canada, and outlining how dynamics of racism and inequity continue to impact Indigenous peoples (Battiste, 2013; Dion, 2009; Smith, 2012; TRC 2015a). This learning can be complex and emotionally charged. Similarly, Indigenous education work involves bringing future teachers to question their own positioning and degrees of privilege, as well as engaging them in ways of knowing and doing that will enable them to build respectful relationships with Indigenous people (Goulet & Goulet, 2014; St. Denis, 2007; Tanaka, 2016). This work is complex, even when focused solely on how to weave Indigenous perspectives into teaching practice in meaningful ways (Dion, 2009; Kanu, 2011). Recognizing these complexities, I seek to understand what I, as a teacher educator, can do to connect with the vital work of Indigenous artists in order to enact my responsibility both to my students and to Indigenous communities.

INTERPRETIVE WEAVINGS

This paper emerges from a broader research project in which I held conversations with seven Indigenous writers and seven teachers who teach Indigenous literatures in secondary schools in Calgary. I am grateful to them for working with me to generate understandings around Indigenous literatures, communities, and learning. I spent about an hour with each person, one-on-one, in shared conversation. Our conversations were open and flexible, so that each teacher / writer could share what s/he felt was important. However, all conversations, in their own ways, took up the study's primary research question: how do Indigenous literatures matter to the resurgence of healthy Indigenous communities? In this article, I look, in particular, at perspectives on how Indigenous literatures can inspire relational understandings when they are taken up in classroom spaces, opening up a sense of social responsibility (Episkenew, 2002).

Methodologically and conceptually, I shaped my research through *métissage* as an Indigenous and hermeneutic research sensibility (Donald, 2012). Founded upon "ethical relationality" (Donald, 2012, p. 543), *métissage* involves bringing together perspectives or methodological approaches from different sources, or even different worldviews or cultures, by weaving them together in a way that respects how they are distinct. I understood my process of interpretation as one of conceptual and textual weaving. Consequently, as I worked through the transcription and interpretation of each conversation, I drew out figurative *threads* — significant understandings — shared by each writer and teacher. Through *métissage*, I generated understanding by weaving together those threads, considering them in relation to each other. As I did so, I would weave in my own understandings, as well as understandings drawn from critical scholarship, seeking to understand deeply what writers and teachers had shared.

Understanding conversations, then, did not mean simplifying them or distilling them down to their basic ingredients or themes. Rather, it meant recognizing the complexities of what people had shared and retaining the intricate relationality of the interwoven threads. It meant dwelling with people's shared and divergent perspectives and listening for what they asked of me. In this interpretive process, I created four connected *weavings*, each one addressing a related set of understandings tied to my central question. This article, arising from one of those four woven lengths, considers how Indigenous literatures can draw readers into relationship with Indigenous perspectives and communities.

In what comes next, I will share perspectives on this topic from the teachers and writers who agreed to share conversations with me for my study. When I quote from their interviews, I will simply refer to them by name. The following table provides a list noting who is a teacher or writer. Within each box, they are listed in the order in which we met, between April and November of 2015. This list is presented to help clarify who is speaking when I quote from

our conversations; however, I must highlight the serious oversimplifications it entails. For instance, Indigenous / non-Indigenous identities are too complex to represent in this table, and teacher / writer roles overlap more than is suggested here. For instance, every writer I interviewed also happened to have an educational background of some kind, either past or present, ranging from school or post-secondary teaching to community-oriented educational organizations. I provide this simple table to help readers to move through the analyses that follow.

TABLE 1. *Participating teachers and writers*

Teachers	Writers
Angela Varila	Richard Van Camp
Rachel Baker	Jesse Archibald-Barber
Alice Curtis	David Robertson
Robin Green	Katherena Vermette
Suzette Williams	Warren Cariou;
Francesca Rawson	Sharron Proulx-Turner
Danny Bill	Daniel Justice

NOTE. Pseudonyms are used to keep teachers' identities confidential.

INTERPRETATIONS — WEAVING THE THREADS

The following section of this paper begins with a textual weaving of quotations from writers and teachers as a way into the understandings explored there. This textual practice, juxtaposing perspectives from multiple sources, is a material form of *métissage* that opens up relational understandings of participants' perspectives (Chambers et al., 2008). It enacts and represents the process of weaving on the page. The sequencing of the threads in these weavings anticipates the ordering of ideas within the interpretive sections that follow. This textual weaving at the beginning of the next section demonstrates the significance of teachers' and writers' voices and the polyvocality of this project, as these voices interact on the page without interference, mediation, or imposition of the voice of the researcher (Kovach, 2009). While this article is largely composed in my voice and shaped through my own thinking, this textual *métissage* is a reminder that relationality is at the heart of my process: I am listening to others as I work to understand.

Weaving perspectives

It's a process of learning what I know, and my own bias, and then figuring out what they know, and where can we meet and then talk about the text? (Alice)

I could never stand reading from a textbook in school. Never got excited for it. But if you give stuff that they'll engage with...that's half the battle. And then they're learning...they get curious about the history, and then they want to read more about it. (David)

If you see it in a specific way that a story can present to you, it can really foster a kind of empathy that all the technical knowledge is never going to provide to you. (Warren)

It's far more intimate in that sense. It's something that really gets inside you, inside your body and your consciousness...it's an internal process. (Jesse)

Sometimes fiction is as close as we can possibly get to understanding somebody who's very unlike ourselves or who has experiences that we haven't had. So I think it can be a very powerful way for students to get deeper into thinking about things. (Rachel)

You have to go through it through empathy...Empathy allows you to understand how it's related to you – whether it's because we're all human, whether it's because we live in this place called Canada...whatever connection we have. (Katherena)

When you go into the book room, Aboriginal literature just isn't there to choose from. And so to ask my school to spend money on a class set of books is just a really big ask. (Suzette)

Almost all Native writers, from the most humble to the most famous, will take the time to talk to you. You just have to reach out. (Sharron)

They are being called to carry that bundle. It was never a call that was meant to be easy...but if they don't carry that bundle, it won't be lighter for those who come after. (Daniel)

I think the greatest learning I've had is, well, talking with people of course, and meeting with Elders and the [Indigenous education resource team], who have been really a great resource. (Robin)

I just remember walking around with my daughter, just feeling this incredible sense of – awe, and humility, that we were being welcomed into this. And – literature does the same thing. It really does. And I just got really emotional. (Francesca)

If there are Aboriginal Studies teachers or people specifically using this kind of literature in other schools it would be cool to be able to get together. (Angela)

...talking about who you are in relation to where we're sitting right now... (Danny)

The literature that our mentors, our trailbreakers, are working on right now, the stuff that they're coming out with – staggering. Absolutely staggering in brilliance. (Richard)

Calling readers into relationships

Knowing that building understanding is already a relational process is important to understanding the capacity of literatures to call people into relationships. From Gadamer (1960/2004) I understand that “meanings, too, are like a space in which things are related to one another” (p. 431) – that understanding is generated in relation with something, people coming together around a topic, within a topography (Jardine, Bastock, George, & Martin, 2002). The relational

nature of understanding is a core imperative within this study. Alice brings this emphasis out beautifully through her lived experiences in the classroom when she talks about coming together with her students around a text. She is talking about starting conversations with students about new texts and issues; she says, “for me it’s a process of learning what I know, and my own bias, and then figuring out what they know, and where can we meet and then talk about the text?” Alice’s portrayal of her teaching process here very much evokes the relational nature of understanding, as she works with her students to build relationships between participants in the classroom and the topic and text at hand. Learning will always involve relationality. Likewise, reading literature always involves a relationship opening up between reader and text. Literary scholars have theorized such dynamics in innumerable ways, such as through reader response theory (to name only one), which may examine the impacts of a text on (and beyond) its readers (Tompkins, 1980, p. ix). What interests me at present is how such relationality (between reader and text) can matter in particular for Indigenous literatures and learning.

The capacity of Indigenous literatures to teach readers, to speak to them, is a key assumption around using Indigenous literatures in the classroom, and it came up often with the teachers and writers in my study’s conversations. It is an assumption that warrants careful examination — both because it is an assumption and because it can open up immense potential for learning. Sharron makes the point that “people learn about Indigenous peoples from Indigenous literature,” which is an essential part of this understanding. I do not think that it should simply be taken for granted that reading Indigenous literatures in classrooms is a good way to bring young people to learn about Indigenous people. I believe that it can, but the taken-for-grantedness of my belief has led me to investigate further. This process warrants investigation because understanding what this process entails can enable educators to realize its potential more fully — and to avoid some of the pitfalls that exist along the way.

Literature necessarily entails learning. As Daniel suggests, any piece of art will be educational “for somebody”: he says, “The thing about words and stories, even entertainment, is they are teachings.” Art incorporates, transmits, and enables understandings. It portrays how things have been, how things are, and how things could be. It stories people and communities. When people read it, it draws them in, making them part of the story too. However, setting out to facilitate such learning within formal education requires consideration and care. As many Indigenous literary scholars have argued, texts must be taught in ways that are contextualized, critically framed, and socially responsible — otherwise, teaching them can be harmful (Episkew, 2002; Hanson, 2012; Justice, 2012).

A key understanding that writers and teachers shared with me in our conversations is that literatures can bring readers to learning because there is an affective, intimate quality to the experience of reading literature. Learning through stories is more engaging than learning from fact-based media such as textbooks. For instance, as part of explaining why he creates the educational graphic novels that he does, David says, “I could never stand reading from a textbook in school. Never got excited for it. But if you give stuff that they’ll engage with...that’s half the battle. And then they’re learning.” Similarly, Warren suggests, “If you see it in a specific way that a story can present to you, it can really foster a kind of empathy that all the technical knowledge is never going to provide to you.” Literature can reach readers and draw them in, these perspectives suggest, which enables deeper learning.

Similarly, writers and teachers suggest that literature fosters greater emotional connections because stories invite readers to relate to the experiences portrayed. When I raise the issue of whether learning from facts or from stories is more persuasive, Katherena suggests that both are important, but that “stories are always the way in. They are the accessible way...stories are the way that people relate to that experience.” Likewise, Rachel suggests that fiction is sometimes “as close as we can possibly get to understanding somebody who’s very unlike ourselves or who has experiences that we haven’t had... It can be a very powerful way for students to get deeper into thinking about things.” The intimate and experiential nature of reading literary texts can draw readers into meaningful learning.

The notion that better learning is enabled when readers engage with what they are reading may seem self-evident, but when writers and teachers talk about how being drawn into literary texts emotionally or experientially can impact learning, they offer new understandings of how significant that engagement might be for the topic of teaching Indigenous literatures. For instance, Francesca considers the impact literature might have on how her students will live their lives and treat other people, suggesting, “If it leads to a sense of empathy... the world becomes better.” Katherena, too, considers empathy as a necessary component for relating well with others, specifically for non-Indigenous people in Canada to engage respectfully with Indigenous people: “We need that empathy – that’s what I think is lacking.” She suggests that settlers might “hold onto prejudices, because...they’ve never been taught to be empathetic towards Indigenous people.” Katherena describes empathy as an emotional connection that can draw people into a sense of personal implication.

Weaving in Lenape-Potawatomi scholar Susan Dion’s (2000, 2009) critical perspectives on empathy is generative at this point. Dion analyzed the potential for settler Canadians (teachers and students) to be exposed to information about Indigenous peoples but not to really process it – that is, to fail to recognize the significance of that information or the impact it should have. Dion (2009) suggested that dominant discourses of Indigeneity – such as that of the

“romantic, mythical Other” (p. 56) — work actively to counter learning about Aboriginal people and perspectives. Without engaging in more critical learning, non-Indigenous Canadians are enabled “to distance themselves from and abdicate their responsibility for attending to the ongoing conditions of injustice that are a part of the day-to-day lived experiences of First Nations people in Canada” (Dion, 2000, p. 359). Dion (2009) engaged students and teachers with stories designed to reframe Indigenous histories and challenge colonial discourses. However, she found that readers persisted in falling back upon dominant discourses even when reading and learning from those narratives. In these examinations, Dion (2009) included empathy as a cautionary point: she critiqued the tendency of teachers (in her study) to focus on empathizing with the narratives rather than considering the implications they convey, such as their own positioning within Canadian colonialism.

Dion’s critique of empathy as a way of refusing more serious engagement contrasts with Katherena’s descriptions of empathy as a catalyst for engagement. Katherena suggests that empathy can be a way in for teachers, drawing them into seeing their own positioning and motivating them to take up Indigenous education work. Describing teachers in a local school district being tasked with incorporating Indigenous content into their everyday teaching, Katherena argues that teachers will not be able to engage well with that work unless they “have a connection to it,” and that such a connection can be precipitated by a “moment of empathy.” As she points to facts that might inspire people to care and connect — such as “a child in residential school” or “lack of clean drinking water” — she insists that empathy is the way to draw people in. She says, “Empathy allows you to understand how it’s related to you.” Katherena sees empathy as enabling personal connections to the learning and work — connections that transcend those offered by information alone, because readers understand how they are personally implicated in that work and learning. That sense of implication, of connection, of “how it’s related to you” is what motivates teachers to take on work they would otherwise feel unprepared to do.

I think that Dion’s (2009) cautionary note about a shallower form of empathy is a good one: she warned that a pedagogical approach to texts that encourages students’ feelings of empathy — more in the sense of pity — “limits engagement with difficult knowledge and avoids conflict” (p. 99). As Daniel and Sharron also warn in this study, it is not enough to respond to Indigenous narratives simply by feeling bad. However, if a deeper understanding of empathy is employed, like the one Katherena describes, empathy can be a useful way of framing how literature can call readers into personally significant understandings that motivate them to respond. This deeper empathy fosters relationship.

Katherena’s analyses here point to a key understanding in this study: namely, that knowledge alone is insufficient preparation for teachers to engage well in Indigenous education work: rather, relational understandings are required. David is right to argue that “if we’re going to be anywhere positive in the future,

we need to start from a good knowledge base,” but often providing information alone will not create adequate change. This contention resonates strongly with Simon’s (2000) formulations on transactional remembrances, in which he argued that knowledge is not enough to call people to interrogate their understandings and change how they act: “simply acquiring more information will never suffice if one is to respond to the force of a testimonial address, a force which, if acknowledged, puts ourselves into question” (p. 74). Rather, the transaction takes place through “reflexive attentiveness to the retelling or representation of a complex of emotionally evocative narratives and images which define...*points of connection* between people in regard to a past that they both might acknowledge the touch of” (Simon, 2000, p. 63, emphasis in original). In such assertions, Simon (2000) examined the kind of learning that may enable “a change in the way non-Aboriginals view their shared history with First Nation peoples” (p. 75). What I find salient here is Simon’s portrayal of meaningful understanding being generated through relationality, in that attending to a narrative (he looks at historical testimonies, for instance) means facing the possibility that that narrative will question and shift the way one understands oneself and the world. This kind of understanding requires more than the accumulation of knowledge. I take up Simon’s arguments here because they interweave well with the understandings I garnered through this study, supporting my contention that, while many teachers are clearly asking for support with teaching Indigenous literatures, information is not enough.

I can make this point about teachers asking for support most clearly through the example of resources. When I have spoken about my research at workshops, for instance, one of the most common questions I have been asked by teachers in the audience is where to find good resources for teaching. Likewise, in the early stages of this project, I assumed that the most useful way for me to support teachers would be to provide teachers with information about Indigenous texts. I thought that they simply needed resources — ideas of what was good to teach, of what texts were out there. However, through my analyses, I came to realize that provision of information might not be the most effective approach. After all, a quick, targeted Google search yields a number of annotated lists of Indigenous literature resources for educators, as well as a few support resources — information is already available. Available information is certainly not as extensive or easy to find as information on more commonly taught texts — as Alice and other teachers state — but there is material to build on.

Listening recursively to teachers in this study talk about their need for connections to resources, I started to really hear what they are saying: that is, they need *connections* to resources, not just resources. Teachers can find lists of appropriate texts, if they have the will and the time. However, building a relationship with the learning offered by those resources — for themselves and their students — is a more complex matter. This insight resonates with Indigenous perspectives on how knowledge is situated in particular places

and bodies (Smith, 2012; Tanaka, 2016), and to the recognition that putting learning into action is not merely a matter of mobilizing, instrumentalizing, or deploying information as rapidly and widely as possible. It is, rather, a matter of building relational understandings (Gadamer, 1960/2004; Jardine et al., 2002; Wilson, 2008).

I want to push this point about accessing resources further, since this was such a prevalent point in my conversations with teachers. In every conversation I held with teachers — and in several with writers as well — we discussed the topic of access to resources. Suzette's comments evoke many points shared by teachers:

As much as I would love to bring in some more Aboriginal literature, to be honest, there's not a lot that's available in my school. When you go into the book room, Aboriginal literature just isn't there... To ask my school to spend money on a class set of books is just a really big ask, especially if it's something that maybe only I'm going to teach.

I think it is fair to generalize across the teacher interviews and say that teachers would feel bolstered in teaching Indigenous literatures if every school had an ample supply of Indigenous books, with supports in place for teaching them. Notably, Suzette's comment that she might be the only one teaching Indigenous literatures at her school was made before Alberta considered Indigenous perspectives in its Teaching Quality Standard. These considerations become relevant for even more teachers when incorporating Indigenous content into teaching becomes mandatory rather than optional. The point about supports is interesting, because it connects to my argument on relational understandings, and because it enables me to offer some pragmatic suggestions for educators.

My conversations with teachers and writers offer several such suggestions, which, taken together, contribute to my argument that teachers need to build relational understandings. The first example comes from Robin. She begins to say that "finding the resources" is "the biggest problem" but then changes direction:

And yet when you look right in our textbooks that we have now, like I'm looking at the grade 10 [book]...It's an old text but it has lots of Indigenous literature in it, and I think it would be a great starting point for that. So it is available. I just think it doesn't occur to people maybe necessarily to use it.

The challenge is not necessarily that texts do not exist; it is that teachers do not necessarily see — or know how to use — what is already there. My second example here comes from Jesse and Warren, both of whom point to the availability of digital media and stories on the Internet: Warren, for instance, points to online resources from storytellers that can make oral storytelling "shareable in a broader way than it used to be." Accessing resources online may be a viable approach for schools seeking more Indigenous content, without incurring costs. However, again, identifying these and taking them up requires educators to build relationships with what is already out there. Such examples provide helpful suggestions for tackling the issue of resources, but also suggest that

it is connections and relationships that are needed for teachers to find the things that are already available. Sharron makes this point particularly clearly when she says, “Almost all Native writers, from the most humble to the most famous, will take the time to talk to you. You just have to reach out.” Reaching out is building relationships.

Admittedly, teachers might struggle to meet the needs of what Suzette calls “the real meat and potatoes of the curriculum – the novel study and the modern play, and the Shakespearean play” with texts that are readily available online and by connecting with writers and storytellers; they may still need those class sets of books. There are particular emphases within how curriculum and assessment shape learning at present, as several teachers discuss in this study. When Alice, for instance, says, “Everything is about deconstructing texts and pulling out quotations and writing and writing and writing and writing,” she argues that innovation is limited by conventional and canonical approaches. Alice and Rachel both point to the influence of the provincial Diploma Exam in shaping how the subject of English Language Arts is taught at the secondary level, such as through a focus on critical essay writing. These teachers suggest that they feel pressured by the assessment model to choose conventional, established materials in order to meet the requirements of the Diploma Exam – that is, texts with sufficient “literary merit” and “complexity” (Alberta Education, 2015a, p. 8). They also feel pressured to teach in conventional ways in order to ensure that students have the requisite skills to succeed on the Diploma Exam. However, in Suzette’s words, convention “still values the pen held by the white man.” Alice expresses hopes that approaches to teaching will shift “now that the Diploma’s worth less” – referring to the relatively recent shift in the exam’s weighting, from 50% to 30% of a student’s final mark (Alberta Education, 2015b). What teachers focus on within English Language Arts is linked to assessment.

The extent to which shifting provincial education contexts will precipitate change in the teaching of Indigenous content remains to be seen. At present, Indigenous texts might be able to constitute the “meat and potatoes” (to borrow Suzette’s words again) of high school English curricula if they are included on the “approved English Language Arts...list of short stories, novels, plays, screenplays, or films” (Alberta Education, 2015a, p. 8), if schools have elected to purchase them, and if teachers are able to build a relationship with that material and motivated to take on the preparation required to teach it well. As educational policy landscapes in Alberta shift to attend more fully to Indigenous perspectives – energized by the work of the TRC – I hope that teachers will receive more support and motivation for teaching Indigenous content (Government of Alberta, 2014, 2016). I also hope that researchers will increasingly examine the extent to which Indigenous literatures and other forms of Indigenous content are actually being taught, as well as the impacts and significance of such teaching.

The complexity of these contexts and considerations suggest that the bigger, deeper question that needs asking is not what teachers need to know, or what texts they should teach, but rather why teachers should undertake this work and learning. What calls them to make the effort? When I ask Daniel why this work is worth doing, why teachers should struggle with the institutional and disciplinary barriers that impede this work, he offers this encouragement:

The only way things will be better is if we do that...[Teachers] are being called to carry that bundle. It was never a call that was meant to be easy...but if they don't carry that bundle, it won't be lighter for those who come after.

I think it is motivating to see how it is a call. The contexts, the real-world situations and relationships that make teaching Indigenous literatures a valuable and socially responsible thing to do (Episkenew, 2002; Kanu, 2011) mean that teaching Indigenous texts is not just a matter of addressing the needs of the curriculum; rather, it is a matter of allowing oneself to be addressed by the perspectives, by the communities, that those literatures represent. I mean *addressed* in the sense of Gadamer's (1960/2004) statement, "understanding begins...when something addresses us" (p. 298). Being addressed is being called into relational understandings, as the readers' understandings are not generated out of their own minds alone but in relation to the subject matter (Gadamer, 1960/2004, p. 285). In other words, "To interpret and remember a text is to read and remember it as if it were addressed to me" (Jardine et al., 2002, p. 55). Further, generating understanding in relation to the subject matter means being called into relation with the people attached to it.

Such relational understandings are exemplified by the teachers in this study who have found ways to relate to Indigenous texts and contexts. Each teacher articulates her own reasons for coming to this work and her own ways of building relationships with the learning involved. Robin shows how relationships are central to doing this work well when she talks about how she builds up her capacity to teach Indigenous content: in her descriptions, she talks about knowledge and resources, certainly, but she also talks a great deal about connections with people — colleagues, Elders, students, Indigenous education resource people, administrators, parents, friends, and her own children. She says, "I think the greatest learning I've had is...talking with people...and meeting with Elders and [her school district's Indigenous education resource team], who have been really a great resource." Perspectives like Robin's suggest that the *what* and *how* of teaching Indigenous literatures — the knowledge, the awareness of texts and resources, the ideas for teaching activities and approaches — are supported by relationships with people — the mentors, resource people, collaborators, teachers, students, and other community members with whom that work is done. Learning from and through Indigenous literatures is enabled by relationships. Further, Indigenous literatures call people into relationships with communities, and this calling requires a response: it is a call to action.

CALLING READERS INTO RESPONSE-ABILITY

The possibility for literatures to make a positive impact on real life hangs on literature's ability to call people into relationships with Indigenous communities that require action. My study integrates understandings of Indigenous principles of relationality and kinship — including the ethical relationality underlying the framework of *métissage* — and it is vital to recognize that, at their core, such understandings entail responsibility. Because two beings are interconnected, what one does affects the other. If I understand myself in relation with others, then I see how each movement I make impacts someone else. In making decisions, I must consider my responsibility to others. Understanding the connection means understanding the requirement for reciprocal, ethical engagement. Such understandings are fundamental within the scholarship I am building upon (Ermine, 2007; Kovach, 2009; Smith, 2012; Wilson, 2008), including Simon's (2000) arguments that enacting transactional remembrances, rather than simply metabolizing knowledge, means living "as if the lives of others truly mattered" (Simon, 2000, p. 62). Such understandings encourage teachers and students, as they learn and respond, to respect how Indigenous literatures matter to Indigenous communities.

Within Indigenous literary studies, one way into this understanding is through the concept of *response-ability*. Recognizing response-ability involves examining one's own positioning in relation to the literature and articulating one's responsibility to act in response to what one has learned (Anderson, 2000; Blaeser, 1999; Eigenbrod, 2002). Storytelling is a relational process and requires participatory involvement. How listeners or readers respond will of course vary depending on their positioning and experiences. Blaeser (1999), for instance, described how responses to stories

might range from perception or simply acknowledging understanding, to engagement in a conversation or involvement in the telling of the story, to a more active taking up of the story in retelling, interpretation of the unspoken, or physically reacting through political resistance. (p. 55)

Whatever forms their responses take, response-ability involves readers coming to some degree of recognition of their relationship with the story and the way that they are implicated in its telling and its teachings — an implication that calls them to respond. Thomas King's (2003) repeated story closing — "don't say in the years to come that you would have lived your life differently if only you had heard this story. You've heard it now" (p. 151) — likewise invoked this sense of responsibility.

Understanding a reader's ability and responsibility to act in response to a text — response-ability — is importantly linked to the nature and continuity of traditional Indigenous storyways. Oral storytelling is distinct from written artistic expression (Blaeser, 1999). Warren insists particularly on this point: "To me the story isn't really a thing, at least in that capitalist way. It's a gift. It's a

spirit. It's something that permeates our being in a different way." While the oral and written differ, the ethical and relational dimensions of storytelling can carry through into literary texts — particularly when writers try to put them in, and particularly when readers respect the text's connection to community.

Like the relational structure of storytelling, the emotional and connective experience of reading calls readers to respond. In a story about being welcomed into a dance at a powwow, Francesca shows this progression from connection to action and argues that literature can inspire the same kind of phenomenon. She shows how significant this experience was for her emotionally, but also considers what those feelings call her to do: "There's this, a willingness, a recognition that the only way to move forward is together." There is a sense in her description that literature — like the dance that she describes — offers an intimate and meaningful experience that non-Indigenous readers should feel honoured to be included in. Further, that feeling of being welcomed in inspires Francesca to imagine building a future through shared relationships.

Jesse and Warren offer further examples of how learning through literatures can call readers to respond. Jesse describes tensions in his classroom, but suggests that learning about shared histories can convert such discomfort into empowerment:

The way I try and negotiate that is...by emphasizing that, no matter where you come from or who you are, this is our shared history.... In that sense, you can transform something traumatic and victimizing into something liberating.

Coming to an understanding of mutual responsibility and personal implication in the contexts they are learning about can bring students to feel liberated. This feeling of liberation is a strong foundation for response and action. Similarly, when Warren talks about literature's capacity to foster empathy, he argues that stories are "a potential building ground" possibly for "reconciliation" or for "movement toward some kind of action." Emotional connections, fostered relationally through stories, can enable readers to consider their own roles and responsibilities.

Connecting learning to responsibility involves understanding that a response is required. Understanding oneself in relation to a text — and to the communities it stories — means examining one's own positioning and developing a sense of responsibility to that relationship. For readers building such understandings, Warren shares a helpful insight about being in relationship. Reflecting on being Métis, he suggests that it "comes back to relationship and how you act rather than just who you are." While he is talking about Métis community, this point resonates in relation to reading. That is, it may be motivating to see that *how* one inhabits the relationship between oneself and an Indigenous text determines the character of that connection. Non-Indigenous readers are not automatically precluded from understanding Indigenous literatures: learning is something that they can work at (McKegney, 2007).

Teachers' perspectives in this study offer a range of considerations for thinking through how non-Indigenous readers can strengthen such connections. Most significantly, in discussing what support they need for teaching Indigenous literatures, teachers point to the possibility for collaborations among teachers. Angela and Robin call for opportunities for dialogue and mentorship among teachers interested in improving their teaching of Indigenous literatures. Suzette disputes the idea that funding is the issue and points instead to collective work between teachers: change, she says, "needs to happen with collaboration... we need to start working together more, to appreciate what other people's perspectives are, as teachers — because it starts with us." Many allied scholars of Indigenous literatures have worked to position themselves in relation (Eigenbrod, 2002; McKegney, 2007); looking at that work, I see how teachers' choices to engage with Indigenous literatures entail a recognition of responsibility. This work calls them to see how they are responsible to the Indigenous communities storied into the texts that they and their students are reading.

Before I conclude, I would like to share a tangible example from a teacher in this study who envisioned inspiring ways to foster the relationality that can grow between readers and texts. Danny — the only Indigenous teacher I spoke with — brought up Thomas King's short story "Borders" and her "dream" of teaching it in a way that would connect students to community, to land, and to their own identities. She says, because the story is set in southern Alberta, it would be possible — with a fair amount of planning and paperwork — to take students on a camping excursion to Writing-On-Stone, which is near the "border crossing" portrayed in the text. Danny shares her ideals of

going down to that place with an Elder...talking about the stories of the land...looking at that story...reading it out loud to the students as an oral piece...talking about identity, talking about who you are in relation to where we're sitting right now.

Learning in that place from a local, Blackfoot Elder would connect the students to the land and community portrayed in the story. In envisioning these conversations with students, Danny asks a significant question: "right now you're in this community...what does that look like for your own learning?"

CONCLUSION: CALLING READERS TO RELATE AND RESPOND

How, then, are literatures significant for teachers in responding to the Calls to Action of Canada's TRC? What is it about literatures that can inspire people to take on the challenges of confronting colonialism? Returning again to the research question at the heart of my broader study — how do Indigenous literatures matter to the resurgence of healthy Indigenous communities? — I think that Indigenous literatures matter because Indigenous literatures are calling readers into relational understandings and the responses they entail. The literary arts invite readers into relational understandings, and these relational

understandings entail a need for readers to respond. Reading Indigenous literatures — while remaining “open to the meaning of the other person or text” and “situating the other meaning in relation to the whole of our own meanings or ourselves in relation to it” (Gadamer, 1960/2004, p. 271) — can bring people to an experience of learning that is not only about knowledge, but is also about understanding oneself in relation with Indigenous communities. Such relational understandings integrate the requirement of mutual responsibility, bringing people to understand their ability to respond, not only to the texts but also to their contexts. Resurgence is fostered when Indigenous readers develop these understandings and relations in their communities. However, learning through literatures might also help non-Indigenous readers to position themselves ethically in relation to Indigenous resurgence. This relationality is a powerful dynamic for educators to take on in responding to the impacts of the Indian Residential Schools system.

Across the conversations, I see hope that recognition of the importance of Indigenous literatures is growing, and that this recognition will help to facilitate change. Knowing that literatures can give readers a sense of “relationship” and of “the real impact on real people’s lives,” Warren says, “I do think that one of the reasons that Indigenous literatures are so popular right now is that there are a lot of Canadians who...want to learn more.” I personally am hopeful that such openness to learning among Canadians, motivated by the TRC, will have positive consequences for Indigenous communities and for Indigenous / non-Indigenous relationships. I believe that this growth in recognition is also linked to the appreciation of the artistry of Indigenous literatures. It is important to hear writers and teachers emphasize that Indigenous literatures can be *good*, not just *Indigenous*. As Richard says, “The literature that our mentors, our trailbreakers, are...coming out with...[is] absolutely staggering in brilliance.” Literatures, in their artistry, have the capacity to draw readers into experiences, to learning, and to relationships. They have the capacity to *address* readers (Gadamer, 1960/2004). Being drawn into relational understandings involves response-ability: engaging meaningfully with Indigenous literatures means being called to respond, to read for resurgence. A story can itself be a call to action — and one that is all the more compelling for its artistry.

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FINDING A PLACE AT HOME: THE TRC AS A MEANS OF (R)EVOLUTION IN PRE-SERVICE (SCIENCE) TEACHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT. This paper focuses on how I have been attending to the TRC's calls to action within science teacher education. It draws on personal experiences, my dissertation, Canadian policy regarding Indigenous education, and academic literature to explore what the calls ask of teacher educators. Throughout, I consider how Indigenous and Western ways of knowing, being, and doing might circulate together in specific places, and the role that *Land* and the natural world might play in reconciliation via science teacher education. Ultimately, the paper offers a still-in-process glimpse into how I have found a place at home to begin engaging with the Calls to Action of the TRC in science teacher education.

TROUVER UNE PLACE CHEZ SOI: LA COMMISSION DE VÉRITÉ ET RÉCONCILIATION COMME OUTIL DE (R)ÉVOLUTION DANS LE CADRE D'UN COURS D'ENSEIGNEMENT DES SCIENCES EN FORMATION INITIALE

RÉSUMÉ. Cet article porte sur la façon dont j'ai répondu aux appels à l'action formulés par la CVR dans le cadre d'un cours en enseignement des sciences. J'y explore ce que les appels impliquent pour ceux qui forment les enseignants en me basant sur des expériences personnelles, ma thèse, les politiques canadiennes relatives à l'éducation des autochtones et la littérature universitaire. Au sein de cet article, j'examine de quelle manière les principes autochtones et occidentaux d'être et de faire doivent cohabiter à certains moments. J'étudie aussi le rôle que la *Terre* et le monde naturel doivent jouer au sein du processus de réconciliation, dans le cadre d'un cours en enseignement des sciences. Finalement, cet article présente un aperçu – encore en développement – de la manière dont j'ai trouvé dans un cours en enseignement des sciences un lieu pour commencer à répondre aux appels à l'action formulés par la CVR.

The complete *Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada* (TRC, 2015b, 2015c, 2015d, 2015e, 2015f, 2015g, 2015h)¹ was being made public as I defended my dissertation (Wiseman, 2016);² as I was ending a part of my life's work and beginning to think to the future. My Indigenous³ family, friends, and colleagues have taught me to attend to such simultaneity.

This paper focuses on how I have been attempting to attend to it within science teacher education.

I begin by explaining how I have come to this work and my positionality within it. I move on to outline the TRC's (2015a) Calls to Action with respect to education in order to: (1) situate them in relation to other documents regarding Indigenous peoples and education; and, (2) to underline the consistency of messaging regarding the importance of education in redressing relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. In considering what that consistency asks of teacher educators, I summarize a (r)evolution in practice implemented in science teacher education at the University of Alberta, and how it led to deeper understandings of place/Land in terms of how, why and what we teach. I then interrogate the idea of place, place/Land, and *Land*⁴ in relation to the colonial classification of place-based learning to problematize thinking that suggests particular projects can easily travel from place to place. Next, I bring the thinking together to present a (r)evolution in my current teaching practice that has allowed me to find a place/Land at home. Finally, I conclude the paper with some thoughts about the ongoingness and locatedness of the work, and the need for teacher educators to figure out what that means in their own contexts. To be clear, the paper does not focus on Indigenous science or Indigenous science education – both of those ideas are more community based – but rather it offers a small and still-in-process glimpse into how I am finding a place/Land at home to begin engaging with the Calls to Action of the TRC in science teacher education.

MĀRAMATANGA AS A MEANS OF POSITIONING MYSELF WITHIN THE WORK

Identifying, at the outset, the location from which the voice of the researcher emanates is an Aboriginal way of ensuring that those who study, write, and participate in knowledge creation are accountable for their own positionality. (Absolon & Willet, 2005, p. 97)

I am a white woman from Montreal, QC. I attended schools from kindergarten through my first degree where teaching and learning were embedded in Western traditions. For the last 25 years, I have lived and worked alongside Indigenous people, peoples, and communities. In this context, I became a teacher, and began the process of struggling with the received wisdom of my previous learning. The work began in 1993 when my long-term mentor, Corinne Mount Pleasant-Jetté, asked a seemingly simple question, “You know those summer science camps you ran as an undergrad? Do you think we could run them for Native kids?” Corinne was a professor in the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science at Concordia University (Montreal, QC), a member of the Faculty's decanal team, my direct supervisor, and a member of the Tuscarora Nation from Ohsweken (Six Nations of the Grand River) in Ontario. For the next 16 years, we worked together supporting K-12 science and mathematics

teaching and learning for Indigenous children and youth through the Native Access to Engineering Program (NAEP) at Concordia, and its successor, Mount Pleasant Educational Services (Mohawk Territory of Kahnawà:ke).

In taking up doctoral studies and subsequent teaching and research in a university context, I frequently return to the question Kovach (2005) says challenges non-Indigenous people in contexts such as my own, “Am I creating space or taking space?” (p. 26). In the questioning, I have been reminded that the relationships I have been invited into over the years come with responsibilities and obligations to share and put into action what has been shared with me. One manner in which I do so is by attending to Stewart-Harawira’s (2005) call for paying serious attention to “the possibilities inherent in indigenous ontologies” (p. 34) within the academy. Therefore, I base research in Indigenist research methodologies (IRMs) (Kovach, 2005, 2009; Smith, 1999, 2005; Shawn Wilson, 2008) as a means of decolonizing research (Denzin, 2005) or, perhaps more accurately, engaging in an ongoing process of “unlearning colonialism” (Dwayne Donald, personal communication, December 21, 2016) with the intent to transform teaching, learning, research, and the “underlying structures and taken-for-granted ways of organizing, conducting, and disseminating research and knowledge” (Smith, 2005, p. 88).

My approach begins by privileging Indigenous Elders, thinkers, activists, and scholars in order to unsettle the origins of my own knowing, being, and doing and to move beyond decolonization as metaphor (Tuck & Yang, 2012) by putting ideas into practice. Here I draw on a concept borrowed from Hawai’ian scholar Manulani Meyer (2013) that she names *māramatanga*. She describes it as “practicing the teachings and ideas that I am teaching so as to live the ideas I believe in” (15:13). *Māramatanga* thus suggests understanding only comes through deep, reflective engagement with embodied practice. In this way, it aligns with advice I received during my M.A. research from Elder Dr. Lillian McGregor (Whitefish River First Nation) at the University of Toronto: “Sometimes you just have to do it. You know, like Nike” (personal communication, April 4, 2002).

As I have come to understand, the just doing it is not for the sake of doing it, but rather a means of beginning (sometimes again) an ongoing, iterative practice without which nothing changes. Given the need for practice, time, and reflection, coupled with my position as a white woman raised in distinctly different traditions, I acknowledge that my attempts at engaging with Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing are always in the process of becoming, always “not yet” (Greene in Pinar, 1998, p. 1). Nonetheless, I return to the process again and again with the hope that such a return is not a spinning around in circles, but rather a means of deepening learning that extends back to the invitation offered by Corinne in her question about summer camps (Wiseman, 2016).

THE TRC, ITS (RELATIVELY) RECENT RELATIONS, AND FOMENTING (R)EVOLUTION

One of the things I reflect on with respect to my work are the tensions of reconciliation. As noted in the TRC (2015c):

To some people, reconciliation is the re-establishment of a conciliatory state. However, this is a state that many Aboriginal people assert never has existed between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. To others, reconciliation, in the context of Indian Residential Schools, is similar to dealing with a situation of family violence. It's about coming to terms with events of the past in a manner that overcomes conflict and establishes a respectful and healthy relationship among people, going forward. (p. 6)

Like the Commissioners, I take up the term reconciliation in this latter sense, but recognize relegating violence to the past is not possible when ongoing violence is perpetuated by individuals and agencies of the Canadian state (see, for example, Jago, 2018; Unist'ot'en Camp, 2019). Nonetheless, I hold on to the difficulty of the concept of reconciliation to see if it allows for anything useful, any *māramatanga* (Meyer, 2013). In this sense, I find it helps to place the TRC and its Calls (TRC, 2015i) in conversation with their historical relations.

The TRC (2015c) calls for a fundamental shift in relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, peoples, and communities in Canada so that future generations “can live together in dignity, peace, and prosperity on these lands we now share” (p. 13). Of its 94 Calls to Action (TRC, 2015a), eleven directly address education in some manner. The *Education* section (pp. 1-2) contains 6 calls focused on addressing education of and for Indigenous students from early childhood through post-secondary levels. These calls include: tackling inequitable per student funding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people; creating mechanisms for school accountability to Indigenous communities and parents; and, developing means for revitalizing Indigenous languages. The *Education for reconciliation* section (pp. 7-8) contains four additional calls focused on education in Canada more broadly. These calls include the focus of my work for the last quarter century, particularly development of K-12 curricula and teacher education that “integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms” (p. 7), and research that considers the manner in which such processes can occur.

The TRC (2015i) is a key historical instance of documenting and acknowledging the violence and atrocities perpetuated on Indigenous young people and their families via the Canadian state through the residential school system. At the same time, the report is hardly the first instance where Indigenous people have laid out and reminded settler people and peoples in Canada of the terms for respectful, healthy, and peaceful relationships. With regard to education, many of the TRC recommendations echo other reports, policies, position papers, and treaties dating back to the arrival of European newcomers. Over the last 50 years, notable contributions such as *Indian Control of Indian Educa-*

tion (ICOIE) (National Indian Brotherhood (NIB), 1972), the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (Dussault et al., 1996), the Minister's Working Group on Aboriginal Education (Jeffrey & Mount Pleasant-Jetté, 2002), and the *Accord on Indigenous Education* (Archibald, Lundy, Reynolds, & Williams, 2010) have consistently pointed to the importance of Indigenous languages, Indigenous community control of education, equitable per student funding, and development of K-12 curricula and teacher education programs that engage with Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing, as a means of both supporting the teaching and learning of Indigenous students and redressing relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. A relatively recent outcome of this consistency has been policy mandates in most provinces and territories for integration of Indigenous perspectives across K-12 curricula in all subject areas taught in provincial / territorial schools (e.g. Alberta Learning, 2002; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007).

Integration is not a new proposal. It arose in the 1950s as an assimilative federal policy aimed at moving Indigenous students from residential schools and into provincial schools (Kovach, 2009). ICOIE (NIB, 1972), however, challenged the assimilative notion of integration to suggest it might become a two-way process where both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students might learn within a "curriculum which blends the best from the Indian and the non-Indian traditions" (p. 25). Two-way integration requires shifts and re/alignment across the educational system among a wide range of educational stakeholders. While there were some attempts at such change in the 1980s and 1990s (Abele, Dittburner, & Graham, 2000; Betkowski, 1987; Saskatchewan Education Training and Employment, 1989), the attempts were not taken up in a systemic manner by teacher education programs or by teachers in classrooms (Wiseman, 2016). More recent policy statements (e.g. Alberta Learning, 2002; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007), and the manner in which they have been / are being translated into provincial / territorial curricular documents (e.g. Alberta Education, 2005; Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2009) seem more promising, if only because they are forcing teachers to respond. Darren McKee,⁵ a former Deputy Minister of Education in Saskatchewan and current Executive Director of the Saskatchewan School Boards Association, notes that such change, while uncomfortable, amounts to revolution:

If you're comfortable, you're going to continue to do what you're doing. Right? That's human nature.... You really need to have a revolutionary shift and then allow evolution to manage that shift. In my mind, it's the teacher talking about things like "I have to do this." The revolution is, yes, [ministries of education are] going to force people to do it. The evolution is then they will understand – or come to understand – that it was a great choice to do it, but not everybody does that at the beginning of the process. (Personal communication, December 2, 2011)

I have spoken with teachers and other educational stakeholders (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) in provinces and territories where policy mandates for integration exist (Wiseman, 2016). In many cases, they acknowledge that the mandates, and the subsequent translation of the mandates into science curricula, have provided the impetus for attempts at implementation in the classroom. Really coming to understand what integration looks like in the classroom, however, is an ongoing, iterative process. In many different ways, the educators with whom I had conversations (Wiseman, 2016) acknowledged the sense of tension, discomfort, unease, unfamiliarity that Darren McKee (personal communication, December 2, 2011) suggests is necessary for beginning the process. At the same time, despite these (often significant) tensions, none of the educators I spoke with had given up. Instead, they were engaged in trying something, being unsatisfied with it, modifying it, and trying again. Their rhythm of return leads me to conceive of the revolution to evolution McKee proposes as (r)evolution.

While (r)evolution and its parentheses may seem like academic affectation, it helps express a concept which I struggle to articulate (Wiseman, 2016), perhaps because it does not exist in English (Little Bear, 2012; Lunney Borden & Wagner, 2013). The work of engaging with Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing requires (at least for those of us who do not come from those traditions) a starting point. That starting point may be some kind of push (D. McKee, personal communication, December 2, 2011), or an invitation to think about science camps. Once you have begun, however, what you find — or at least what I have found, what many of my colleagues have found (e.g. Lunney Borden & Wagner, 2013), and what the educators I spoke to within my dissertation inquiry expressed — is an ongoing process of return. Not a spinning around in circles as much as a patterned and complex (r)evolution around what it is you are trying to understand through practice (Wiseman, 2016). You become engaged in an ongoing process of learning where sometimes you feel like you are back where you started, but then realize it both is and is not the same place, because you come back to it having learned more. (R)evolution — at least for the moment — expresses the process in a manner I can live with because it suggests that the process is ongoing and uncomfortable, but also that the process involves return, perhaps to something new.

So, the TRC and its calls (2015i) may not be entirely new, but they may be one of those powerful pieces of thinking that acts to foment (r)evolution. As Kovach (2009) underlines, however, education is always “more than a matter of policy” (p. 160) and government intention. Research supports the notion that teachers in Canada understand their role in implementing policy as presented in curricula, but struggle with the what it might look like, particularly when it challenges their current understandings, practices, and values (Aikenhead & Elliott, 2010; Barrett & Pedretti, 2006; Hart, 2002). Hart (2002) proposes that the negotiation of such challenges is facilitated through “meaningful intellectual

encounters” (p. 1243). As a doctoral student at the University of Alberta, I was directly confronted with what such meaningful encounters might look like in science teaching and learning in teacher education (Wiseman, 2016; Wiseman, et al., 2015).

PLANTING PEDAGOGICAL (R)EVOLUTION IN (SCIENCE) TEACHER EDUCATION

I arrived at the University of Alberta in the late summer of 2009, seven years after the province had adopted its *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* (Alberta Learning, 2002). Given delays between policy adoption and translation into provincial curricula documents, the changes with respect to science curricula were still relatively new, and very much in flux, both in terms of how they were taken up in K-12 classrooms and in teacher education. Within science methods courses in my department, integration was generally addressed by a single lecture, delivered by invited guests from a local First Nation or by faculty members and graduate students (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) whose work and research explored how Indigenous and Western conceptions of the world and the way it works might circulate together. Usually these guests had no relationship with students beyond the lecture. Thus, while the one-time interventions occasionally piqued the interest of a few students, they laid little fertile ground for significant change in practice for most students (Wiseman, et al., 2015). Fortunately, in considering how to shift these one-time interventions to more meaningful, extended encounters where pre-service teachers might explore “the idea that the Western (Canadian) knowledge system represents only one way of knowing and being” (Kelly, Shultz, Weber-Pillwax, & Lange, 2009, p. 263), an opportunity arose to reclaim and repurpose some space within the Faculty.

The Indigenous Teaching and Learning Gardens grew in these spaces, and rendered them more particular places/Land with something to teach. The Gardens consist of planters on two balconies, and a larger, on-the-ground site. Each site is populated with plants indigenous to Alberta and the prairies. In many ways, the sites are consistent with school gardens found in schools and school yards across Canada. In others, they have served as a fallow ground for remarkable (re)volutionary teaching and learning for the community of students (undergraduate and graduate), faculty, staff, and Elders who have been involved in ongoing living relationships in and with the Gardens.

My colleagues and I have attended to and shared multiple stories from the Gardens (e.g. Wiseman, Glanfield, & Donald, 2012; Wiseman, Onuczko, Glanfield, & Donald, 2013; Wiseman, 2016) that demonstrate how they are a place where Indigenous and Western ways of knowing, being, and doing might circulate (and perhaps grow) together. Given the success of the project in terms of supporting pre-and in-service teachers in coming to understand that

engaging with Indigenous perspectives in science education is, as one student participant told us, “totally doable” (personal communication, May 8, 2012), colleagues in other parts of the country have expressed interest in the seeds of what we do / have done in the Gardens — presumably so that it might be reproduced in their own contexts. In response, we have emphasized that what we do may look indistinguishable from other science methods courses, but what is fundamentally different about teacher education in the Gardens, what might be (r)evolutionary, are the assumptions in which we grounded the project.

The root assumption is based on advice offered by Blackfoot Elder Narcisse Blood, a few years before his passing: “The worst thing to do is nothing and just go with the same” (personal communication, March 16, 2012). As such, the Gardens grew out of the idea that provincial policy regarding integration of Indigenous perspectives (e.g. Alberta Learning, 2002) is not primarily about the content of subject areas taught in schools. Instead, we assumed that such mandates are asking for something different in terms of pedagogy. So, even before the Gardens existed in a physical sense, we drew on ideas planted almost 50 years ago regarding two-way integration (NIB, 1972) so that in the Gardens, we might “learn from each other in balanced ways” (Donald, 2013, p. viii) as Treaty peoples with relationships and responsibilities to each other and the *Land* that we share. We also grounded the work in understanding that “the sustainability of human life and living depends on the repeated renewal of good relations with the entities that give us life” (Donald, 2013, p. viii, emphasis in original). These commitments led us to realize that teaching and learning in the Gardens emerges from living with the plants and each other in teaching and learning, but also from living with the plants and the Gardens on their own terms because there is no way to observe plant growth in a garden still covered in snow. In these ways, the Gardens opened up a place for everyone involved in the project to begin learning from *Land* as active teacher (Zinga & Styres, 2011), rather than about land as passive, inanimate object.

UNLEARNING COLONIALISM THROUGH LAND AND PLACE

As I am still coming to understand, *Land*, capitalized and italicized per Zinga and Styres (2011), indicates an identifiable geographical location where animate earth, air, and water come together with all the beings (human and other-than-human) who exist and have existed in physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual relationships with and within that place/Land. This is *Land* that is “storied” (Donald, 2009, p. 129), *Land* that speaks (Basso, 1996), *Land* that can be listened to (Hogan, 2000), *Land* as first teacher and pedagogy (Zinga & Styres, 2011), and *Land* that has birthed countless generations and accepted them back in death as a part of itself (Stan Wilson, 2001). In their discussion of place and the manner in which it is taken up in contemporary research, Tuck and McKenzie (2015) note that Western interpretations of *Land* as presented above can be overly romantic. They underline that “in Indigenous

worldviews, relationship to land are...familiar, and if sacred, sacred because they are familiar" (p. 51). This conception of *Land* largely falls outside Western ways of knowing, being, and doing (Cajete, 1999, 2006; Tuck & McKenzie, 2015), and leads to tensions in trying to understand the pedagogy of the Gardens. In fact, what I find happens in presenting about the Gardens is one of the activities Tuck and McKenzie (2015) describe as primary to European colonialism: classification. People suggest all sorts of existing and pre-framed constructs for how the Gardens might be classified — STEM, project-based learning, best practice — but nothing comes up more often than place-based education / learning.

Place-based education / learning emphasizes multidisciplinary engagement of students in problem solving or service related to issues emerging from local contexts (Calderon, 2014; Gruenewald, 2003, 2008; Styres, Haig-Brown, & Blimkie, 2013). It is a broad field with significant diversity in uptake and application, but often includes a focus on experiential learning, community engagement and connection, out-of-school / outdoor experiences, intergenerational learning, and student-led projects as a means rendering curriculum less abstract and more relevant to students' lives (Gruenewald, 2003). In these descriptions, I understand why people want to classify the Gardens as place-based learning, because the project shares many of the same features. At the same time, while place-based learning does not preclude Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing, Calderon (2014) and Styres, Haig-Brown, and Blimkie (2013) strongly suggest the approach is inadequate for decolonizing education. It does not account for "Land as sentient" (p. 192) and living, nor does it explicitly work to expose the manner in which settler assumptions about the world and the way it works have silenced Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing, separating humans from *Land* and *Land* from all its relations, thus breaking down pedagogical relationships that have been in place for thousands of years. Both Calderon (2014) and Styres, Haig-Brown, and Blimkie (2013) suggest that more critical approaches to place-based learning such as Gruenewald's (2003, 2008) critical pedagogy of place can be supportive in addressing some of these insufficiencies, particularly in relation to decolonizing goals, but conclude these approaches are still too grounded in Western ways of knowing, being, and doing to account for a significantly different understanding of place that includes "Land as living fundamental being" (Styres, Haig-Brown, & Blimkie, 2013, p. 192). Here, they identify one of my primary difficulties with the labeling of the Gardens: all the labels on offer are grounded in Western ways of knowing, being, and doing, while in the Gardens, Western ways appear to circulate together with Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing. So, identifying the Gardens too closely with pre-existing constructs limits what the Gardens (and the people who learn with and from them) are and what else they might become.

Moreover, these critiques of place-based learning remind me to attend to *Land* as active entity in understandings developed in specific places. That is, *Land* speaks, but does not necessarily speak the same language in every place. As I understand it, within Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing there is an intimate relationship between language and place/Land (Basso, 1996; Hermes, 2005; Little Bear, 2012; Watts, 2013) that arises because language is connected to and emergent from *Land*. Dwayne Donald has told me that the *Land* in Alberta speaks Blackfoot and Cree and struggles with English (personal communication, December 21, 2016). Watts (2013) explains the idea as “based upon the premise that land is alive and thinking and that humans and non-humans derive agency through the extensions of these thoughts” (p. 21). The implication is that without access to the language *Land* speaks, it is difficult to understand certain things related to place/Land; that certain ideas may only exist in particular languages (and places/Lands). In the case of the Gardens, as my colleague and mentor Florence Glanfield has said, we see evidence of these kinds of living relationships at play in “how the Gardens are leading with people to act for them” (personal communication, May 31, 2011). I am not claiming that everyone learns to hear the *Land* speak by engaging with place/Land. I am claiming that the experience in the Gardens strongly suggests that developing relationships with place/Land significantly impact educators’ (at all levels) understandings of how Indigenous and Western ways of knowing, being, and doing might circulate together in science curricula, and may lead to developing understandings that *Land* exists. Thus, place or place/Land in this sense is a fluid concept. For people unfamiliar with Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing, place may just be a location in which they are comfortable, but – because of that comfort – more able to enter into the process of unlearning colonialism through conversations in which Indigenous and Western ways of knowing, being, and doing begin to circulate together. For people more familiar with Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing, place may be an intimate relationship with and belonging to specific geographical places, place/Land or *Land*, that allows people to hear and understand what places have to teach.

These understandings of and experience with place, place/Land, *Land*, language, and the relationships between them thus inform my position as a science teacher educator. As I came home to Montreal to take up science teacher education in a different place, in a *Land* that speaks Kanien’kéha (Mohawk) and Algonquin, I kept returning to a point raised by Hermes (2005) about the relationship between place and language; *ma’iingan* removed from *Land* loses its spirit and becomes merely a wolf. It was clear to me that in attempts to consider how Indigenous and Western ways of knowing, being, and doing might circulate together in the context of Québec, I could not engage in “the illusion of benign translatability” (Battiste & Henderson, 2000, p. 80) by misplacing the Gardens from the University of Alberta to a *Land* that does not speak their language. And so I was faced with the question of how to find a place (or place/Land) at home.

FINDING A PLACE AT HOME

While I agree with Kovach (2009) that education transcends the limitations of policy, and it is therefore possible for educators to engage with Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing in teaching at any time, policy in place can also be helpful in opening up conversations. As Darren McKee (personal communication, December 2, 2011) said, it is the discomfort of having to do something that begins (r)evolution. Unlike most other provinces and territories Québec has no requirement for engaging with Indigenous perspectives across K-12 curricula, in science or any other subject area (Wiseman, 2016). And so, while I know that many of the underlying assumptions I bring to teacher education are based on what I have learned alongside Indigenous people, peoples, and communities, I was left wondering how I might begin explicit conversations with pre- and in-service educators in the courses I teach at McGill.

My first step was to examine the Québec Education Programs (QEP) for science (Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001, 2004, 2007). While the QEP positions science as human activity embedded in social and cultural contexts, the social and cultural context of science curricula in Québec is firmly ensconced in Western traditions. As an example, from Kindergarten through Grade 10, the QEP for science requires the integration of “cultural references” (e.g. Ministère de l'Éducation, 2004, p. 231) within science teaching and learning. These references include: historical figures and events related to science and technology, such as Leonardo da Vinci and the Industrial Revolution; community resources, such as museums and professional organizations; and application of science and technology to daily life. While the program notes that cultural references may extend beyond the examples provided in curricular documents, there are no explicit references beyond Western examples, with many of the references located not in Québec, Canada, or the Americas, but in Europe. Moreover, of the 81 scientists and engineers named in the general science programs from kindergarten to Grade 10, all of them are white, and only three are women. As such, cultural references in the program seem framed in very particular manner.

Given the above situation, there did not seem to be much place for consideration of Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing within the QEP. So, in my first term of teaching at McGill, instead of rushing into conversations that would be difficult to ground in pre-service teachers' understandings and experiences, I held onto a Blackfoot word shared by Narcisse Blood (personal communication, March 15, 2012), *aokakiosiin*, that describes becoming “wisely aware of where you're at.... Of things that you see – not just things you see, but things you don't see. That is very important, one component of pedagogy.” As I paid attention to where I was at, I found a place in which I might begin. Unsurprisingly, it was a garden.

Towards the end of my first term at McGill, I found out that the Faculty of Education had a relatively new outdoor learning space. As at the University of Alberta, it is a modest piece of reclaimed land between buildings. Knowing that the lot existed returned me to an early story from the pilot project in which we established the Gardens (see Wiseman et al., 2015). The pilot occurred during a winter term secondary science methods course. Conversations between the project Elder, the course instructor, myself, and other team members regarding what plants indigenous to Alberta should be included in the Gardens, were interspersed with research to determine what seeds were actually available at reasonable cost in Alberta in January. While there were obvious choices such as fireweed (the first plant to spring up after a fire), there was not a lot of overlap between the two lists, and so we dug deep into online research for alternatives. One morning, one of my colleagues arrived confident she had found an answer.

“Corn, beans, and squash” she said.

I shook my head, “Nope.”

“Why not?” she asked, looking somewhat deflated.

In some ways she was right. Corn, beans, and squash are plants indigenous to the Americas. They have been cultivated in many places for an extremely long time, but not in northern Alberta because it is too dry; and thus not the place/Land or *Land* for these plants. I knew about corn, beans, and squash, or the Three Sisters, from Corinne, who knew about them from her Tuscarora family, *Land*, and a cousin in another branch of the family, Jane Mt. Pleasant. Dr. Mt. Pleasant is an Associate Professor of Horticulture at Cornell University whose research focuses on Haudenosaunee agriculture (Cornell University, 2017). The Haudenosaunee are a confederation of six nations: Mohawk, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca, Onondaga, and Tuscarora (Haudenosaunee Confederacy, n.d.). McGill sits on Haudenosaunee territory, and specifically Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) *Land*⁶ (McGill University, 2017).

Finding out about the outdoor learning space helped me begin more grounded conversations with the people who had started the project, and with people in the Faculty's Office of First Nations and Inuit Education (OFNIE). OFNIE connected me with a graduate student from Kahnawà:ke with experience teaching in and with a Three Sisters garden. Together, we planned labs for elementary science methods where the Three Sisters would serve as a means of teaching and learning from place/Land, and also as a means of opening conversations about engaging with Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing within Québec. Still, I was experiencing some tension with regard to how to situate these conversations more broadly within science teaching and learning. I had some worries that in providing pre-service teachers with a solitary concrete example of what it might look like to have Indigenous and Western ways of knowing, being, and doing circulate together, they might think that was it,

that there were no deeper implications to this kind of work and learning in teaching, that for them there would be no (r)evolution. And then, the full and final report of the TRC (2015i) was released.

As I have already noted, the TRC (2015i) serves as both an acknowledgement of the horrors of residential schools in Canada, and a map for moving toward healthier relationships between Indigenous and settler peoples. It is a difficult and uncomfortable read, but it is also an important read. I have listened to my colleagues and students discuss how what it lays out has a place within social studies, history, perhaps language arts. I heard similar conversations at the University of Alberta with regard to the provincial mandates with respect to integration of Indigenous perspectives in education (Alberta Learning, 2002). The policy mandates regarding integration are more or less explicit regarding science (and other subject areas) (Wiseman, 2016). At first glance, the connection to science within the TRC is less explicit, but it is there, in the very last volume of the document, *Reconciliation*:

If human beings resolve problems between themselves but continue to destroy *the natural world*, then *reconciliation remains incomplete*. This is a perspective that we as Commissioners have repeatedly heard: that reconciliation will never occur unless we are also reconciled with the earth. Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous laws stress that humans must journey through life in conversation and negotiation with all creation. Reciprocity and mutual respect help sustain our survival. It is this kind of healing and survival that is needed in moving forward from the residential school experience. (TRC, 2015c, p. 13, emphasis added)

The natural world is the very focus of science teaching and learning in Canadian provinces and territories (Wiseman, 2016); as such, the TRC asks us to deeply consider how, why, and what we teach within the sciences.

Now, I begin each of my courses with an acknowledgement of territory, discussion of the TRC (2015i), residential schools, teachers' role and obligations in redressing relationships, and how my work and being as a teacher and researcher have developed alongside Indigenous people, peoples, and communities. I then share how the TRC is related to teaching and learning in the sciences to open up conversations about how reconciliation requires deep consideration of what, how, and why we teach within the sciences.

While I continue to develop this aspect of teaching, it is at play in all the courses I teach. It is perhaps best developed for the moment in elementary science methods where we relate Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing to concepts and big ideas considered within the QEP (Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001) such as climate change, what constitutes living, and systemic relations and interactions. The culminating exploration in elementary methods is embedded in consideration of the Three Sisters within the Haudenosaunee territory in which my students and I live. In this multi-week lab, we discuss plants indigenous to the Americas, selective breeding, the political, nutritional,

and spiritual importance of corn, beans, and squash to the Haudenosaunee, place/Land and *Land*, the history of the Three Sisters in the conquest and settlement of what is now Québec, and when possible, have a guest from Kahnawake who can share stories about the Three Sisters role in the long-ago emergence of the world. We also plant seeds, make observations of their growth, and then transplant them to a Three Sisters Garden in the Faculty's outdoor learning space.

Ultimately, I hope we harvest the Three Sisters in fall, gather and dry seeds for replanting, and use the vegetables as a base for a community feast where more stories and discussions about cycles of life, place/Land and *Land*, might emerge. In these early versions of the Three Sisters garden, however, we find we are sharing the bounty with many other-than-human relatives on campus and from nearby Mont Royal. Right now skunks, raccoons, and various types of birds and other small critters, are feasting on the fruits of our labour. But they too become part of the discussions in class in terms of relationships and what is needed to sustain life. On the last day of spring courses, we connect all these explorations and discussions back to the acknowledgement of territory on the first day of fall courses. Thus, I feel that pre-service teachers leave for their in-school placements not only with something to do with regard to engaging with Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing in science teaching and learning, but also with (at least) the beginnings of understanding how and why it is important to do it in this particular place/Land. And so, I have found a place at home which I hope brings about and contributes to (r)evolution.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Finding ways for ourselves and future generations to “live together in dignity, peace, and prosperity on these lands we now share” (TRC, 2015a, p. 13) is not a one-time event. It is something we must return to over and over again, and keep working on, together. What works in one place, or in a specific place/Land or *Land*, may not work in another, or not in the same way. (This too is a lesson in science). There is no easy answer for how Indigenous and Western ways of knowing, being, and doing might circulate together in science teaching and learning, just as there are no easy answers to reconciliation and unlearning colonialism. There are only multiple answers that are located and placed, that live and breathe in the *Land* and relations that exist in what is currently Canada – or more accurately in the territories and nations that what is currently Canada is mapped onto. What I offer here then is one small instance of taking up the work and living obligations in my place/Land. I am not saying that others can necessarily do what I have done, for the specificities of each person's context and their experiences are the only things that can help define what occurs in local places / Lands. But I have pointed to places for beginning, for coming to understand, for unlearning colonialism, and, perhaps, for (r)evolution. So, I end by inviting you to begin. *N'ya: weh.*

NOTES

1. The Final Report of the TRC (2015i) is divided into 6 volumes (TRC, 2015b-h). Where I am referring to the entire work, I will reference the web page where the entire report can be found (TRC, 2015i). Where I am drawing from a specific volume (e.g. TRC, 2015c), I will reference that volume only.
2. I thank the following organizations for the scholarship and research funding that supported much of this work: the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada, along with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research and Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. I also thank the people with whom I have worked closely in developing and learning from the Gardens – Stephanie Appelt, Dwayne Donald, Florence Glanfield, Isabel Kootenay, Alvine Mountain Horse, and Tracey Onuzcko – and the many students whose courses brought them to the Gardens.
3. I use the term Indigenous to refer to collectively to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people, peoples, and communities in Canada. I recognize that such collective terms do not reflect the locatedness and complexities of specific nations' and peoples' epistemological, ontological, and cosmological relationships with the world. I nonetheless use the term because, as Métis scholar Chelsea Vowel (2016) notes, there is nothing better available to us at this time.
4. I use the terms place, place/Land, and *Land* in different senses. While place may be specific – like Montréal, a garden, or a kitchen – it is a term that suggests a location that can be occupied, used, passed through etc. but not necessarily in a meaningful manner. *Land*, on the other hand, is as described by Zinga and Styres (2013), a meaning/full, sentient, geographic location from which specific peoples have emerged and with / within which people and specific peoples have engaged in long-term, mutually sustaining relationships supported by ceremony. Place or place/Land is a term I am using – at least for the moment – to consider places like the Gardens which have moved beyond place, but that may not yet be *Land*. The difference in terminology is not to categorize into distinct boxes so that place/Land is not, or cannot, simultaneously be *Land*. The difference is rather to indicate that in the process of learning / coming to know and in terms of the experience of long-term mutually, sustaining relationships, people / peoples may, in fact, have different relationships with the place and/or land.
5. Some of the people cited in this work informed my dissertation (Wiseman, 2016). Many waived anonymity and are identified by their own names. Those who chose a pseudonym are indicated with an asterisk.
6. Montreal has been a meeting place for a number of Indigenous peoples, including the Anishinabeg. In acknowledging territory at McGill, I include both the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg peoples.

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A COLLABORATIVE SHARING OF STORIES ON A JOURNEY TOWARD RECONCILIATION: “BELONGING TO THIS PLACE AND TIME”

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ABSTRACT. This paper emerges from the particular field experiences of three “settler” colleagues working in a teacher education program, each of whom found that their personal and professional relationships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people had a positive and constructive bearing on how they responded to provincial mandates and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action.

PARTAGE COLLABORATIF DE RECITS DANS LE CADRE D’UN CHEMINEMENT VERS LA RECONCILIATION : « APPARTENIR A CE TERRITOIRE ET CETTE EPOQUE »

RÉSUMÉ. Cet article a vu le jour suite à l’expérience vécue au sein d’un stage par trois collègues « colonisateurs » œuvrant dans un programme de formation des enseignants. Ceux-ci ont constaté que leur relation personnelle et professionnelle avec les Premières Nations, les Métis et les Inuits avaient eu une incidence positive et utile sur leur manière de répondre aux mandats provinciaux et aux appels à l’action formulés dans le cadre de la Commission de vérité et réconciliation.

We are story. All of us. What comes to matter then is the creation of the best possible story we can while we’re here; you, me, us together. When we can do that and we take the time to share those stories with each other, we get bigger inside, we see each other, we recognize our kinship — we change the world, one story at a time. Richard Wagamese (as cited in Janssens, 2017)

We three come from diverse backgrounds and places. Our voices and perspectives are influenced by the places that we called home. We are all settlers to this land; one is Indigenous Hawaiian and two are of Anglo-European ancestry. Our Notes from the Field is our way of reporting how we, as teacher educators, have and are preparing ourselves for the task of addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s (TRC, 2015) Calls to Action.

As we came together over the past few months to talk about how our individual stories could be told as a collective experience, it became clear that the process of examining and sharing our own pathways, significant events, experiences, and learning from and with Indigenous people and place possesses an inherent richness of its own. It is a story to be shared in the right time and place.

Although diverse in background and experience, we wished to walk a similar path with our student teachers. We started together with a new awareness, knowledge, understandings, and perspectives gained from our reading of King's (2012) *The Inconvenient Indian* and Dion's (2009) *Braiding Histories*. We talked about how to frame our work and how to utilize entry points and central ideas that we would circle back to throughout our program. Into our conversation came *Engaging Minds: Changing Teaching in Complex Times* (Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Kapler, 2008) as a way to think about what we are doing with student teachers. The rich text not only caused us to think more deeply about teaching and learning, but we also saw within it the significant threads of both Indigenous and Western ways of seeing the world.

Our conversations were built around a combination of personal narratives and the asking of questions to help us get to the core of what we felt would be sufficient for our student teachers and their own journeys to an understanding of Indigenous worldviews and perspectives; yet space was also intentionally left for explorations as we went along.

What follows are our three perspectives on our journey into Indigenous perspectives in teacher education and how teacher education can address the TRC's Calls to Action (2015). We do this in two ways. We recall that which took place for each of us as we went about our work, and we note that which has been learned since, all in reflection.

KIM'S STORY

In a speech to the Surrey Teachers Association, Wagamese (2016) said the cyclical nature of storytelling "has been happening since we first harvested language." He said during the telling of a story first we listen and then we hear. The difference? When we hear, a reaction happens that involves a mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual response. His articulation of storytelling struck me as it also reflects what happens when learning occurs. My learning lies within stories. Each time I pause within a story to ponder or reflect, I learn — especially with a story that lingers, or one that nudges, pokes, and prods my consciousness. When I give time and space and I have the patience to hear the story, I find the lesson — and I learn. The development of my hearing took time, but it has been essential in my learning story in relation to Indigenous Peoples. What I recall is that in the beginning of my work as an educator, I did all the talking and not enough listening. Over time, I learned to not only listen, but I also learned to hear.

It was while I was living and teaching in a northern Inuit community on the edge of the Arctic Ocean in the early 90s that I first confronted my cultural identity. Darren taught me. Darren was one of my third-graders — an Inuvialuit boy who one day proclaimed, “the White Man gets all the good stuff.” This brief yet powerful statement put me off kilter — it was the first time I *ever* had to confront my identity. As a multi-generational Canadian and non-Indigenous educator, my powerful and privileged position personified the dominant narrative of colonial ways of knowing. Although, as a teacher from the south, I was part of a minority in the community, I contributed to upholding the governing colonial narrative. Darren and others within the community provided me ample opportunities to examine my position as I lived and worked in the North. However, I was ill-equipped and lacked the self-awareness to fully understand my role and to be culturally responsive in this unfamiliar context. Musqueam Elder, Larry Grant (2015) has said, “It is quite a thing to ground yourself with who you are” (personal communication, September 2, 2015). It is quite a thing and it feels like a foundational layer to the complex nature of this work toward reconciliation. Undeniably, those stories stayed with me as they had caused a severe fracture in my sense of identity. Those pivotal moments and memories from my experiences in the North sparked an awakening for me, which inspired me to return to school.

Sharilyn taught me. She was my mentor and advisor while I completed my MEd at the University of British Columbia (UBC). Sharilyn was the witness to my stories of the North. It was the first time I engaged in professional and intentional conversations with an Indigenous person about education. My work at UBC is where I began to confront and understand my cultural identity and my role as educator. While in the North, I had disregarded the community’s visions for their future. I did not recognize their established voices in the creation of meaning concerning curriculum and education. As a non-Indigenous educator, I was blinded and unaware of my status and cultural position, and did not know I needed to respond to my students in a more culturally thoughtful way. As long as I was the eager “tourist” acting as missionary to the people, I would remain on the outside separated from the story, unable to hear or learn. While at UBC, Sharilyn taught me to ask questions. She helped me develop a reflective practice, which lead me to community-based research, ultimately deepening my understanding of what it means to be a culturally responsive / responsible educator. She first taught me to listen, and then hear.

After teaching in Vancouver for several years, I became a Faculty Associate at Simon Fraser University (SFU). At the time, the University was in its second year of implementing a mandate set out by the Teacher Regulation Branch (B.C. Ministry of Education, 2012), which required all pre-service teachers to learn about Aboriginal Education. This timing coincided with the events acknowledging the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (2015) final report and the calls to action. Although an uncertain path for many of us

non-Indigenous educators, it was also a necessary time for engagement and learning — it was essential that our community of educators take up our responsibilities to address the mandate and the Calls to Action. Kau’i taught me. Kau’i, my mentor, my colleague, and my friend, is still teaching me. Kau’i reminded me to do what Sharilyn taught me — read the theory or policy and learn the protocols. She reminded me to be curious and to inquire. Kau’i taught me the importance of acknowledging the land; she taught me how to sit in the circle and listen so I could hear; she taught me to learn alongside the multiple diverse perspectives of First Nation Elders, scholars, leaders, and educators. I learned to seek out opportunities, I found the courage and humility to listen, and then hear. Through the teaching of educators like Kau’i, my practice was forever transformed — I was the teacher but I was a learner too.

As a teacher educator at Simon Fraser University (SFU), I worked with a module of pre-service teachers who specifically wanted to work through their teacher education program while also exploring Indigenous perspectives, pedagogies and principles. As developing educators, I wanted my students to examine their relationship with Indigenous Peoples through an exploration of assumptions, stereotypes, and misunderstandings. My mentors had taught me to be responsive and to develop a sense of reciprocity within our community of learning. Collectively, my students and I developed our conceptualizations of Aboriginal Education and saw how those frames could be reflected in our practice. Again, as a non-Indigenous educator, I committed to stepping aside to allow the voices of Indigenous Elders, teachers, and scholars to mentor and teach my students to provide an authentic, diverse perspective. In consciously acknowledging my privilege and my position, I remembered to step aside to allow those with the wisdom and knowledge to guide us.

My learning comes from my (re)remembering of my stories. The story is long and complex, and the story is also unfinished as learning is life-long. Through my reflective practice, I’ve been able to acknowledge the significant relationships, which have taught, mentored, and guided me. It is truly through my experiences in relation to others, with others, and alongside others where the growth occurs. My story continues to unfold — I commit to listening deeply and actively in order to hear so that I may continue to learn.

COLLEEN’S STORY

In order to move forward or stay in place, the hummingbird’s wings move in a back and forth motion, creating what might be called an infinity symbol. The movement of wings back and forth resonates with me as I have endeavoured to put into words the story of my learning journey in Aboriginal Education. I have played with a number of metaphors because it is not easy to articulate something that is a dynamic and multi-layered process. Every experience, every conversation propels me forward and, at the same time, more deeply into the work.

I began my journey into Aboriginal Education with student teachers in the Fall of 2013, at the time when the Truth and Reconciliation events were taking place in Vancouver. I remember being cautious and a little worried, as student teachers took their first steps to bring forward Aboriginal perspectives, histories and ways of knowing. I asked: *What resources are you using? Who recommended these resources? Is this a topic that Grade 5 and 6 students can handle?*

I learned of the “Paddle for Reconciliation” event at False Creek, sponsored by Reconciliation Canada (2013a), because my Dragon Boat Team accepted the invitation to participate. I started out that day to capture the event in photographs. The first Indigenous person I encountered was a parent from my former school. He was there to paddle with his family. It was a brief and heartfelt encounter, a connection, and then I was off to see more. Sitting on a rock by the water’s edge, the words “*Namwáyut* – We Are All One” passed by me on shirts worn by many...grace, beauty, hope, sorrow...the heartbeat of the drum... This was a day of intense and mixed emotion demonstrated in the expression in individual faces, and the silences in between the greetings and celebration. I am grateful that I realized it was a moment in time where I needed to simply slow down and be fully present in this place, realizing that the events of that day were not an end point to celebrate something accomplished but rather a beginning step on a long journey forward.

On a rainy day later that Fall, I came to Georgia Street to participate in the “Walk for Reconciliation.” We were a sea of colourful umbrellas, all vying for a clear view of the speakers that would soon grace the stage. It was an interesting contrast of images – the city backdrop, the traditional regalia, a speech by Bernice King, daughter of Martin Luther King, and the Elders that led us forward and back across the Georgia viaduct. We walked. We were led. I remember how the Aboriginal leaders of our walk started to come back toward us as we walked within the crowd. This time I was not a thoughtful observer from the side. I was joining in. The pathway did not wind...it reflected two opposite directions...a coming and going that allowed us to see one another...

A student teacher recently asked me how I have come to be where I am in my understandings and commitment to infusing Aboriginal Perspectives into my work as a teacher educator. It was a thoughtful and important challenge. If I only had 10 minutes or 1000 words to answer that question, what would I say?

I am still grappling with which pathways have actually led me to this place in time and which pathway I will take next. However, when I think about my learning over time, this is what I am most sure of:

My own sense of place, and my belief in place-based education, are important entry points for me in doing this work. I grew up on the unceded / unconquered territories of the Syilx / Okanagan people, specifically the Upper Similkameen. I had many opportunities to be connected to the natural world,

and time to discover the natural rhythms of the land on which I played and lived. My grandparents were highly influential in helping me to see and listen to the world around me. In this place, I have a deeply rooted sense of home. How does that impact and influence how I walk?

My appreciation for the more-than-human¹ world has always influenced my practice as an educator, and the importance of our connection to the land seems to filter through every learning opportunity. When I became a teacher educator in 2013, a required reading was *The Inconvenient Indian: The Curious Account of Native People in North America* by Thomas King (2012). I remember the impact of his words, and the sense of being “rattled” because it challenged my deeply rooted sense of home, never having thought of who might have lived on the land before my great-grandparents settled there. It started deeper conversations. It made me sad. I could only imagine the impact of loss of place because my sense of place has shaped my growth, my values, and my respect for the more-than-human world. How might we work together to discover a fabric that consistently honours Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives, helping to teach us about ourselves, about our relationship with one another, and about our relationship with the land?

Prior to coming to SFU, I had the opportunity to engage and be guided in community learning with and from Indigenous elders and parents in my schools. Through dialogue, and shared experiences I continued to learn.

Dion and Dion, through *Braiding Histories* (2009), have brought forward the importance of the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. Dion suggests an examination of one’s biases and assumptions through an assignment she names the File of (Un)certainities (Dion & Dion 2009). The importance of learning with and from Indigenous voices through authentic, honest and meaningful dialogue is one pathway we, as educators, can follow. I reflect on the people who have directly or indirectly shared their stories with me and have helped to deepen my understandings and move me forward.

Kau’i is a consistently wise mentor for me. She has the ability to plant ideas, and models patience and the giving of space to allow them to grow. She reminds us that it is “drop by drop” that we deepen our ability to notice, our awareness of what is important, our knowledge, and our commitment to facilitate change.

Wagamese has offered powerful insights through his writing. In particular, *One Story, One Song* (Wagamese, 2011) has become something that I share as a way of making connections. For me, he reminds us of the important interplay of humility, trust, introspection, and wisdom in all learning, in all healing, and in all journeys forward.

Brad Baker, Squamish Nation, District Principal for Aboriginal Education North Vancouver School District, is a steadfast presence and mentor. His presentations to my student teachers, over the course of three years, have

helped me know his own history and story. His guidance encourages me in the same way he inspires others to “go forward with courage.” (SD44 Aboriginal Education, 2018)

I explore my own pathway to understanding and advocacy, while at the same time try to help others discover their own. It seems that the more I come to know and understand, the more I discover I have yet to learn and do. My own learning journey is a perpetual back and forth motion, like the movement of the hummingbird’s wings, as I pull from past experiences, and discover new understandings, believing that there are infinite possibilities in the journey forward. I have learned that it is a journey that needs both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people working in relationship, moving together, and exploring the many layers of responsibility and possibility... “belonging to this place and time”(Chief Joseph as cited in Reconciliation Canada, 2013b).

KAU’I’S STORY

“Let us find a way to belong to this time and place together. Our future, and the well being of all our children rests with the kind of relationships we build today.”

Chief Dr. Robert Joseph, O.B.C. (Reconciliation Canada, 2013b)

Kim’s and Colleen’s stories serve as two examples of learning journeys that brought to light their understanding of their own relationships to Indigenous peoples. My learning journey is one of awakening to the significance of ceremony and its role in education. In his book, *Look to the Mountain: An Ecology of Indigenous Education*, Pueblo scholar Gregory Cajete (1994) tells us the “learning journey begins and ends with spirit. It begins with appropriate orientation, acknowledging relationships, setting intentions” (p. 69).

On a warm day in late August, a Burning Ceremony had been arranged prior to the opening of Simon Fraser University’s Fall 2016 President’s Dream Colloquium: *Returning to the Teachings: Justice, Identity and Belonging in the 21st Century* (Simon Fraser University [SFU], 2016). I was enrolled in this as a course and when asked to lend a helping hand for this ceremonial event, I was honoured to do so.

Assigned to the parking lot with a grad student colleague, we waited on the side of the road in quiet anticipation of the arrival of the Coast Salish knowledge keepers and ceremonial practitioners. Soon a red compact car approached, slowly gliding to a stop next to us, and the woman in the front lowered her window. A quiet smile and the scent of cedar wafted through the opening. The woman’s name was Thelma and the driver was her brother Smitty. I got into the car to guide them to the drop-off place for the cedar they brought. As we drove, I discovered that Thelma and Smitty were the children of the late Elder Dr. Vincent Stogan, Tsimalano. I had met their father when he shared his teachings of “Hands Forward, Hands Back” at UBC. Prior to the

hiring of Indigenous faculty at SFU, there were many times when I'd drive from SFU to UBC to seek the guidance of Indigenous educators Verna Kirkness and Joanne Archibald. They were integral in nurturing my efforts to be a respectful, responsible, and responsive teacher educator as I attended to the Indigenous issues within the context of teacher education.

Thelma and her brother guided the collective work of Indigenous traditional knowledge holders and cultural practitioners from Katize, Musqueam, and Squamish Nations. The Burning Ceremony included the SFU President and Deans, and the course professors, one from the Faculty of Education and the other from the School of Criminology; each of them was given a task, a responsibility in this ceremony. We stood around a steady fire centered in a clearing of stones, surrounded by our few Cedar relations left standing on the south side of the Science Complex. Thelma and Smitty oriented us, acknowledged the presence of Spirit, Indigenous Ancestors, and ourselves with our histories, and then explained the intentions of the Ceremony. Through the prayers and the burning of prepared foods and blankets, the Coast Salish Ancestors were respectfully acknowledged. Guided by Indigenous knowledge holders, representatives of the University actively participated in the ceremonial process of seeking spiritual support and knowledge in the launching of this President's Dream Colloquium. At that moment when the smell of cedar wafted on the smoke surrounding us, I was dwelling in the past, present, and future. Turning to us encircling the quiet fire, Thelma announced the Ancestor's blessings for this President's Dream Colloquium.

When our course, *Returning to the Teachings: Justice, Identity and Belonging in the 21st Century*, began in September, those in attendance were also brought into the realm of Ceremony. On this occasion, Chief Joseph, Ambassador for Reconciliation Canada and Special Advisor to Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, was scheduled as our first speaker. Drumming and singing announced his entry into the theatre. The hosting First Nations present conducted the ceremonial practice of blanketing. Chief Joseph had traveled from his home to the colloquium at a time when his family and community were mourning the loss of one of his relatives. He let us know that coming to speak to us was his responsibility as the Ambassador for Reconciliation Canada, but he would need to return home and therefore was unable to join us in our seminar discussions. He spoke to us about the truths of residential schooling as he described the harm he personally experienced. He spoke of the impact of that trauma upon him and his responses to that trauma. He spoke with humility and strength of his commitment to make things right and his responsibility to lead by example. At the conclusion of Chief Joseph's talk, the host First Nation gave him a brushing, *Xwip'an* (in the Coast Salish language of Halkomelem), to cleanse him in mind, body, and spirit and to rid him of anything negative in preparation for his journey home.

The President's Dream Colloquium was integrated with Indigenous ceremonies of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tseil-Waututh as well as dialogue, what the faculty organizers say, "creates a rich mobilization, diverse community engagement and capacity building for a new vision" (SFU, 2016). Cultural practitioners and knowledge-keepers from one of the four Coast Salish Nations hosted the seminars led by artists, community activists, lawyers, and academics. Students were organized into work groups with responsibilities that included helping each First Nations host group, preparing the meal that followed each colloquium, assisting the Elders, arranging the blankets, and gathering cedar boughs. Over the course of the term, relationships were forged between each host First Nation group and the students in the course. As testimony to this relationship building process was an invitation from a cultural practitioner of *Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw*, Squamish Nation, to our entire class to attend as guests to a special Longhouse gathering in his community to honour those residential survivors who were sent away from family and community to residential schools.

Each session's discussion of the concepts of justice, identity and belonging, brought into focus the disparities experienced by Indigenous peoples as described on the SFU website, (SFU, 2016, "President's Dream Colloquium, Returning to the Teachings"). The TRC's Calls to Action (2015) underscored the importance for all Canadians to be knowledgeable of the unconscionable challenges encountered regularly by First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples within Canada's education, economic, environmental, health, and justice systems. The introductory words of Chief Joseph had opened a door for me to join in the collective action of reconciliation and to "find a way to belong to this time and place together" with Indigenous peoples of these lands and with other settlers. This course gave us opportunities to form valuable relationships with one another as we undertook our assigned chores, prepared for presentations, and participated in class discussions. We gradually coalesced into a collective of learners who listened with care and who sought to understand perspectives different from our own. An interdisciplinary approach was extended to us through the array of guest presentations in the locations and spaces that allowed us to share feelings and reflections and discuss ideas.

The inclusion of ceremony to honour the invited guests and scholars set a respectful tone for each gathering. I was (re)introduced to the sacredness of being together, which prompted me to seek what Cajete (1994) had described as "the place of thought, the place of the deepest respect and sacredness, the place of good life, the place of Highest Thought" (p. 70). The President's Dream Colloquium was indeed unique, modeling Indigenous ways of being and knowing and demonstrating what is possible in a place of higher education as we go about our work addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

Kim, Colleen, and I formed a writing group soon after completing our work together in SFU's teacher education program. The MJE Call for Proposals prompted us to write about our experiences as "settlers" attending to the TRC Calls to Action. Since that time, our learning journeys have continued to move our everyday lives towards enacting our commitment to the wellbeing of Indigenous peoples. We have taken the time to share our stories, and in doing so, as our opening quote from the late Richard Wagamese expressed, we did get bigger inside, we saw and see each other, we acknowledge our kinship — and we will contribute to changing the world, one story at a time.

NOTES

1. Indicates kinship to entities that are not human persons. It's an English translation of an idea in a number of Indigenous ways of understanding that doesn't translate well into English except in the terms provided.

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RESPONDING TO THE CALLS TO ACTION: REFLECTIONS ON TEACHING MANDATORY INDIGENOUS EDUCATION TO TEACHER CANDIDATES IN ONTARIO

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ABSTRACT. Drawing on reflexive conversations, we describe our experiences teaching a new mandatory course in Indigenous education at Western University in London, Ontario. By discussing the successes, challenges, and mistakes made while teaching this course, we hope to continue to decolonize our practice as settlers, PhD students, and educators with the goal of working towards reconciliation in education and society.

RÉPONDRE AUX APPELS À L'ACTION : RÉFLEXIONS SUR L'ENSEIGNEMENT D'UN COURS OBLIGATOIRE EN ÉDUCATION AUTOCHTONE OFFERT AUX FUTURS ENSEIGNANTS EN ONTARIO

RÉSUMÉ. S'appuyant sur des discussions réflexives, nous décrivons notre expérience d'enseignement d'un nouveau cours obligatoire portant sur l'éducation autochtone et offert à l'Université Western, en Ontario. En partageant les succès vécus, les défis rencontrés et les erreurs faites pendant l'enseignement de ce cours, nous espérons poursuivre la décolonisation de notre pratique en tant que colonisateurs, doctorants et éducateurs, dans le but de contribuer à la réconciliation dans le domaine de l'éducation et dans la société.

Throughout the six volumes of *The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC, 2015) identified glaring gaps in the education of non-Indigenous Canadians regarding Indigenous perspectives and experiences, particularly the residential school system. These TRC findings call for both age-appropriate curriculum

and teacher training, supports, and resources for the K-12 and post-secondary sectors (TRC, 2015). People for Education (2016), a not-for-profit organization that advocates for public education in Ontario, identifies this “knowledge gap” as “the lack of knowledge about the history, cultures, and perspectives of Indigenous peoples in Canada,” which can be improved through programming, resources, and professional learning activities for educators (p. 1). The Association of Canadian Deans of Education (ACDE, 2010) has also recognized that faculties of education have a “responsibility to expand educators’ knowledge about and understanding of Indigenous education” (p. 2). In addition, the professional regulatory body for educators in Ontario, where both authors are qualified to teach, the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT), recognizes the need for teacher training specifically focused on integrating Indigenous content. In its *Accreditation Resource Guide*, a companion to the *Ontario College of Teachers Act* (1996), the OCT (2017) suggested that teacher training programs “ensure that candidates recognize their responsibility to educate all students in their classrooms [about] Indigenous histories, cultures, perspectives and ways of knowing as important within the Ontario context in which all students are living and learning” (p. 33). Similarly, the Ontario Ministry of Education’s (2007) framework document for its Indigenous Education Strategy identified that all students are expected to learn about Indigenous peoples’ histories, cultures, and perspectives, what we refer to throughout our Notes as Indigenous education.

While the need for training and professional development about Indigenous peoples and histories has been made clear, and while Bachelor of Education programs in Ontario have been extended to two years, teacher education programs are required to deliver mandatory Indigenous content (Ontario, 2016), but not specific Indigenous education courses (People for Education, 2016). Western University in London, Ontario, however, recently responded to these calls to support teacher training in this area through the introduction of a mandatory course, previously offered as an elective. The Bachelor of Education program in Ontario is a two-year post-graduate degree in which graduates become qualified to teach in specific grade divisions (i.e. primary / junior, junior / intermediate, or intermediate / senior). The course, titled, “Aboriginal Education: Toward a Decolonizing Pedagogy for Teachers,” is a multi-section, required course for all teacher candidates in Year One of the program starting in 2016-2017. The course has broad ranging, multiple, and critical learning objectives, which include teaching about Canada’s colonial history and contemporary issues facing Indigenous communities, alongside more “practical” teacher training concerns such as culturally relevant and appropriate instructional strategies, and the location and vetting of suitable resources.

These Notes from the Field reflect just a few of the personal, epistemological, and pedagogical considerations that arose during our time teaching this course. These notes developed through a process of “kitchen table reflexivity” where we came together “through informal conversations” to “critically and reflexively

engage with the fluidity of [our] positionalities” (Kohl & McCutcheon, 2015, p. 748). Following Kohl and McCutcheon (2015), we engaged in “everyday talk” as a cathartic process wherein we discussed, questioned, bragged, complained, contemplated, collaborated, and more, all the while centering the ways in which our positionalities influenced our teaching and learning. These Notes from the Field discuss the complexities of instructing the course, our attempts to have our work contribute to the process of reconciliation, what worked as well as where we struggled. It is our hope that by making our teaching practice public in these Notes from the Field, our work may assist others’ learning, teaching, and engaging with Indigenous perspectives in teacher education.

A note, then, is needed about who we are and how we came to be instructors for this course. We are non-Indigenous women who identify as white settlers and are currently PhD candidates at the same Faculty of Education. We were also, during the 2016-2017 academic year, instructors in the same teacher education program. Kaitlyn’s research is concerned with understandings of reconciliation among educators following a TRC-inspired event held in south-western Ontario. Natalie’s work is focused on the perspectives of in-service teachers about Ontario’s Indigenous education policy and its impact, or lack thereof, on their practice, classrooms, and schools. We are both interested in the ways reconciliation and decolonization are being supported and/or inhibited by education in Ontario. We understand decolonization to be an ongoing process that involves both personal or internal processes (TRC, 2015), along with more formalized external changes within society (i.e., changes to institutions, structures, etc., Battiste, 2013).

As PhD candidates, Bachelor of Education instructors, and new scholars, we agree with the position taken by the ACDE which advocates for collaborative and focused efforts that support transformational education in the area of Indigenous education that critiques the “status quo” and moves away from deficit reasoning around the achievement “gaps” which persist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (ACDE, 2010, p. 2). We also recognize the important role and responsibility teacher training has to play in “expand[ing] educators’ knowledge about and understanding of Indigenous education” (ACDE, 2010, p. 2) so as to address the education gap (People for Education, 2016; Pratt & Danyluk, 2017) that exists between the knowledge necessary to support efforts towards reconciliation and decolonization of education (Battiste, 2013), and the status quo. Perhaps most importantly, we acknowledge our own deficits, as settlers, but are hopeful that our writing may contribute to the forging of a new relationship – that by making public the successes, and, essentially, the mistakes we made in our classes – we can improve our own practice, include others in the discussion, and participate in moves toward reconciliation.

THE COURSE

Embracing the TRC's Calls to Action for education, with our own philosophies of education rooted in the need for decolonization (Battiste, 2013) and appreciation of critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970/1993), we set out to prepare teacher candidates for the process of "unsettling." For Regan (2010), this requires "interacting differently with Indigenous people – with vulnerability, humility, and a willingness to stay in the decolonizing struggle of our own discomfort" (p. 13). Based on our readings of Regan, among others, we understand unsettling to include personal, epistemological disruption, which we hoped to initiate among our teacher candidates. Based on Kaitlyn's experiences as a student in a similar course, and for both Natalie and Kaitlyn through conversations with other teacher educators, we anticipated that many of our students would need to be made aware of Canada's colonial past and present, and the legacies that bear witness to them. More importantly, they would need to critically consider the ways their own lives intersect with the legacies and ongoing processes of colonialism – their privilege, their own marginalization, their complicity, and their resistance. In order to join and encourage them on this journey, we generally focused on content exploring Canada's existence as a colonial entity as a foundation for the course, with the goal of "upsetting [students'] investment in seeing Canada as a fair, generous, and tolerant nation" (Cannon, 2011, p. 21). We did so with hopes that students would begin to develop the skills and understanding necessary to facilitate the respectful and responsible use of practical strategies and resources in their future classrooms.

Using the Ontario Ministry of Education's (2007) *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework (Framework)*, the policy document informing Indigenous education in the province, we attempted to garner buy in from our students about their professional obligation for teaching all students about Indigenous peoples' histories, cultures, and perspectives, and for supporting Indigenous student learning. In Kaitlyn's classes, personal connections were secured among some students by asking them to identify and research the treaty that covers their hometown, in areas where land has been ceded through treaty, or the geographic area where they hope to teach. Many were unaware of treaties or their role in settler occupation of traditional Indigenous territory. Natalie facilitated personal connections for some students through a writing activity about students' personal teaching philosophies and treaty knowledge, alongside a class discussion about why they thought they were being required to take an Aboriginal education course and how they felt about it. Overall, we encouraged our students to make connections with the course through the acknowledgement that "we are all Treaty people who share responsibility for taking action on reconciliation" (TRC, 2015, p. 7). It is also noteworthy that we acknowledged that some land in Canada has not been ceded through treaty negotiation and asked students to explore issues concerning these circumstances.

All course sections followed the same course syllabus, but we each approached content and instruction in pedagogically different ways. Our process of unsettling, in covering Canada's colonial context and our individual and collective relationships to it, promoted a process of deconstruction which focused on critiquing the beliefs and assumptions students held about education and Indigenous peoples. To a lesser extent, we explored pedagogical implications for teaching Indigenous students, because, as Ontario's *Framework* (2007) makes clear, Indigenous education is for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. In our own versions of the course, we covered residential schools, namely the ongoing legacy and intergenerational trauma, and language and identity formation, including the role language has to play in cultural preservation. Through our engagement with Indigenous communities and the works of Indigenous scholars, we recognized respect as an important component of teaching and learning in the area of Indigenous education more specifically. As such, both Natalie and Kaitlyn worked to model respectful pedagogies in their classes: that is, the demonstration and respect for students' knowledges, perspectives, and decision-making. This flexibility allowed each instructor to frame issues through a particular lens: for Kaitlyn, through treaty responsibilities and settler complicity in our current colonial context, and Natalie, through attempts to create a space for teacher candidates to acknowledge their positionality and challenge settler colonial logics (Wolfe, 2006). In our discussions throughout, and after the end of the course, three themes emerged: competing priorities; students' fear, anxiety, and/or complacency; and the impact of time constraints on our programming.

COMPETING PRIORITIES

Competing priorities between instructor and students manifested in the content that we covered, notwithstanding limits imposed by the shared course syllabus, how much time we spent on particular areas, and our capacity to meet student requests. We both needed to balance providing students with the practical tools to take up Indigenous content in their practice and providing them with the necessary background knowledge and skills to take up this work in responsible and ethical ways. As settler women, we felt most knowledgeable about settler complicity and the ways in which colonialism has impacted the relationship between Indigenous peoples and settlers; therefore, we spent much of our time covering this area. In contrast, students appeared to be preoccupied with "the cultural other" and "how to 'deal with' the other in the classroom" (St. Denis & Schick, 2003, p. 78, emphasis in original). For example, students were particularly interested in hearing about or from the local First Nation communities, with specific requests for a guest speaker. While we appreciate the value of guest speakers for understanding cultural context, we felt that it was first necessary to focus on understanding settler responsibility for colonialism and its impacts on Indigenous communities. We also recognized that as

our students emerged from the program, they would be spread out across the province, and therefore, needed to seek out information about their specific teaching contexts and the communities they would serve. Both of us, however, provided detailed information about the First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Leads now required in each school board (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016) and stressed the importance of connecting with them, but acknowledge this as a serious limitation of our course design.

In the classroom, priorities between the instructor and students differed in that both of our groups of students were insistent on acquiring tangible resources they could use in their classrooms. Teacher candidates frequently asked for prepared lesson plans or kits. In understanding this course as the beginning of the work set before them, we instead took time to focus on the lack of inclusion or biased content about Indigenous peoples in curriculum, the deficit perspective perpetuated in the media and resources about Indigenous peoples, and strategies for assessing resources that they could use with their students. By doing so, we hoped these future teachers would gain skills necessary to adequately implement programming, wherever it may come from and in whatever form.

We also found competing priorities at an institutional level. While the Bachelor of Education program now includes a nine-week course dedicated to “Aboriginal education” and “decolonizing pedagogy” (terms used in the course titles), we question how much these topics are a priority at an institutional level. We ask, is decolonizing or unsettling content integrated across all courses? Our status as PhD student labour also raised concerns about our own priorities, and the ways being both commuter students and instructors impacted our capacities in the course, namely our ability to make the important and necessary steps to build relationships with the local communities which we consider to be an important component of working in Indigenous education. Finally, we recognize that our students, as individuals with their own relationships and responsibilities, necessarily prioritized their courses and assignments in a variety of ways. Thus, students often came to class unprepared, not having read the assigned texts. Both instructors also experienced instances where students clearly communicated that they understood the work of their other classes as more valuable than the work done in our classes, specifically the creation of lesson plans in their subject teachable classes. These competing priorities were a challenge for negotiating our next theme: students’ fear, anxiety, and complacency.

FEAR, ANXIETY, AND/OR COMPLACENCY

By asking students to step out of their comfort zones, we were prepared for expressions of fear and anxiety. Our groups of predominantly self-identified non-Indigenous students admitted their lack of understanding and fear of the

course content in introductory activities designed to help us get to know our students. While “defensive anger, fear of change, and fears of losing [one’s] personal and cultural identities” (Boler, 1999, p. 176) are common reactions when students are asked to examine their beliefs and assumptions, we observed that some students embraced this fear and anxiety and critically engaged with the material and their own positionalities. This sometimes came in the form of requests for additional information and resources, or reaching out for advice on how to integrate specific components in their placements following the course. In other instances, some students retreated and spent time in class on their laptops, tablets, and/or phones in non-course-based activities, despite having collaboratively developed classroom expectations at the beginning of the course that teacher candidates were to use their devices respectfully. Observing students’ fear and anxiety brought up anxiety in us as settlers, students, and instructors which we worked through together in our kitchen table discussions so that we could best serve our students, and our own needs.

Having dedicated our graduate work and aspects of our personal lives to the field of Indigenous education, and specifically the role of non-Indigenous educators in contributing to efforts of reconciliation through education, complacency was a lesser expected reaction to course learning. Complacency was expressed in two ways: by those who thought they had done the necessary work of the course because they had taken an Indigenous Studies course in their undergraduate program, and others who were simply uninterested in engaging with the material of the course at all, which might also be described as resistance. These student reactions required us to shift our approaches so that we better incorporated students’ emotions into the planning process and the strategies we used to engage students in the classroom. In doing so, we attempted to target lessons and activities on a more individual level, seeking out resources and connections specific to students’ teachable areas, locations, and past experiences. For example, towards the end of the course, both instructors prepared “resource fairs” so that students could interact with specific resources (i.e., lesson plans, books, activity kits) targeted at specific divisions or teachable subjects. Such efforts succeeded in gaining enthusiasm from some resistant students, however, complacency and resistance remained a problematic presence in our classes.

TIME (AND OTHER) CONSTRAINTS

Both “competing priorities” and feelings of “fear, anxiety, and complacency” are wrapped in the issue of time: a) how could we cover all the content necessary to meet the goals of this course in nine weeks; b) how could we meet the needs of all types of students, in large classes, with different teachable subjects in different division levels; and c) how could we promote lifelong unsettling learning among our teacher candidates in the little time we had with them? We found that a lack of time prevented us from engaging in the difficult, yet

crucial work, of coming face-to-face with one's discomfort, fear, and anxiety about the content. We often found ourselves exposing students to new ideas, and then packing up the class and moving onto a new topic the next week. Students also indicated they felt rushed in activities and, at times, some displayed frustration about having to cover so much content in so little time. We left the course feeling as though we introduced important concepts to our students that could contribute to decolonizing their practice, but also that it would be prudent to see them again next year to continue developing their knowledge and skills. Ultimately, the course feels like an unfinished project.

OUR LEARNING

Following our kitchen table reflexive discussions, we, with another of our teaching colleagues from the course, were fortunate enough to share our experiences at a province-wide forum on education as a response to the TRC's Calls to Action. These ongoing, collaborative, and critical discussions offer important opportunities to position our practice for the constructive criticism of others in our field. We appreciate these opportunities and recognize the important role they play in enabling us to interrogate our approaches so that we continuously improve our practice and better understand our role as settler educators in Indigenous education.

These Notes from the Field have called attention to the complex nature of implementing the TRC's Calls to Action on education for reconciliation by focusing on a specific Bachelor of Education course in Ontario dedicated to "decolonizing education." With institutions and specific programs across the province and country looking for ways to embed the Calls to Action in their programming, despite the Ontario government's recent cancellation of curriculum revisions based on Indigenous histories, cultures, and perspectives, careful consideration must be given to implementation plans and the long-term sustainability of such activities. In our experience, the course discussed above was often the teacher candidates' first exposure to the concepts of decolonization and Indigenous education, which required significant intellectual and tangible resourcing to meet students' needs. Furthermore, we recommend that such efforts have a clear purpose or learning goal(s) so that all levels of implementation (i.e., administration, faculty, students) understand why such activities are necessary.

We found that competing priorities; students' fear, anxiety, and complacency; and constraints of time and other factors led to challenges in our classrooms that impacted the content we covered, our pedagogical approaches, and certainly our understandings of what it means to be settler instructors of such a course. We suggest that a single course alone does little to address Battiste's (2013) second prong of decolonized education — a reconstruction embedded with Indigenous ways of knowing and being — which we envision as a vital

component of our work. We also recognize that this course asks our teacher candidates to develop a decolonizing pedagogy in a colonial system, which presents challenges for educational change at an operational level (i.e., school calendar, grading, etc.). However, we reiterate that such a course must be understood as the beginning of these educators' responsibility for decolonizing their practice, and ultimately their lives, and that ongoing efforts must be made, individually and collectively in programs and learning institutions, to achieve the goal of meaningful reconciliatory learning for students and teachers.

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PROCESSUS D'ENGAGEMENT DES PREMIÈRES NATIONS, MÉTIS ET INUITS DANS LA RÉVISION DU CURRICULUM ONTARIEN

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RÉSUMÉ. Ces notes de terrain décrivent le processus de révision du curriculum ontarien qui s'arrime avec les appels à l'action de la Commission de vérité et réconciliation du Canada. En résumant un entretien avec une agente d'éducation du Ministère de l'éducation de l'Ontario, ce texte dresse le portrait du plan d'action mis en place pour répondre aux appels à l'action et dans lequel les Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits sont engagés.

THE PROCESS OF ENGAGING FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT IN THE REVISION OF ONTARIO'S CURRICULUM

ABSTRACT. This Note from the Field aims to describe the Ontarian curriculum review process related to the Calls to Action identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. By summarizing an interview with an education officer from the Ontario Ministry of Education, this text outlines the actions undertaken in order to respond to the Calls to Action in which First Nations, the Métis and Inuit Peoples are engaged.

*Seul on avance vite
Mais ensemble on va plus loin
(Proverbe africain)*

En mai 2017, je me suis rendue à Toronto pour assister au Forum intitulé « Répondre à la Commission de vérité et de réconciliation : Apprendre et vivre nos appels à l'action en Ontario ». Alors que la ville où je demeure était aux prises avec une crue des eaux historique, Elder Cat Criger, du Conseil pour les Initiatives autochtones, a parlé de ce fait d'actualité lors de la cérémonie d'ouverture en y amenant sa perspective : « Lorsque l'on ne prend plus le temps

de toucher à l'eau, c'est elle qui se rend à nous » (Criger, 2017). Inspirée par cet apport qu'une perspective autochtone peut amener à notre compréhension du monde, je me suis demandé comment inclure ces perspectives des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits au sein des écoles de langue française de l'Ontario. Une rencontre avec une agente d'éducation du ministère de l'Éducation de l'Ontario (MÉO) m'a amené sur une piste de réflexion intéressante. L'objectif de cette contribution est de faire un compte-rendu de cet entretien afin de décrire un processus de révision du curriculum qui s'arrime avec les appels à l'action.

CONTEXTE POLITIQUE ET ÉDUCATIF

Retournons au début des années 2000. Au sein de la population âgée de 20 à 24 ans, 59 % des Inuits, 42 % des Métis et 52 % des Premières Nations vivant hors réserve n'avaient pas obtenu un diplôme d'études secondaires lors du recensement de 2001 (Statistique Canada, 2001). Pourtant, ce taux était de 26 % pour l'ensemble de la population canadienne. Face à cette situation, il semblait donc nécessaire de trouver de nouvelles façons de travailler ensemble afin de combler cette inégalité entre les Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits et les non autochtones. C'est ainsi que l'éducation des élèves des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits a été identifiée comme étant prioritaire par le Conseil des ministres de l'Éducation du Canada en 2004 (Bureau de l'éducation des Autochtones et Ministère de l'Éducation, 2007). Suivant cet élan national, le gouvernement de l'Ontario a publié *La nouvelle approche ontarienne des affaires autochtones* (Bureau de l'éducation des Autochtones et Ministère de l'Éducation, 2005). Dans le cadre de *La nouvelle approche*, le gouvernement s'est engagé à travailler de concert avec les chefs et les organisations autochtones dans le but d'améliorer le rendement scolaire de ces élèves. Le gouvernement avait comme objectif de réduire de 20 % d'ici 2012 l'écart entre le taux d'obtention du diplôme d'études secondaires des élèves Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits et celui des élèves non autochtones (Bureau de l'éducation des Autochtones et Ministère de l'Éducation, 2005).

Suivant cet engagement, le *Cadre d'élaboration des politiques de l'Ontario en éducation des Premières Nations, des Métis et des Inuits*¹ paraît en 2007 (Bureau de l'éducation des Autochtones et Ministère de l'Éducation, 2007). Ce Cadre reconnaît que les élèves des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits de l'Ontario ont les connaissances, les compétences et les comportements nécessaires à leur réussite scolaire et à leur devenir citoyen. Ce Cadre souhaite aussi que tous les élèves de l'Ontario connaissent et comprennent tant les traditions, la culture que les perspectives des Premières Nations, des Métis et des Inuits, et ce, considérant tant les traditions que la contemporanéité de ces communautés. Selon ce Cadre, c'est en collaboration et en partenariat avec les familles, collectivités et organisations des Premières Nations, des Métis et des Inuits que le Ministère s'engage à élaborer des stratégies afin d'

augmenter la capacité du système d'éducation à répondre aux besoins des élèves des Premières nations, Métis et Inuits en matière de culture et d'apprentissage, [de] fournir des programmes, des ressources et des services de qualité pour donner à ces élèves des possibilités d'apprentissage qui favorisent l'amélioration du rendement scolaire et la construction identitaire, [d']offrir un programme d'études qui facilite l'apprentissage par tous les élèves de la culture, de l'histoire et des perspectives traditionnelles et contemporaines des Premières nations, des Métis et des Inuits, et qui contribue également à sensibiliser le personnel des conseils, le personnel enseignant et les conseillères et conseillers scolaires élus [et d'] élaborer et mettre en œuvre des stratégies qui favorisent la participation accrue des parents, des élèves, des collectivités et des organisations des Premières Nations, des Métis et des Inuits aux efforts d'amélioration du rendement scolaire. (Bureau de l'éducation des Autochtones, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2007, p. 7)

Puis, le 24 août 2015, la première ministre de l'Ontario, Kathleen Wynne a revigoré cette discussion en s'engageant à respecter les recommandations de la Commission de vérité et réconciliation du Canada lors de la signature de l'accord politique entre les Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits et le gouvernement de l'Ontario. Plus en détail, les recommandations 62 et 63 de la Commission prescrivent de rendre obligatoires, de la maternelle à la douzième année, les contenus traitant des pensionnats autochtones, des traités ainsi que des contributions passées et actuelles des peuples autochtones. Aussi, le curriculum et les ressources pédagogiques associées doivent être élaborés et mis en œuvre de façon à permettre aux élèves, à travers des suggestions de pratiques exemplaires, de s'approprier les réalités et apports autochtones à l'histoire du Canada. De plus, les élèves doivent d'être exposés aux séquelles que les pensionnats autochtones ont laissées. Finalement, pour favoriser l'exposition des élèves à ces contenus, l'évaluation des besoins des enseignants en termes de formation doit être effectuée. Ces recommandations s'arriment donc avec certains éléments du Cadre qui ciblait la réussite scolaire des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits à travers une meilleure compréhension de la culture, de l'histoire et des perspectives des Premières Nations, des Métis et des Inuits.

PLAN D'ACTION

Suivant cette lancée, le MÉO a développé un plan d'action. Lors de la première phase de ce plan, il y a eu une mobilisation des partenaires. C'est lors de cette première phase que s'est créé le comité directeur, comité constitué majoritairement de personnes des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits. Ce comité qui chapeaute la mise en place du plan d'action a approuvé des équipes de rédactions du côté anglophone et francophone. Évidemment, étant donné qu'il y a davantage de Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits anglophones, les équipes de rédaction anglophones étaient plus nombreuses que les équipes de rédaction francophones. Malgré ce défi, certaines personnes des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits francophones ont été recrutées. Dans ce processus, il n'est pas question de collaboration, qui viserait à travailler ensemble. Les

membres des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits et le MEO préfèrent le terme engagement. En effet, ils ne font pas simplement travailler avec les gens du MEO, ils font partie du processus décisionnel, car le comité directeur doit approuver chacune des étapes et des décisions du plan d'action.

À ce jour, dans cette première phase des révisions, les équipes se sont affairées à réviser les curriculums d'histoire et d'études sociales de la quatrième, cinquième, sixième, septième, huitième et dixième année. Le choix de cette matière s'explique par le fait que les contenus qui y sont à l'étude portent directement sur les réalités des Premières Nations, des Métis et des Inuits. Aussi, ces niveaux ont été retenus puisqu'ils correspondent aux années pendant lesquelles sont intégrés les contenus reliés aux trois grands thèmes proposés dans les appels à l'action : les contributions historiques et contemporaines, les traités et les pensionnats indiens. Ces équipes de révisions sont formées de représentants des associations matières (p. ex. Association des enseignants d'histoire et de géographie, etc.), mais aussi des représentants des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits qui ont été choisis par des associations (p. ex. L'Association des femmes autochtones du Canada, etc.) pour représenter celles-ci. Le but de ces comités de révision demeure que soient abordés les contenus soulignés par les recommandations de la Commission de vérité et réconciliation, et ce, toujours de façon adaptée à l'âge de l'élève.

Les comités de révision se sont rencontrés pendant une semaine en juillet 2016 et pendant trois jours en janvier 2017. En cohérence avec le besoin de laisser l'espace aux Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits, le MEO s'affairait à faciliter les rencontres et à proposer des structures qui ont été parfois rejetées, parfois adaptées ou parfois adoptées par les équipes de rédactions. L'important était davantage que la voix des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits soit entendue et écoutée.

C'est de façon très engagée que ces membres ont révisé une partie du curriculum et ont analysé les endroits où il serait pertinent d'ajouter les perspectives des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits. Chaque ajout a sa raison, chaque ajout a sa justification. Même si aucune attente ni aucun rôle n'était attribué aux participants, il a été observé que lors de ces rencontres, les apports des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits alimentaient davantage les idées liées au contenu alors que les apports des enseignants se concentraient plutôt sur l'arrimage didactique de ces contenus. Ces observations n'ont pas été quantifiées et demeurent subjectives. Mais certes, les suggestions qui découlent de ces échanges ont contribué à préciser le curriculum tant en ce qui a trait aux attentes, aux contenus, aux exemples qu'aux pistes de réflexion. Par exemple, si le curriculum prescrit d'étudier les communautés anciennes, un ajout spécifiera d'inclure un peuple des Premières Nations et un peuple inuit à ce contenu. D'ailleurs, dans les groupes anglophones, cette différenciation entre les peuples s'est révélée importante, car au fil des rencontres, il y a eu récurrence d'un discours qui soulignait le besoin de ne pas amalgamer les Premières Nations,

Métis et Inuits sans nuances. Finalement, en comparant les suggestions faites par les équipes anglophones et francophones, les idées se ressemblent et les curriculums seront les mêmes.

L'ENGAGEMENT

C'est à la demande des membres des Premières Nation, Métis et Inuits que le MEO a poursuivi ce processus collaboratif sous le terme d'*engagement*. En effet, selon l'agente d'éducation interrogée, il semblerait que les membres des Premières Nation, Métis et Inuits préfèrent le terme *engagement* à celui de *collaboration*. Ceux-ci souhaitent peut-être suivre la direction dans laquelle s'est orienté le comité consultatif en Saskatchewan. En effet, dans cette province, un processus de renouvellement du curriculum des sciences de la sixième à la neuvième année a été entamé en 2008 (Aikenhead et Elliott, 2010). Le comité consultatif, incluant des acteurs du milieu scolaire et des membres des Premières Nations, a été formé. Les recommandations formulées par ce comité suggèrent, entre autres, que les savoirs des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits soient reconnus et intégrés, mais aussi que ces savoirs soient ancrés et culturellement situés. Ainsi, si le contexte d'apprentissage doit respecter les ancrages culturels, une pédagogie mettant l'accent sur l'expérimentation s'impose. Par exemple,

students may begin their study of flight by observing the flight patterns of birds and insects in collaboration with a Knowledge Keeper, as opposed to an instructional approach wherein the teacher begins by teaching about the four forces that act on flying objects. (Aikenhead et Elliott, 2010, p. 330).

Aussi, puisque les savoirs sont situés, s'il y a dans une classe des étudiants d'une certaine nation, il a été recommandé par le comité de la Saskatchewan qu'un enseignant réfère à un aîné dans cette communauté afin d'être guidé quant au choix du contenu et aux méthodes d'enseignement qui respecteraient les perspectives de cette communauté. En d'autres termes, en Saskatchewan, la responsabilité de la formation professionnelle des enseignants repose aussi sur les partages volontaires qu'ils pourraient avoir lieu avec des gardiens du savoir des communautés locales (Aikenhead et Elliott, 2010). Bref, ce comité a permis que les perspectives des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuit de la Saskatchewan soient intégrées. Toutefois, au-delà de ces ajouts, l'engagement signifie aussi que les fondements philosophiques sous-jacents à un contenu et à des pédagogies eurocentriques soient réorientés pour être davantage inclusifs. Par conséquent, cette référence à l'engagement au sein du processus laisse penser que les attentes des membres des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits ontariens et du MEO ne sont pas seulement de l'ordre de l'addition, mais aussi de l'ordre d'une réorientation des fondements philosophiques et pédagogiques sous-jacents au curriculum. Rappelons aussi que déjà, lors des rencontres au sein des équipes ontariennes, le besoin de reconnaître la connaissance de façon ancrée et située s'était fait entendre.

CONCLUSION

Finalement, il semble incohérent qu'un curriculum traite des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits sans que des représentants de ces peuples approuvent ce discours. Voulant répondre aux recommandations 62 et 63, le MEO a mis sur pied un plan d'action qui permet l'engagement. Sans cet espace au sein du processus, les révisions n'auraient pas inclus les perspectives des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits tels que ces représentants le désirent. Ce processus permet donc de faire place à la voix des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits afin que les générations futures d'Ontariens apprennent et entendent ces perspectives. Même si ce processus prend du temps, prendre ce temps est essentiel... car seul on avance vite, mais ensemble on va plus loin!

En ce moment, ce plan d'action se poursuit. D'abord, pour donner suite à ces échanges et recommandations, les phases de la vérification linguistique et de la vérification des faits historiques suivent leur cours. Pour ce faire, des experts en histoire et en éducation autochtone ainsi qu'une experte en équité et en inclusion ont vérifié les faits. Ces experts, étant des Premières Nations, des Métis, des Inuits et des non Autochtones, ont offerts leurs suggestions quant à l'exactitude des dates, des noms des différents traités, des lois, etc. Ainsi, il sera très intéressant lors de la parution du curriculum révisé d'analyser les révisions qui y ont été apportées dans ce désir d'engagement pour voir comment sont modifiés les fondements philosophiques, et ce, autant au travers des contenus que des pédagogies préconisées.

L'intention est aussi que les ressources pédagogiques et que le perfectionnement professionnel soient offerts en même temps que la parution du curriculum révisé. Par rapport à ce perfectionnement professionnel, j'ai d'ailleurs assisté lors de ce même Forum à l'atelier de Colinda Clyne, responsable du programme d'éducation et d'équité des Premières Nations, Métis et Inuits du Conseil scolaire Upper Grand District School Board, qui soulignait l'incontournable besoin de référer aux aînés avant d'aborder certains sujets de façon décontextualisée, ou encore, en ayant recourt à une pédagogie qui serait incohérente avec leurs perspectives. Il sera donc aussi très intéressant de suivre l'élaboration du processus entourant le perfectionnement professionnel qui accompagnera la révision du curriculum. Toutefois, il faut demeurer conscient que cette réconciliation est fragilisée par les priorités fluctuantes au fil des élans politiques et par l'assiduité variable que l'on peut questionner si des séances de travail sont annulées

NOTES

1. Ci-dessous nommé « Cadre ».

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AN ARTS-BASED CURRICULUM ENCOUNTER: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LIVE ON THIS LAND?

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ABSTRACT. Our arts-based curriculum encounter occurred in a graduate course on arts-based research methods. For a class project we engaged in an inquiry on the question: “What does it mean to live on this land?” which we explored through various arts-based activities. The question challenged us to think deeply about our relationship with and responsibilities to the land we occupy. The inquiry raised for us and, in various ways, implicated us in issues around geographical settings, historical contexts, colonization and nationhood, relations as/with Indigenous peoples, Indigenous ways of knowing, relations with the natural environment, exploitation of the land, the environmental crisis, and our own family histories and personal journeys. In this paper, we share the reflective writings of four inquiry participants interspersed with some images from our work together.

RENCONTRE DANS UN PROGRAMME BASÉ SUR LES ARTS : QUE SIGNIFIE VIVRE SUR CE TERRITOIRE?

RÉSUMÉ. Notre rencontre au cœur d’un programme basé sur les arts s’est produite dans un cours de deuxième cycle en méthodologie de recherche axée sur les arts. Dans le cadre d’un projet de classe, nous nous sommes posées la question « Que signifie vivre sur cette terre? », puis l’avons explorée dans le contexte d’une variété d’activités liées aux arts. Cette interrogation nous a amenées à approfondir notre relation avec et nos responsabilités face au territoire que nous occupons. Notre recherche nous a amenées à nous questionner et à nous impliquer de diverses manières sur des problématiques en lien avec des lieux géographiques, des contextes historiques, les concepts de colonisation et de nationalité, les relations en tant que et avec les autochtones, les principes autochtones d’être et de savoir, les relations avec l’environnement, l’exploitation de la terre, la crise environnementale ainsi que nos histoires familiales et cheminement personnel respectifs. Dans cet article, nous partageons les réflexions de quatre participants à la recherche, en les entrecoupant d’images de notre collaboration.

OUR ARTS-BASED INQUIRY

Our arts-based curriculum encounter occurred while on Treaty 6 territory in what is known as Edmonton at the University of Alberta.¹ In support of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (2015) calls to action – specifically in relation to the call for Education for Reconciliation around “building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect” (p. 7), in a graduate course on arts-based research methods, we engaged in an inquiry on a question posed by Indigenous scholar Dr. Dwayne Donald: What does it mean to live on this land? The question challenged us to think deeply about our relationship with and responsibilities to the land we occupy.

The inquiry raised for us and in various ways implicated us in issues around geographical settings, historical contexts, colonization and nationhood, relations as/with Indigenous peoples, Indigenous ways of knowing, relations with the natural environment, exploitation of the land, the environmental crisis, our own family histories and personal journeys. To explore the question, we individually and collaboratively engaged in various arts-based activities including collaging, writing and movement. Dr. Donald also took us for a walk in the North Saskatchewan River valley near the University. His walk, which he frequently offers to groups, involves visits to specific sites in the valley and storytelling about the historical significance of the places.



FIGURE 1. *River Valley Walk* by Trish Jagger

Many of our creations for the inquiry responded to that walk. The culmination of the inquiry was a collection of our work in the form of an altered book.² What follows are reflective writings by three students in the course and the instructor, interspersed with some of the images from the altered book we created.

Diane: All my relations

In response to the prompt: “What does it mean to live on this land?” I am beginning to try to understand the three words “All My Relations.” I photographed some native plants in the river valley near the University and created a photo collage. My plant relations included: blue flax, sage, giant rye, raspberry, highbush cranberry, choke cherry, saskatoon berry, rose, dogwood, birch, blue spruce, mountain ash, cottonwood, wolf willow. That was the start of my inquiry.



FIGURE 2. *All My Relations* by Diane Conrad

I express my appreciation of nature through hiking, camping, canoeing, gardening, bird-watching, harvesting wild plants, and picking berries. Engaged in these activities, out in nature, I am content. Sensitive to the effects of my existence on the environment, I make environmentally consciousness gestures in my day-to-day life: I recycle, compost, don't drive a car, keep my consumption in check. I understand that I am dependent on the land for my survival. With the environment at risk, I mourn for the survival of generations to come. I have not, until recently, thought of the land and its inhabitants as my relations. How might such understanding of relatedness change things?

I am trying to understand the land as a living, sentient entity with materiality, affect, and memory, and my existence within an ecological consciousness. In contradiction to my Western education, I am grappling to understand that I am not the site of knowledge, rather, knowledge is in the energy waves that flow through everything and have done so since primordial times (Little Bear in Hill, 2008). Spirit flows through me as it does through the rocks and trees. I need to nurture my relationship with the land in order to understand its wisdom. As Leroy Little Bear stated, “only when the rocks get to know you will they tell you their story” (Hill, 2008, p. 42).

Enmeshed with the land, I have obligations. What does it mean to honour sacred relations in everything I do? Sheridan and Longboat (2006) stated, “where one is has everything to do with who one is” (p. 369). How am I composed of the place I inhabit? How does the land affect how I think? How do I exist in inter-dependence with the more-than-human inhabitants, with the memory of all those relations who have ever been and in anticipation of all those yet to come? How should I allow the land and its inhabitants to instruct me in my way of living here? How should I uphold my obligation to communicate appreciation with the sentient landscape around me and think with the intelligences of the land? What ceremonies can I authentically perform to respectfully renew the conditions of my co-existence?

I am burdened with the realization that the worldview into which I’ve been educated is hostile to the land and is not easily overhauled. How do I unlearn destructive habits of thought and repair the way I relate to the land through my thoughts and deeds? More than actions or gestures, I seek meaning in my way of being. How do I change my way of being in the world? How do I make this ontological shift?

As I write, I see, on my office floor atop a stack of papers, a rock that I have been neglecting and which I picked up twenty years ago while camping at Fossil Lake, Northwest Territories. That I collected this rock as a curiosity and utilized it as a paperweight is evidence of my exploitative worldview. This ancestor must have incredible knowledge of the land from perhaps long before humans joined the consciousness. It lived some part of its life, possibly on the bed of some ancient lake, in close relation to some other entity – an anemone, coral or barnacle, that left impressions of itself indelibly pocked on its surface. What stories could this ancestor rock tell? Over the coming years, I will endeavor to come to know this ancestor better; perhaps, eventually, it may tell me its stories.

Trish: Negotiating boundaries

My ancestors traversed oceans in search of new homes. Today my family is scattered across nations. What does it mean to live on this land? It means living in the in-between spaces of somewhere and nowhere.

"I am enmeshed in a series of relationships that I depend on for my survival." These words spoken by Dr. Donald (personal communication, October 26, 2016) have taken residence within me, pulling me to a wide-awakeness of the complexities of my existence. Therefore, I live "at a crossing point of too many social and cultural forces" with the realization that I "am forever on my way. [And that] my identity has to be perceived as multiple, [if I am to] strive towards some coherent notion of what is humane and decent and just" (Ng-A-Fook, 2014, p. 1).

As I look down at the ground beneath my feet, I find myself struggling to sort through these multiplicities, striving to locate myself amidst a cacophony of voices — past, present, and future, which invite / request / demand that I stop and listen. Voices that travel in the wind as I walk through the suburban winter landscape I currently call home and which dwell within me wherever I may travel, often shaking my restless soul to wandering, both mentally and physically, in search of the land to which I belong.

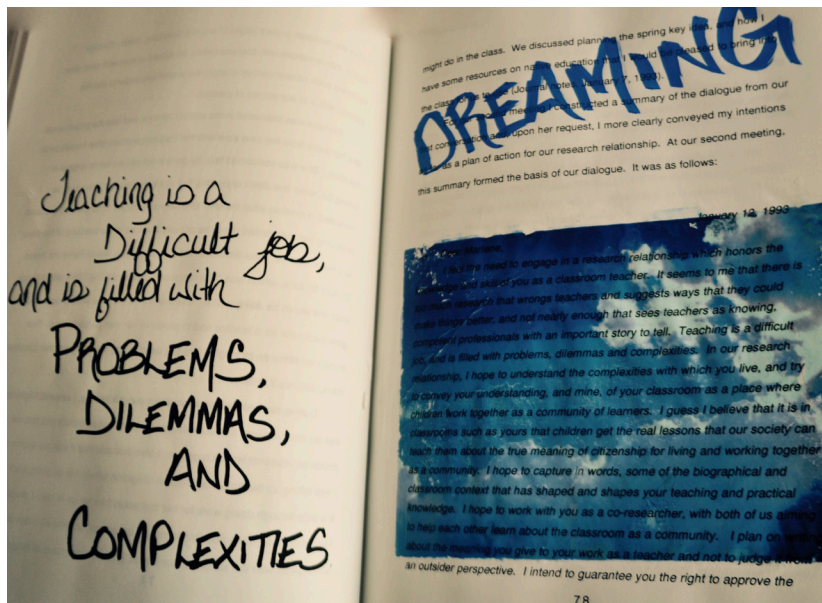


FIGURE 3. *Dreaming by Trish Jagger*

Perhaps it is my fate to belong to no place, and that rightly so, no place shall belong to me. England, Scotland, Canada, the United States, France, Costa Rica, Germany, Jamaica...The nations of my ancestry are vast and diverse. Some of which were lived on as conquerors and colonizers, others which they were driven from, fleeing persecution, daring to dream of new places of possibility for their families, their futures. I wonder if they knew of the scars those dreams might lead to for others. I wonder if they cared.

In her own quest to answer the question, “Where am I from?” Emily Baillin (2012) wrote:

Where I’m from doesn’t always feel like how “where I’m from” should feel
...and that’s hard, it’s complicated.

I pull the bandana from my eyes,
and wait for my pupils to adjust.

I am from blurry lines.

And while I will not claim to reclaim borderlands, I will say I negotiate boundaries.

You see, I’m working to strengthen this HYBRIDIZED identity of mine –
to make sense of my own contradictions and confusions. (para. 4)

I too negotiate boundaries, both those that lie within me, embedded through the years, and those external to me that can at once both confine and provide. Tied to the nation in which I was born, a nation, which too seeks to understand its identity; but how often we both forget, you have to let go of what was, so you can become what will be.

Perhaps I am like water: Elusive, impossible to hold. Belonging to no one nation or piece of land, destined to move from shore to shore, gathering sediment, refuse, stories. Stories that smash against each other at times, swirling together in a *métissage* of memory, history, and experience, before crashing on to another distant shore, weaving together my life with those I meet along the way.

The first time I placed my feet in the ocean, I felt peace. The irony of this is not lost on me, a child of the prairies who grew up in a thriving metropolis, benefitting from a worldview rooted in taking whatever we could from the land, to prosper, to thrive. In my youth, I did not consciously know better; I choose to believe that my parents did not either. Now we know. Now we must do better.

I cannot erase what has been. I cannot give back what was taken, and I cannot deny that I am grateful for all that I have been given in this life. These are my confusions and contradictions.

My yoga practice has taught me to ground down to the land on which I stand, reminding me to embrace life and breathe in each moment. As the four corners of my feet grip the earth, energy rises vibrating through muscle, bone, and tissue, limbs reaching, grasping for the sky, greeting all my relations, my living and lost loved ones. They whisper to me, as I’m swaying...searching...dreaming. I pull my hands down into silent prayer, and hold tight to their mistakes and lost dreams, their laughter and tears, telling me I must continue to search for ways to live a life that acknowledges the gifts I have been granted.

Reflecting back to Dr. Donald's words, "I am enmeshed in a series of relationships that I depend on for my survival..." I think of this, as I clasp my love's hand and dare to look forward to the journey ahead, grateful that I have landed on this unexpected shore. I lay my head against his chest so I can listen to his heartbeat, hypnotizing me like the sound of gentle waves. It sings to me I have found safe-haven, a place in which to dwell if only for a moment amidst the cacophony and confusion, the contradictions and confusions. Neither tarnished by past transgressions, nor located in some vague, imagined future.

In this space of stillness, in-between where I've been and where I'm going, I am reminded of Michael Ondaatje's (1992) words:

We die containing a richness of lovers and tribes, tastes we have swallowed, bodies we have plunged into and swum up as if rivers of wisdom, characters we have climbed into as if trees, fears we have hidden in as if caves. I wish for all of this to be marked on my body when I am dead. I believe in such cartography – to be marked by nature, not just label ourselves on a map like the names of rich men and women on buildings. We are not owned or monogamous in our taste and experience. All I desired was to walk upon such an earth that had no maps. (p. 261)

Tori: Mapping acknowledgement

When I think of what it means to live on this land, I think of the relationship between the land and its occupants. As humans, the land constructs our identities and shapes our histories. Part of living out such history has brought us a practice of navigating and building. Settlers build things, such as city towers that become landmarks on maps that people travel to and take photographs to post to acknowledge *they* have been there.

Perhaps we need to reverse the order and think about the land first and who has stood in this place before – look at its value from multiple perspectives. We need to navigate our way through different origin stories and recognize their contributions. With these acknowledgements, we must make informed choices about what and how we build; understanding *what* we construct can both add and take away, depending on one's perspective. Perspectives that take the land into consideration first can be passed on through Indigenous practices and ways of knowing, or settlers can embrace these values through hybrid identities.

For many Indigenous and other Canadian peoples, a sustainable approach is not a novel idea, but rather a cornerstone at the root of belief and practice. Yet, this crucial way of thinking can get lost in a louder narrative – not only heard in schools, but also visualized through the geographic maps that are commonly used to represent our land. Every map tells a story.

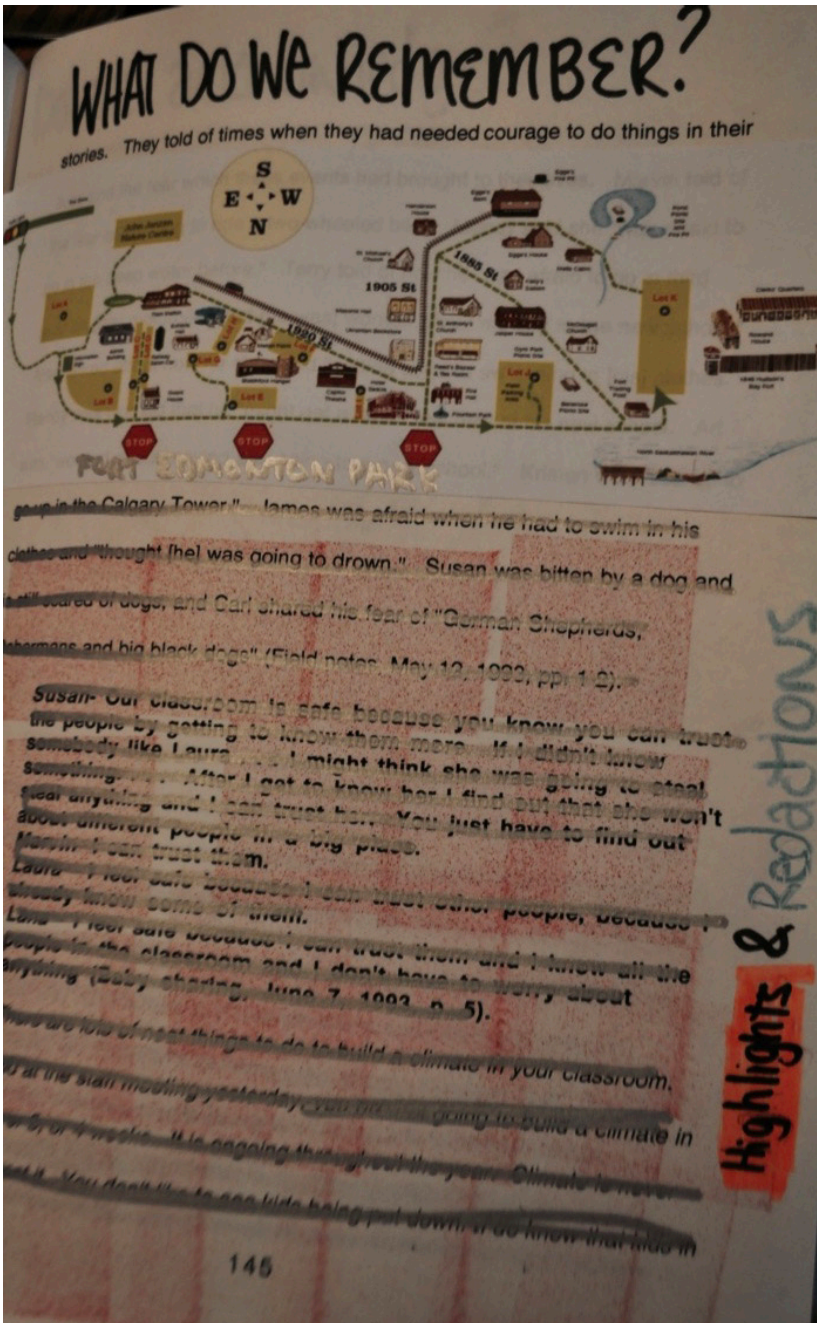


FIGURE 4. What Do We Remember? by Tori Bleeks

Maps are subjective as are other forms of visual art. Silences within popular stories are often echoed by what we choose to exclude from popular maps.³ We become so familiar with some maps that we believe in them and passively accept the stories they tell. Maps, such as road maps and those for classrooms, are commodified and sold. As consumers, we can inadvertently buy into these stories. If we think about alternate, or lesser-known maps, we may be able to question what we believe.

I think about which maps we commonly see, what is marked down in their legends, and how what is left off is forgotten, not passed on in legends to future generations. What might be different if treaty outlines were as familiar as provincial borders on Canadian maps? If we have a defamiliarizing experience with something we normally recognize and believe in, can we gain a new perspective? Is it enough to promote an ontological shift?

I reflect on the ongoing practices of those with different perspectives living on the same land. Rather than negotiating harmony, colonization has been violent, unjust, and traumatizing. Tragedy strikes in times of reconciliation as power and politics trump what may be best for the living, breathing land itself. Injustice continues with the Ktunaxa Nation in British Columbia (Bakht & Collins, 2017) and in North Dakota with Standing Rock (Mufson & Eilperin, 2017). This American dispute remains important given we are only divided by a border drawn on a map of what is Turtle Island. Now, more than ever, the Canadian-American border represents a distinction between two countries that are politically carving spaces with different narratives regarding *who* is allowed to live on certain lands. In 2017, many individuals made new trails on foot to Emerson, Manitoba and Hemmingford, Quebec (Markusoff, 2017; Nuttall, 2017). As these travellers cross into Canada, I wonder how their own stories have encouraged appreciation of the land they have risked their lives to reach, and how their narratives will influence how they navigate and build their lives.

Perhaps the newcomers to Canada, with hybrid identities shaped by their first-hand experiences and marked by social injustices, can find common ground with those who were here first and endured exploitation. I believe there is room to hope we can negotiate harmony because this land, though deeply eroded with stories that scar, can still, at its core, care and provide for all its visitors, so long as we respect it.

Sarah: It means...everything

What does it mean to live on this land?

It means...remembering.

It means...remembering how they told us we were Indians...how they told us we were heathens...how they told us we were uncivilized.

It means...remembering how they outlawed our ceremonies, our potlatches, our sundances, our sweatlodges, our dance, our song, our drum.

It means...remembering how they outlawed our dress, our regalia, our beadwork, our quillwork, our basketry, our creative expressiveness.

It means...remembering how they took our parents, our kohkoms and moshoms, our chapans and beat them, starved them, cut their spirits into little pieces and sent them back into the world, the walking wounded.

It means...remembering those who hid their children and kept our laws, our ceremonies, our sacred bundles, our languages alive and thriving.

It means...remembering the old ones who signed treaty...remembering how they did so in prayer and ceremony...how they did so with the express purpose of preserving the land and our ways for an eternity.

It means...remembering that the old ones prayed for my existence and that of my children and grandchildren, their children and grandchildren.

It means...remembering how Nohkom used to send me out with an ice cream pail, every day, during picking season to gather the blueberries, strawberries, and saskatoons growing wild.

It means...remembering how Nohkom would let me sit on the ground at her feet as she painstakingly threaded bead after bead into a pair of deer hide moccasins.

It means...remembering walking behind Nohkom as she checked her traplines, singing the old songs as she tramped through the bush.

It means...reclaiming.

It means...reclaiming the language stolen from me through listening closely to my Elders prayers.

It means...reclaiming the ceremonies stolen from me by taking every opportunity to sit close to the earth in communion with my Creator.

It means...reclaiming the vast creativeness of our clothes, our songs, our dance, our drum, our stories.

It means...reclaiming the practice of waking with the sun to give thanks to the Creator.

It means reclaiming our ways of knowing, our ways of doing, and our ways of being in this world.

It means...resisting

It means...resisting pipelines, which snake through our lands, poisoning our waters, putting everything that matters at risk.

It means...resisting government laws and policies, which would seek to further threaten our languages and our cultures and our lands.

It means...resisting education practices that strip us of who we were meant to be.

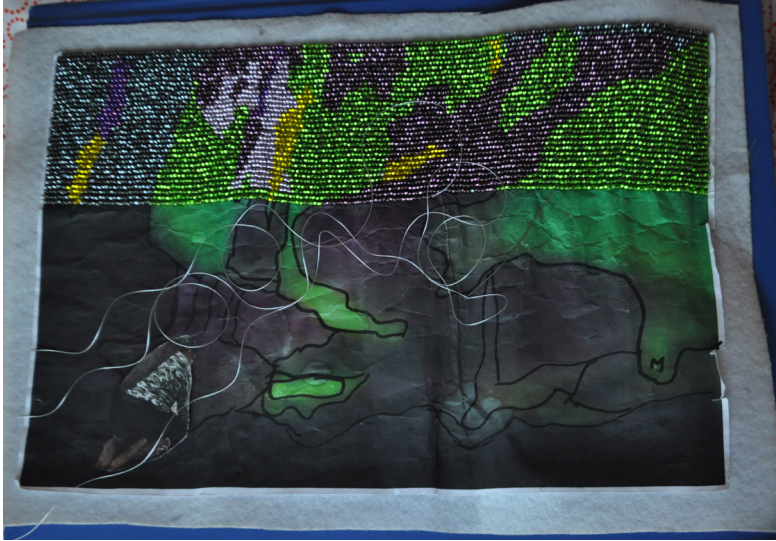


FIGURE 5. *The Ancestors* by Sarah Auger

It means...resisting anything and everything that threatens our existence as Nehiyawak, as Cree people, for the sake of the generations to come.

It means...always living conscious, intentional, and purposeful lives.

It means...reminding my grandbaby everyday how smart, courageous, beautiful, and precious she is.

It means...being a good ancestor.

My ancestors' blood and bones are buried deep in this land...their hopes, dreams, and memories are carried along the waters digging trenches into the riverbanks of my place.

My ancestors dance through the night sky, their radiance transmitting a brilliant evanescence, forever fading...forever present.

The land holds our memories.

The land tells our stories.

The land is my kin.

Hawaiian scholar Manulani Aluli-Meyer (personal communication, February 1, 2017) recently asked me, how does thinking about the land inform your work...Then she gave me the answer...everything. She said that land is at the centre of everything.

Kohkom...What does it mean to live on this land?

Babygirl...It means...everything.

OUR JOURNEYS TOWARD UNDERSTANDING

What does it mean to live on this land? In our class inquiry, individuals interpreted the question in different ways; responses were as varied as the individuals responding. Each response was deeply personal, grounded in an encounter with who we are in relation to the land we inhabit. Our responses depended on our individual locations and relationships with place and the natural environment, our individual stories about who we are, how we came to be here, the places we and/or our ancestors have been, how we have learned to understand where we are, where we belong, and where we are on our journeys toward understanding. Our collective story is one of individual paths across time and place towards understanding. For those whose ancestors are Indigenous to here, the knowledge of land is an inheritance. Like our walk with Dr. Donald, our journeys meander, pause to reflect, take in new insights, and push on.

The arts-based processes we undertook individually and collectively helped us to reflect upon and articulate the paths that we are exploring, questioning, and navigating, or remembering, reclaiming, and resisting – the routes that have got us to here and will now carry us forward in closer relationship with one another and with the land we have in common. The process involved listening – to ancestors, to nature, to the world around us – and gave us opportunities to listen to one another. It helped us to remember the importance of attending to, of walking alongside, and hearing others' stories, to quiet our own voices and thoughts in order to honour those of others and to listen to the land around us. The story presented herein, then, is one of reconciliation with each other, with the land, our ancestors, and ourselves.

NOTES

1. We would like to acknowledge other students who participated in the arts-based inquiry: Santoshi Robertson-Davis, Joëlle Prefontaine, Brad Nczyk, Christine Valentine, Allison Sivak, Bronwyn Sneffjella, Mariel Day, Lebo Disele, Mandy Hollands Ish, Stacey Murchison. We would also like to thank Dr. Dwayne Donald for his contribution to our inquiry.
2. An altered book is an art-form which transforms an existing book using various mixed-media (writing, drawing, cutting, folding, collage, etc.) from its original form to a new form with a new appearance and purpose (see Cobb & Negash, 2010).
3. The Mercator projection is a commonly used world map, which physically distorts the proportional sizes of countries and continents. There are many lesser-known equal-area map projections – including the Gall-Peters projection, which aim to provide a more physically accurate cartographic depiction (Barney, 2014).

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BLAIR STONECHILD. *The Knowledge Seeker: Embracing Indigenous Spirituality*. University of Regina Press. (2016). 244 pp. \$27.95 (paperback). (ISBN 978-0-88977-418-6)

With the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) final report published in 2015, it sometimes seems as though the entire country is racing to respond to the Calls to Action. Indeed, there is an undeniable energy attached to the movement toward reconciliation in Canada – an energy that demands careful thought regarding its direction. In this regard, Blair Stonechild's book *The Knowledge Seeker: Embracing Indigenous Spirituality* is a timely text that holds crucial lessons for scholars, teachers, and teacher educators in their respective journeys toward reconciliation. Though he is fundamentally concerned with Plains Cree and Saulteaux spiritual philosophy and aims to “contribute to the recovery of Indigenous spirituality” (p. 1), Stonechild makes the broader implications of such spiritual knowledge, particularly for education, clear in the later sections of the text and ultimately succeeds in making links between Indigenous spirituality, healing, and the present movement toward reconciliation, both on a personal and an academic level.

Beginning the text by recounting his own educational journey from Qu'appelle Indian Residential School to McGill University, Stonechild participates in the practice central to Indigenous writing of beginning with one's own story in order to ground the conversation in a particular lived reality. Though Stonechild's writing may be considered abstract later in the text, it is more easily understood through the lens of his own story. The continuation of his story in Chapter 2 as a pioneer of First Nation controlled post-secondary education and as the first instructor hired by the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (later renamed First Nations University) serves as a lived example for the current generation of burgeoning Indigenous scholars, as well as those seeking to “Indigenize” Western educational institutions.

Moving from his personal experience into a focused discussion of Indigenous spiritual philosophy, Stonechild describes the Plains Cree and Saulteaux's perspectives in three areas: the fundamentals of human existence (Chapter 3); the importance of relationships with self, the land, the spirit world, and community (Chapter 4); and the power of traditional spirituality to heal (Chapter 5). Stonechild combines the knowledge of Elders with the academic literature around Indigenous spirituality, particularly the work of Vine Deloria Jr. (1973, 2006). This combination results in one of the most thorough and in-depth discussions of Indigenous spiritual philosophy in print today.

A third distinct, but unmarked, section of this text is devoted to a re-examination of the history of colonization through the lens of the aforementioned spiritual principles. Here Stonechild, in addition to outlining well-known effects of colonization, makes the case that colonization was devastating because of the ways in which it robbed Indigenous people of their spiritual relationships to the terrestrial and supernal worlds. Linked to this contextualization is Chapter 7, in which Stonechild discusses the crises at First Nations University between 2005 and 2011 as an example of the ways historical contact and colonization continue to negatively impact the natural balance of many First Nations communities.

The eighth chapter of Stonechild's text is given to a discussion of the link between Indigenous metaphysical concepts and modern science, with particular emphasis on reincarnation, spirit, consciousness, and near-death experiences. Though these areas are not always seen as "rigorous" to the scientific community at large, Stonechild posits that these concepts "bring credibility to Aboriginal notions of spirit" (p. 176). Readers familiar with Gregory Cajete's work will find this section reminiscent of the concepts involved in Native science (Cajete, 1999, 2000).

In the final chapter of his text, Stonechild discusses the implications of his work for modern post-secondary education. Here, teacher educators interested in Indigenizing the academy and/or curriculum will find important examples and lessons related to how to work for and with Indigenous peoples toward the integration of Indigenous knowledge into post-secondary study. Stonechild's discussion focuses on the inclusion of spirituality in education toward a more holistic curricular experience for students *and* teachers. One specific example provided by Stonechild is the Indian Social Work program at First Nations University, which has used a combination of Indigenous spiritual principles and Western social work theory to train Indigenous social workers. Aboriginal approaches to social work are explained thoroughly elsewhere, particularly in Michael Hart's (2002) work on the matter, and constitute an additional area of research to which this text may prove relevant.

Though Stonechild hints toward a critical analysis of the socioeconomic plight of First Nations people in Canada, authors trained in Western critical theory may find the text lacking in this regard. Likewise, this text may be limited by the fact that many educators today are reluctant to engage with spiritual concepts. For First Nations people, however, spiritual practice is engrained in everything — it is an element of a holistic being. It is, therefore, crucial that teachers, teacher educators, and scholars who work with Indigenous people have some knowledge of Indigenous spiritual philosophy. Toward that end, the readability and relevance of this text make it an ideal choice for introductory courses in Indigenous education at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Additionally, scholars interested in the interaction between Indigenous spirituality, the education system, and reconciliation will find this text a stimulating theoretical base for further research.

Canadian post-secondary institutions and teacher training programs are at an unprecedented crossroads. With the “race” to reconcile in full swing, there is enough energy to generate lasting, meaningful change in our education system, change that moves toward healing the damage done by residential schools and toward more holistic and sustainable approaches to life and education. On this journey, however, we must remember to go slow and consider our actions carefully. Evelyn Brockwood, a residential school survivor, asks us to “go slow, we are going too fast, too fast...we have many tears to shed before we even get to the word reconciliation” (TRC, 2015, p. 16). *The Knowledge Seeker* is a living example of what it means to be thoughtful in Indigenous education and for this — among other reasons — it is essential reading for those interested in integrating Indigenous knowledge into the curriculum at either the P-12 level or in post-secondary institutions.

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CHELSEA VOWEL. *Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Métis and Inuit Issues in Canada*. Portage & Main Press. (2016). 290 pp. \$26.00 (paperback). (ISBN 978-1-55379-684-8)

Chelsea Vowel's *Indigenous Writes* is a highly informative and engaging collection of 31 essays addressing a wide range of issues related to Indigenous peoples in what is currently called Canada. The book offers the intellectual, witty, and interdisciplinary writing that readers of Vowel's popular blog (<http://apihtawikosisan.com>) are familiar with. Vowel writes with first-hand knowledge of having lived and worked in the Prairies, the Northwest Territories and Québec as a Métis woman and parent. Moreover, her approach and analysis are clearly informed by her degrees in Education and Law, and years of teaching and activist experience. She writes in a conversational tone, uses accessible language, and offers a straightforward engagement with often difficult social and political issues.

The book is organized into five broad themes: Terminology of Relationships; Culture and Identity; Myth-Busting; State Violence; and Land, Learning, Law, and Treaties. While each essay and section can stand on its own, together they build on one another, producing a strong cumulative effect when the book is read in its entirety. Vowel begins by providing a historically grounded, practical discussion of issues of naming and categorizing various Indigenous peoples (Chapter 1) and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada (Chapter 2). She goes on to discuss Indigenous cultural identities, with reference to current events, providing information on how to respect cultural boundaries (Chapter 9) and "find authentic Indigenous stories" (Chapter 10, p. 92). Vowel's section on Myth-Busting (Chapters 13-19) not only identifies and "busts" persistent misconceptions and stereotypes about Indigenous peoples, but offers critical analysis of how such ideas have been constructed, how they are damaging to individuals and communities, and how such fallacies inform and enable structural oppression. Finally, Vowel examines Canadian state relations with Indigenous Peoples and the use of Canadian law to further state interests (especially Chapters 20-31). Topics addressed in this section include Residential

Schools, Treaties, and a number of government policies targeting and affecting First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. The breadth of knowledge, clarity, courage, and generosity with which Vowel achieves this project are exceptional. *Indigenous Writes* is thus an important and appropriate book for a wide range of readers – Indigenous and non-Indigenous, adolescent and adult students, self-directed learners of all ages, and all teachers.

In the introduction to the book, Vowel orients our reading by explaining that it is inspired by conversations about Canadian politics that she had during law school with two friends – one Liberal and the other Conservative. Having these discussions and listening deeply to one another across enormous differences of experience and political opinion demonstrated for Vowel the importance and potential of such work. *Indigenous Writes* is convincingly written in this spirit and reflects Vowel's commitment to continuing such transformational conversations across differences. She reminds readers that what and how she writes is “not about you as a person,” and asserts that while her tone is not always what some will find “polite,” she does her best to “keep things light” and is “genuinely trying to communicate with you” (p. 3).

Vowel's voice and personality remain present throughout each essay. Her use of vernacular, humour, and at times, sarcasm add layers of meaning, underscore arguments and carry her and her readers through discussions of infuriating facts and difficult, often painful issues. Contemporary Indigenous artists and writers have often used humour and satire as an assertion of resilience and humility, as political strategy, a weapon of self-defence, and/or to make (things) fun (Baker, 1991; Taylor, 2006). Those familiar with *Métis in Space* (<http://www.metisinspace.com>), a podcast co-produced by Vowel and Molly Swain, will know this to be part of Vowel's repertoire. Framing and delivering political critique in this manner foregrounds Indigenous presence and agency while providing the listener or reader opportunities to smile and even laugh, lower their defenses and become open to learning.

And learn we must. *Indigenous Writes* could hardly be timelier, with many Canadians scrambling to respond to a newfound collective interest in Indigenous peoples in the wake of the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). As Chair of the TRC (and now Independent Senator) Murray Sinclair asserts, there is need for a “wholesale change in thinking” that foregrounds Indigenous peoples and nation-to-nation relationships; “education is the key” to moving toward reconciliation (Macdonald, 2016, para. 7, 10). The TRC findings regarding the history and legacies of the Residential School system in Canada – what Vowel powerfully refers to as *Monster* (Chapter 20) – highlight the role of education and the inextricable links between schooling and other institutions (e.g. the law, the Church) within the context of Canadian settler colonialism:

For over a century, the central goals of Canada's Aboriginal policy were to eliminate Aboriginal governments; ignore Aboriginal rights; terminate the Treaties; and, through a process of assimilation, cause Aboriginal peoples to cease to exist as distinct legal, social, cultural, religious, and racial entities in Canada. The establishment and operation of residential schools were a central element of this policy, which can best be described as "cultural genocide." (TRC, 2015, p. 1)

The ideologies and social relations that supported the Residential Schools system remain embedded in the foundations of Canadian education systems and continue to shape government approaches to Indigenous peoples and land. Whether or not there is any hope for significant change and "reconciliation" remains to be seen, determined by long term processes of un-schooling and re-educating ourselves and deconstructing and replacing colonial institutional foundations. Vowel helps us to begin this work without reducing the complexity of historic and contemporary relations between the Canadian nation-state, Indigenous peoples, and other populations now occupying this territory. *Indigenous Writes* offers readers the opportunity to learn from and engage with the ideas of this knowledgeable Métis intellectual and teacher and provides a wealth of annotated references for further study in meticulous and extensive footnotes. It is a critical contribution to teaching and learning about Indigenous peoples in Canada and leaves Canadians with no excuses for ongoing and willful blindness to Indigenous presence, experiences, rights, and struggles.

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EDEN ROBINSON. *Son of a Trickster*. Knopf. (2017). 319 pp. \$32.00 (hardback). (ISBN 978-0-345-81078-6)

“Life is hard,” Eden Robinson’s new novel states. “You have to be harder.” This repeated line, which punctuates the novel, is an ambiguous moral lesson for protagonist Jared. The line is one that is repeated by his mother, and remembered over and over by Jared as the book unfolds. His mother is definitely harder than life; she is a wild, violent, hard-partying mother whose boyfriends are anything other than father figures or role models for Jared (one of them gets nail-gunned to the floor at one point by his mother for his misdeeds). Is the line about hardness, in its repetition, one of this novel’s lessons? Or is it, instead, a false lead, a mistaken approach to life that will, in turn, bring down all of life’s duress?

Robinson’s novel takes readers into complex scenarios with no easy answers. In that respect, she builds on her previous novels *Monkey Beach* and *Blood Sports* and her short story collection *Traplines*, all of which have had very strong critical reception and have found their way onto syllabi and into classrooms. *Son of a Trickster*, in this reviewer’s view, increases the complexity of Robinson’s writing, leading readers down a path in which Indigenous spiritual and supernatural worlds collide with the everyday world of pop culture and high school coming-of-age narratives. In other words, alongside the trickster, Jared sees magical fireflies and ape men / spirits, all the while discussing the merits of Nickelback and A Tribe Called Red. Given its complexity and language, it is likely a novel that will resonate with readers in post-secondary contexts, and particularly with critics invested in ongoing discussions in the fields of Indigenous literary and cultural studies.

Jared lives in northern British Columbia. He is a high school student trying to avoid failing his classes while negotiating his mother’s unpredictable moods; his mother’s boyfriends’ violence; his wayward father’s ineptitude; his sister’s neediness and poor parenting; his classmates’ assortment of teenage drama; his neighbours’, the Jakses, decline in old age; his girlfriend Sarah’s emotional

challenges — and the dawning awareness that he is linked to a larger-than-life world in which he may or may not be the son of a foul-mouthed trickster. Receiving very little support, but many demands from every side, Jared attempts to negotiate entering a world in which very little seems to make sense in realist terms, yet in which the reality of the situations that he has faced — and will continue to face — may finally start to make sense.

The denizens of Robinson's novels are tough characters: they steal trucks, drink a lot, curse each other through text messages, are frequently high, and place countless obstacles in Jared's path. Their goals are as murky as can be and they often seem to be trapped by their poverty and addictions (though it is, of course, and as Robinson makes clear, much more complicated than that). Jared himself, however, makes many foolish choices, and is hardly an innocent. The demands on him as the "cookie guy" — the baker of the region's finest pot cookies — don't exactly help him out, either. From page one, where his mother calls his grandmother a "fucking cuntosaurus," readers are invited into a world of conflict, strife, and difficult negotiations.

Robinson's writing, with this novel, becomes evermore challenging. The novel's resolution — if it can be claimed as such — provides an ending where events are far from settled. Her depictions of Indigenous characters — many of the characters in the book are Indigenous, as is Robinson — do not provide readers with tidy images of Indigenous life where anything like reconciliation is ever achieved. Instead, *Son of a Trickster* provides readers with an unruly world of human and non-human actors — like a pack of blood-thirsty otters — who, for the most part, seem to be doing their best just to get the better of each other. In considering this book in the context of Indigenous writing, I would argue that it is a book of resurgence rather than reconciliation (with my ideas here being influenced by Anishinaabeg writer and thinker Leanne Simpson's [2011] *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back*) this novel does not set out to make peace with anyone, but it features a strong cast of deeply resilient characters. It highlights the challenges facing northern communities and puts conflicting cosmologies into contact with each other. The toll that this drama takes is very human in nature, with Jared's survival remaining far from certain. The result is a novel that demonstrates the stakes in Indigenous life lived for itself, rather than for the sake of reconciling the colonial nation.

Life is hard, as the novel states. It is harder for some people than it is for others. It is definitely hard for Jared and his community in *Son of a Trickster*. Whether it follows that one has to be harder, though, seems, to this reader, to be the debate. It is also a debate that has been played out, in its own version, within theories of affect. Judith Butler (2004) has argued (in *Precarious Life* first and foremost) that interpersonal ethics can derive from recognizing and acting upon the ways in which humans are vulnerable — as embodied, fragile beings. For her, our vulnerability is an index of the ways in which people need

to care for one another, and announcing this vulnerability can become the site for the beginning of this process. On the other hand, Lauren Berlant (2011) (in *Cruel Optimism* in particular) has argued that there is nothing to compel ethical actions once we recognize each other's — and our own — vulnerability. She posits, instead, that admissions of vulnerability are just as likely to prompt those humans who bear witness to such admissions to strike first, lest they be struck. In other words, letting down one's guard, as a sign of a very real and frank weakness that we share with one another, can give one's opponents an opportunity to attack.

In many ways, this conundrum is one of the central ones in *Son of a Trickster*. What would the results be if Jared were able to demonstrate and act upon how scared, isolated (even among many people), and vulnerable he is? Throughout the novel, he seems to wish to show his soft side, perhaps especially in his nascent relationship with Sarah. Time and again, however, the hardness of life announces itself. But do the community members' responses to each other, which seem to lead to more and more hardness, simply escalate the stakes? Or are they the only possible recourse in a world in which vulnerability too often leads to suffering rather than healing?

Offering few answers, but many provocative openings for further thinking, Eden Robinson's new novel is a strong one. I anticipate that it will be taken up with deep interest by the readership that has eagerly awaited this book.

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