ROUTLEDGE

# Applying Indigenous Research Methods

## Storying with Peoples and Communities

Edited by
**Sweeney Windchief and Timothy San Pedro**

# APPLYING INDIGENOUS RESEARCH METHODS

*Applying Indigenous Research Methods* focuses on the question of "*How*" Indigenous Research Methodologies (IRMs) can be used and taught across Indigenous studies and education.

In this collection, Indigenous scholars address the importance of IRMs in their own scholarship, while focusing conversations on the *application* with others. Each chapter is co-authored to model methods rooted in the sharing of stories to strengthen relationships, such as yarning, storywork, and others. The chapters offer a wealth of specific examples, as told by researchers about their research methods in conversation with other scholars, teachers, and community members.

*Applying Indigenous Research Methods* is an interdisciplinary showcase of the ways IRMs can enhance scholarship in fields including education, Indigenous studies, settler colonial studies, social work, qualitative methodologies, and beyond.

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# APPLYING INDIGENOUS RESEARCH METHODS

## Storying with Peoples and Communities

*Edited by Sweeney Windchief and Timothy San Pedro*

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**To those who have walked the path before us so that we can forward lessons to our relations, both current and still to come.**

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# FOUNDATIONAL QUOTE

"We extend our left palm upwards, to symbolize reaching back to receive teachings from the Ancestors and those who have travelled before us. We are given the challenge and opportunity to live these teachings. We also have a responsibility to pass those teachings to others who may also be the younger generation, which is shown when we put our right palm downwards. In the circle, we join hands in respect, reverence, and cooperation."

*Vincent Slogan, Musqueam First Nation Elder (re-storied by Jo-ann Archibald)*

# SERIES EDITOR INTRODUCTION

*Eve Tuck [Unangax] and K. Wayne Yang*

For those interested in conducting research that honors Indigenous communities and epistemologies, you will find so much generosity within these pages. This book focuses on the "how" of applying Indigenous research methods, while acknowledging that the "what" and "why" have been written about extensively by generations of Indigenous studies and education scholars (Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008; Kovach, 2009; Chilisa, 2011). Some of these very authors are contributors to this book, such as Jo-ann Archibald, Q'um Q'um Xiiem, from the Stó:lō and St'at'imc First Nations. Archibald's 2008 book, *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit* serves as an exemplar about listening to and appropriately re-storying Stó:lō and Coast Salish elders' teachings. In it, Archibald described seven principles of storywork which must be observed in order to enact a storywork pedagogy in a good way. One of these principles, reciprocity, deeply informs the approach of this book. Each chapter is written as a storied telling by scholars, teachers, and community members in conversation about how they have applied Indigenous research methodologies. This story exchange already makes clear why stories are shared, what is appropriate to share and with whom, and how the storying is responsible to the places and communities in which they were experienced and to the future generations of people who will learn from them.

Storywork practice is very different from Western commonsense notions of "universal stories," with presumed universal listeners and omniscient narrators who are never actually universal. In those stories, "universal" means unmarked; perspectives that are often masculinist, conquering, and Eurocentric are normalized as gender-neutral, timeless, and placeless. By contrast, storywork makes transparent the listener and the teller, and the dialogic nature of storying—that is, the way the story is created in the space between teller and listener (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2014). Furthermore, these stories might well be told differently when either dialogic

partner—storyteller and listener—changes. Anishinaabe writer, Gerald Vizenor (White Earth Nation), explains that a story is like a living three-dimensional hologram to be observed from different perspectives, and differently narrated each time with new details and towards different intentions. A story can be "a kind of visual memory that depended on the situation and circumstances—who is listening, whether they are family or not—the story could be told from multiple perspectives, in different contexts" (Vizenor, 2014, p. 110).

By teaching through storied examples, *Applying Indigenous Research Methods* is itself already modeling Indigenous methods of storywork (Archibald, 2008), storying (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2014), and yarning (Kovach, 2009). The chapters offer a wealth of specific examples, as told by researchers about their research methods in conversation with other scholars, teachers and community members. This dialogic, intergenerational storying approach is accessible and graceful, but also answerable and rigorous. As Archibald (2008, p. xi) reminds us, "Indigenous storywork is not easy." As scholars speaking with others and with the knowledge that their storywork will be picked up by still more readers, the authors must be clear about what is being shared and why, without offering up knowledge to be simply expropriated out of context. Margaret Kovach (Sakewew pîsim iskwew), who is also a contributor to this book, calls "yarning" the storytelling, re-storying, and re-membering that weave together the relations with others implicit in stories (Kovach, 2009). Kinloch and San Pedro (2014) explain that trust is built between storier and listener. Thus, there is an implied trust between the authors and ourselves as readers of this volume.

This trust is purposeful—these diverse teachings of Indigenous research methodologies are toward particular projects of Indigenous resurgence and futurity. The re-membering and re-storying, especially in the context of an edited book, in a book series about Indigenous and decolonizing studies in education, is hopeful, futuristic work. The trust is that we will listen, learn, and forward Indigenous sovereignty and relationality. Storywork is Native futurity in practice.

*Applying Indigenous Research Methods: Storying with Peoples and Communities* is a foundational book in this series, because it showcases what Indigenous methods can do, and also how Indigenous research methods can be taught. Indigenous methodologies of inquiry seek to regenerate Indigenous ways of knowing and research, and craft educational spaces for Indigenous peoples, by Indigenous peoples (Smith, 1999). Many discussions of Indigenous methodologies highlight the role of Indigenous cosmologies, axiologies, and epistemologies in the design and implementation of research (Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008; Kovach, 2009; Chilisa, 2011). Indigenous research methodologies emerge from Indigenous epistemologies or knowledge frameworks so they are always people and place-specific (Smith, 1999; Tuck & McKenzie, 2015). The same Indigenous research methods may be used across many contexts, but will always need to be tailored to that context to match community needs and understandings of knowledge and knowing.

Indigenous research methods are distinct from other research methods not because they are so vastly different—many Indigenous methods include interviews, focus groups, surveys, archival research, and other tried-and-true methods of social science—but because of the theories that guide them. One of the distinguishing features of Indigenous research methodologies is that they are built upon the concept of relational validity or "relational accountability" (Wilson, 2008, p. 77). In other words, what is most "important and meaningful is fulfilling a role and obligations in the research relationship—that is, being accountable to your relations" (Wilson, 2008, p. 77). Creating and maintaining respectful and mutually beneficial relationships between researchers and Indigenous communities (even when the researcher comes from the community) is of utmost importance, in part because Indigenous peoples have sometimes been mistreated and misled by academic researchers, both in the distant and recent past (Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008; Tuck & Guishard, 2013). Theories accountable to these relations between land, sovereignty, belongingness, time and space, reality and futurity shape Indigenous research methods (i.e., Goeman, 2013; Byrd, 2011; Salmón, 2012).

Indigenous and decolonizing perspectives on education have long persisted alongside colonial models of education, yet too often have been subsumed under broader domains of multiculturalism, critical race theory, and progressive education. In addition to many other unique attributes, Indigenous and decolonizing studies engage incommensurabilities fashioned by (settler) colonialism and our relations within and outside it. By attending to Indigenous worldviews and decolonizing theory as distinct philosophical traditions, this provocative series hones the conversation between social justice education, and Indigenous and decolonizing studies. Timely and compelling, the *Indigenous and decolonizing studies in education* series features research, theory, and foundational reading for educators and educational researchers who are looking for possibilities beyond the limits of liberal democratic schooling.

We invite you to keep reading other books in this series, and to consider this series as a potential home for your work in Indigenous and decolonizing studies in education.

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# PREFACE

## Reflection, Action, and Conscientization

*Sweeney Windchief [Nakóna] and Timothy San Pedro*

*Applying Indigenous Research Methods*, in alignment with the central tenets of Indigenous Research Methodologies (IRMs) (Kovach, 2010; Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008), is a collection of dialogic stories shared between senior scholars and emerging scholars, students, and/or community members. The contributors of this book focus their chapters upon the application of Indigenous research methods—the "How?" of such work. Focusing specifically on methods addressing the ways Indigenous[1] authors work with peoples and communities providing a necessary extension to much of the work that has previously been the foci of Indigenous research methodologies—i.e., the "What?" and the "Why?" of IRMs.

The questions fueling this collection of stories originated when co-editors (Sweeney Windchief and Timothy San Pedro) attended the third annual American Indigenous Research Conference on the Flathead Indian Reservation in Western Montana. While there, two things became evident:

1. Scholars, communities, and students, worldwide (Chilisa, 2011; Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008; Kovach, 2010) are engaging and applying IRMs because such methodologies allow for connection to place, to people, to relationships, and to land, something that is often partial or lacking in Western research constructs (Grande, San Pedro, & Windchief, 2015).
2. Overwhelmingly, the scholars we spoke with shared that we have a much clearer understanding of the "What?" and the "Why?" of IRMs; however, they (and we) want clarity on the "How?" which is the application of IRMs (American Indigenous Research Association Conference, 2015).

In light of the importance of relationships, the co-editors invited colleagues with whom they have shared ontological space in the academy to respond to the questions:

- What are the storied examples of the enactment of IRMs?
- What are the commonalities between storied examples of IRMs?

In this edited volume, we rely on the contributions from a number of Indigenous scholars who speak to the importance of such methodologies in their own scholarship, but ask them to focus storied conversations upon the application of IRMs with others. As such, an innovative feature of this book lies in the format. While writing about the methods of Indigenous research, we ask contributing authors to co-author with others (emerging scholars, students, community members) to engage in the methods rooted in developing meaning through the sharing of stories to strengthen relationships. In other words, we ask contributing authors to not only speak to the ways IRMs can be applied, but to also author their chapters using the IRMs of yarning (Kovach, 2010), storying (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2014), and storywork (Archibald, 2008) among others.

Stories, particularly in Indigenous communities, are told with purpose: to teach and to learn with others the power of particular knowledges so that the lessons held within stories can continue—respectfully and responsibly—in new spaces with new listeners/learners (Archibald, 2008). Archibald states, "Elders will direct the learning process for those who ask" (Archibald, 2008, p. 24). Knowing this, we humbly ask the following questions of contributors (who we regard as academic elders):

- In applying IRMs to our lives and to our research, what particular methods are used?
- How are IRMs enacted with others?
- How do relationships to place and to one another impact the application of IRMs?

Questions centering the "What?" and "Why?" of methods rooted in Indigenous paradigms is not new. For example, Kovach (2010) asks, "Why a focus on method?" In answering, she states that there must be a meaningful interplay or relationship "between the method and paradigm and the extent to which the method, itself, is congruent with an Indigenous worldview" (Kovach, 2010, p. 40). Garcia and Shirley (2012) rely on Critical Indigenous Pedagogy (CIP) as a method in their work within schooling settings. CIP places focus upon self-reflexivity, dialogism, decolonizing, and transformation that rely and place value upon "Indigenous knowledge systems to promote, protect and preserve Indigenous languages, cultures, land and people" (Garcia & Shirley, 2012, p. 80). This congruency between methods and Indigenous paradigms requires a significant level of reflexivity to understand our relationships with those who invite us to learn with them. The location and development of relationships are central to the ethics and care when considering ways to apply IRMs.

In alignment with Indigenous ontologies, we each offer the following self-location statements to share who we are, and more importantly who we are accountable to.

I (Sweeney) grew up with the Nakóna name Tatąga Togáhé which was given by my grandfather Hokšína Oyágambisa.[2] I am a member of the Napéšį[3] (personal communication Minerva Allen), Húdešana[4] (personal communication, Sweeney Windchief Sr.) and Wadópana[5] (personal communication, Larry Wetsit) clans. I grew up hearing stories from my relatives that spoke to a specific ontology that included humor, humbleness, generosity, and ability to provide for one's family. The highlights of my upbringing were within the context of the Assiniboine nation. As an enrolled member of the Fort Peck tribes who grew up primarily off reservation, I now serve as an assistant professor at a predominately non-Native institution located geographically close to, but ontologically far from, the Fort Peck Indian Reservation.

I (Tim) was raised on the Flathead Indian Reservation in Western Montana. At the age of 4, I experienced a swift severing of my ethnic identity when my mother (who is white—Scottish and English) and two sisters fled my father who emigrated from the Philippines to the USA when he was 4 years old. That severing of ethnic identity was quickly filled by the love, friendship, protection, and support of my friends and their families who were from the Se éliˇs (Bitterroot Salish), Ksanka (Kootenai/Standing Arrow People), and Q´Iispe´ (Upper Pend d'Oreille) tribes (personal communication, Michael Munson). Through invitation, I was welcomed into community and have been identified as a FilipIndian (a combination of Filipino ethnicity and Indigenous experiences) by my friends and their families. These collective experiences continue to teach me the crucial importance of invitation, of listening, of storying. It is with the blessing and support of those who believe in me and see purpose in me that I move forward in academia.

We acknowledge the importance of the contributors to this book. It is structured specifically to highlight the importance of relationships and the responsibilities that come as a result of shared space. The book is organized into three parts:

- Part one is an appreciation for those who share the knowledge with us much as our relatives have done for generations. We recognize that they are the starters of a flame that can serve as a light and heat source that people can gather around.
- Part two is an appreciation for making use of the knowledge that others have so kindly shared, while reflecting on the actions that they have taken by accepting the responsibility that comes with sharing knowledge.
- Lastly, part three acknowledges that there are important people who have taken it upon themselves to pass on important teachings to oncoming generations in admiration, appreciation, and in a combined effort. These three sections are framed using Praxis (the dialogic process between reflection and action) and conscientization (the development of a critical consciousness).

To illustrate this move from methodologies to methods and the ways these chapters were co-constructed through dialogic conversations, we rely on prior scholarship from those invited to contribute to this book as a way to forward prior work in new ways. For example, Kovach (2010) focuses on the productive metaphor of "yarning" whereby storytelling, re-storying, and re-membering are crucial threads that center the telling and receiving of stories to develop meaning and relations with others. Yarning as a method rooted in conversation allows for participation that is dialogic and relational. Such a method counters Western research paradigms that claim relationality creates bias and jeopardizes validity within research. This pursuit of "objectivity" whereby researchers exclude themselves from participants is the antithesis of IRMs and is dehumanizing for all involved. Rather than ignoring the ways we, as humans, impact and are impacted, IRMs center relationships to land, to place, and to time (Grande, San Pedro & Windchief, 2015; Garcia & Shirley, 2012; Tuck, 2009). Through such dialogic and relational methods, the focus is upon a conscious interdependence between an individual and a collective (Tuck, 2009) or what Kovach (2010) calls "self-in-relation." Self in relation frames knowledge as a co-production located in the development of our selves in relation to others. In other words, "… our doing is intricately related with our knowing" (Kovach, 2010, p. 40). Lee and Quijada Cerecer (2010) frame this linkage between doing and knowing through a counter-storytelling methodology where Native youth have spaces to reflect, make sense of, and change their schooling experiences. Such spaces of cyclical conscientization, transformative action, and resistance (Smith, 2004) must be sacred, according to Garcia and Shirley (2012). Within such "sacred landscapes" cross dialogues offer examinations of the ways Indigenous peoples resist colonizing structures, while acknowledging and celebrating their own actions of survivance (Garcia, 2011; Shirley, 2011; Tuck, 2009; Vizenor, 1994). Survivance moves "beyond our basic survival in the face of overwhelming cultural genocide to create [sacred landscapes] … of synthesis and renewal" (Vizenor, 1994, p. 53). Because IRMs are rooted in relationships developed through storytelling and built upon Indigenous epistemologies, they move beyond damage research narratives that limit possibilities and hope for Indigenous peoples and communities and move toward desire-based research that recognizes and, sometimes, revitalizes the power already held in communities (Tuck, 2009; McCarty & Lee, 2014).

To accurately know, one must consider dimensions of knowing beyond the mere facts presented. There are multiple ways of knowing that eventually can be condensed into knowledge coming from different interactions and through different experiences. Meyer (2013) makes the connection that knowing, in a western sense is delineated between the mental aspects, the physical feelings, and spiritual experiences. Conversely, in an Indigenous paradigm, it is commonsense that these three delineated ways of knowing are interrelated, are affected by one another, and dependent upon one another (Meyer, 2013). This is a place of powerful connection for Indigenous peoples globally, which is representative of the adaptability of Indigenous communities and important given that IRMs are relatively absent in the realm of accepted academic knowledge internationally.

When Indigenous methodologies are absent in Indigenous research, the results—the interpretation itself and the dissemination of that interpretation—serves as a colonial tool of erasure that manifests in dehumanizing ways (Calderon, 2014). The result is a collective consciousness of superiority over Indigenous peoples in a way that allows generations to feel that Indigenous peoples, communities, and their resources, can be used to the benefit of non-Indigenous peoples.

The application of Indigenous methods must be rooted in an Indigenous paradigm that is concerned with the intricacies of, and responsibilities to, multiple relationships (Wilson, 2008). Relationships are not a simple thing given the interconnectedness as articulated within an Indigenous paradigm. This includes a relationship with people through human connections, relationships with Indigenous communities through their own languages and ontologies, connections to the environment, the cosmos, and Indigenous ideologies. By recognizing that we are a part of the earth and dependent stewards of land, water, air, and the cosmos, we have a relationship to collective ideas. These ideas are informed by our connections; therefore, we as people must be accountable and responsible in this multiplicity of relationships.

If research is allowed to move forward, void of Indigenous methods, knowledge, and action, the collective non-Indigenous disposition will creep into policy that has historically been informed by colonial ideology serving to further marginalize Indigenous peoples. Indigenous methods call for active participation and contribution to Indigenous community, culture, language, and social practice, through story. This is a resistance to various addictions, material impoverishment, political repression, and signals of worthlessness (Smith, 1999).

The application of Indigenous methods are dynamic, contemporary, diverse, and essentially are centered within Indigenous value systems often learned through relationships. Archibald states: "The Elders taught me about seven principles related to using First Nations stories and storytelling for educational purposes, what I term storywork: respect, responsibility, reciprocity, reverence holism, inter-relatedness, and synergy" (Archibald, 2008, Preface, para. 3). Indeed, words are medicine, they can hurt, and they can heal. In this edited volume, we asked contributing authors to not only share how they have applied IRMs, but also that they co-author with others using methods of yarning, storying, and storywork to show the ways by which scholars use this medicine responsibly as a way to emphasize how words can heal.

In considering this book, we pose that the chapters are stories and we learn with them. They are the medicine we need at particular moments in our lives; they have the power to shift and change with each new telling because we come to them with new experiences and understandings at different points in our life. We receive these chapters as a gift, as nourishment, and wish to reciprocate with a story that is reflective of the complexity of IRMs in oncoming chapters, as well as to share with the readers the utility and complexity of stories.

While preparing the prospectus for this book project, we (Sweeney and Tim) engaged in weekly Skype sessions. What were once conversations that mostly discussed the formalities and tasks of this large task we had undertaken, the conversations began to take a turn: more and more, we were sharing stories of how we were making sense of our own navigation in academia. As we shared, the other would listen closely and intently, letting the other know that their stories are being heard, absorbed, and reflected back to the storyteller (i.e., yarning). In one such Skype meeting, Sweeney shared the following story "The Giveaway," which Tim urged Sweeney to include as part of the introduction because of the way it illustrated through story, the "How?" of IRMs.

## The Giveaway

Our (Sweeney) family makes a trip every year, and has since before my children were born. The familiar 13-hour car ride takes us home to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation for an Assiniboine community gathering. This is a time to connect and reconnect with family, friends, and culture. This time spent intentionally in Indigenous community is always insightful and inspiring. Part of the gathering includes a feed and giveaway. Typically, at the end of the gathering, if there is a member or family who is celebrating a major life event that person will give material items away to people who are attending. People give belongings to those who have helped them throughout the past year. Gifts often include Pendleton blankets, Star quilts, and household goods, equipment, regalia, animal hides, drums, songs, or anything they can in order to honor the receiver of the gift. Those who receive the gifts get up out of their seat and walk to the family who is giving away; they shake hands and share hugs in thanks for receiving the gifts. I am genuinely grateful for these times of sharing, laughter, and good feelings.

As we sat in a large circle, we could hear the people's names being announced and the items they were soon going to receive. Suddenly, I heard the familiar voice of my Uncle RJ: "I want you all to know that we are proud of my nephew Hawk Windchief. To honor him for earning a Doctoral degree, I want to gift him with a horse!" he said.

I was stunned!

I was completely taken by surprise as most graduation gifts were things that typically included items that help the person in their career, such as a computer or some other equipment to do research, a coffee mug or perhaps a nice pen, I certainly did not expect a horse. At first, I was so happy that I received this gift and was ecstatic to be recognized for the hours of hard work, time studying, and doing research the previous year. I was immediately humbled by my uncle's generosity.

Suddenly, however, panic set in. I recognized that I didn't know anything about horses. What was I going to do with a horse? At the time, my family and I lived near downtown Salt Lake City, Utah. One of my few memories related to horses was years before helping a friend load an unruly horse named "Sugary" onto a trailer. Sugary was annoyed by us, the sounds coming from inside the

trailer made her jerk, turn, and run, and I remember my friend telling me "Don't let her go!" My hands were burnt from the lead rope, and it was beginning to get too dark but I wasn't about to lose my friend's horse. We pushed and prodded until near exhaustion and eventually got her loaded. The next day, I had to crawl to the chiropractor because I couldn't walk.

Thoughts were flashing through my head. Some related to cultural protocol, "You can't deny a gift at ceremony." Some were logistical, "Where am I going to keep this animal?" and "How am I going to take care of it … horses eat a lot!" and eventually to the absurd, "I don't even have a trailer to transport it … Am I supposed to ride this thing back to Salt Lake City?"

With these questions swirling in my mind, I went to thank my uncle. I gave him a big hug and thanked him for his generosity as horses were, and continue to be, incredibly important to many Assiniboine people.

He smiled and whispered in my ear: "I am proud of you my boy … you're going to like him, he is tall, black, and strong."

Still in shock, I could barely hear the other giveaways happening simultaneously around us. Nonetheless, we witnessed many more gifts passed to friends and relatives. Once this beautiful tradition of the giveaway concluded, families said farewells, exchanged or updated contact information, and helped clean up.

After the ceremony was over, we packed up our gear. I walked over to my Uncle RJ's camp where he was packing up to go back home. I humbly asked him if he could keep this horse at his place until I found a place for him. He understood my predicament and graciously agreed to keep and board the horse until I had it figured out. Periodically, over the next year, my uncle would ask, "When are you going to come get your horse?" My horse owning situation had not improved. Boarding horses was expensive, and I did not have the means to properly care for this gift. I was indeed stalling while trying to figure out what I was going to do.

One year later, at the same gathering, I was sitting next to a different uncle, Uncle Peter. Peter is an elder. He speaks fluent Assiniboine and is a knowledge carrier for the people. As we were visiting, he told me he really liked that large black horse at RJ's place. He asked if it was mine and asked if I wanted to sell it to him. I took a deep breath of relief and gave it to him on the spot.

I knew that this horse was going to live a good life. Uncle Peter grew up with horses, he trains them and was in a much better position to care for this horse, so I had no reservations about giving it to him. Years earlier, Uncle Peter had helped me through a really hard time in my life, and I thought that this would be a good way to show my appreciation while simultaneously un-shouldering the burden of owning a horse, given my current situation in the city.

It has been 6 years since I received the horse, and 5 years since I gave him away. In 2017 I learned that Uncle Peter named him Tá (Assiniboine for "Moose"). Uncle Peter tells me time and time again how that horse doesn't go over obstacles; he doesn't go around; he goes through! When we visit, he tells me all about Tá, and it makes us laugh with joy. He really loves that horse.

## Notes

1 This book uses the terms "Indigenous", "American Indian & Alaska Native", "Native" and "Native American" not interchangeably but in the terms that the literature uses or the chapter authors use them. Political connotation within the terminology is understood by these sources in multiple ways and without the authors' judgment.
2 Assiniboine name for Joe Day; translation: "The boy everybody talks about."
3 "Stakes themselves out" people through my paternal grandfather and father.
4 "Red Bottom People" band of Assiniboine on my grandmother's side.
5 Assiniboine band that settled on the Fort Peck Reservation, called canoe paddlers, Canoe band; Paddlers, band of Assiniboine living around Wolf Point, MT.

## Lessons Learned from "The Giveaway": Centering Community Knowledge

As Sweeney first told that story to me (Tim) over Skype, I gave non-verbal and verbal queues that his story was connecting with me (as I tend to do when engaging deep conversations within and beyond academia). I thanked Sweeney for sharing his story and shared with him the lessons I was learning from it at the time of the telling. Over the years of our friendship, Sweeney has taught me so many things, among those that have stayed at the forefront of my mind was when he told me that the same story, told at different stages of our lives, reveal to us different lessons, deeper lessons. Although the story may remain the same (as "The Giveaway" will when in print), we have changed in relationship to it. What once may have taught us important lessons to share with our siblings and communities later might become lessons of reciprocity, love, and a deep appreciation for Indigenous knowledges. It is with that lesson in mind that I share how Sweeney's story has impacted and changed me, knowing full well that later on, this same story may mean something deeper, richer later in my life.

Sweeney's story of Tá, as I read it again and again, transports me to a time during my graduate studies at Arizona State University where I was learning how to become a "researcher" as though that is something hallowed, special, and separate from what people do every day; it is not (see Patel, 2015).

I was enrolled in a methods seminar course when, half way through the semester, the professor stated, matter-of-factly: "Once the research has concluded, so does your communication with subjects."

I remember saying under my breath, "That's ridiculous."

Apparently, I said it louder than I had intended because he called me out and asked me for an extension of my utterance of ridiculousness. Knowing that this hard and fast lesson that he was asking us to accept as our truth—the importance of severing relationships once we collected, stole, and tricked people to sharing their stories for us—was so far from the lessons I had been taught in my community. I felt a responsibility to teach others what those on the Flathead Indian Reservation taught me. So, after a short pause, my mind racing, I stayed seated and, with my head bowed, said:

> "I was taught that relationships are sacred and just because an IRB [International Review Board] tells me that my research has concluded, doesn't mean that the relationships forged in such research settings also completely stop. If all we are doing is pretending to be interested in order to pull information from others, then your definition of research is deeply problematic."

I remember my voice wobbling, trying to hold firm to the beliefs taught to me at home, while keeping in mind the importance of continuing relationships in my own research well after it had "concluded." It was during this time that I began reading, independently from my methods courses, work that centered IRMs, the work of many of those in this edited book: Margaret Kovach, Jeremy Garcia, Valerie Shirley, Eve Tuck, Jo-ann Archibald, Mary Eunice Romero-Little, Tiffany Lee. These and many other Indigenous scholars rooted their work in tribal epistemologies. It was also at this time that Michael Munson and I (see Chapter 8) first met and learned that we grew up less than an hour from one another. We both deeply resonated with these scholars and engaged in a number of informal book/article talks centering their work in relation to our home communities.

But like Sweeney's story and his realization that he could not properly care for Tá at the time by himself, I remember writing my dissertation and feeling conflicted with what to include that would be accepted as research methods. At the time, I felt as though I could not properly care for or fully understand the depth of the lessons these Indigenous scholars provided, so I reverted to the western scholars who were forwarded in many of my courses of study to provide the theoretical and methodological justifications for the work I was doing. And, as I think about Sweeney's story now, and how he relied on his relations and his community to care for something so important, I think about the work that's still to come. I have realized that I am ready to care for Tá; I am ready to care for the Indigenous knowledges shared with me and rooted in relationships, reciprocity, care, and respect when—and only when—invited into such spaces of storywork, yarning, and storying.

## Lessons of Horses and the Gifts that Come with Story

That's the beauty of stories, Tim; they can be what we need at the time of the telling. My (Sweeney) intentions for telling this story have several different reasons:

1. Indigenous stories are often historical but can also be modern.
2. There are lessons couched in this story that relate directly to Indigenous research; particularly, knowledge is a gift, and that gift comes with responsibility which can be either a burden or an opportunity to share, depending on the readiness of the receiver.
3. Relationships are central in the role of sharing/gifting knowledge.

### *Lesson #1: Indigenous Stories are Variable, Both Historical and Contemporary and Reflective of the Realities of Indigenous People*

The term "story" encapsulates a broad system of communicating information. There are multiple kinds of stories and protocols that go with them. It is nearly impossible to share a list of rules that go with stories in an Indigenous context; there are stories that are told verbatim by those who have the authority to tell them. These stories may be shared at particular events and particular times of the year. There may be guidelines about who can hear these stories and under what conditions they are shared. Other stories grow and change over time. These stories may be made useful to the listener through the teller's artistry and ability to change the story so that it is relevant to the listener. In other cases, stories may be told for the purpose of the teller more so than the listener. For instance, though the listener is still in a position to benefit, the multiple reasons for the story are juxtaposed around the teller's healing. The story shared at the beginning is one that recognizes that stories are happening to us as well as to those around us. Two people may have lived through the same experience, but their stories of the event may be very different.

The story above could be told differently from my uncles' perspectives, or perhaps from the perspective of another family member who was close to all of the interactions that took place but not a central figure in the story. Nonetheless, this story is one that happened in a contemporary Indigenous context that explicitly connects Indigenous ways of knowing and formalized western education. This modern story pushes back on notions of Indigenous knowledge that are too often centered in an exoticized, and romanticized versions that are frozen in time for non-Indigenous consumption. The characters in the story are very real, and—in alignment with Indigenous research—the people in the story will certainly have read this story before it goes to print, and have had the opportunity to change how they are represented in it.

### *Lesson #2: There are Lessons Couched in this Story that Relate Directly to Indigenous Research*

Knowledge is a gift. When someone shares knowledge, they are honoring the person that is receiving it. Using Tá (the horse named Moose) as a metaphor for knowledge is not too farfetched when we consider the responsibility that comes with a researcher receiving Indigenous knowledge. Much like Tá, knowledge can be heavy, strong, beautiful, and, if in the hands of someone who is not prepared for it, knowledge can become a burden. When gifted to someone who knows how to care for it, it can bring joy, help one's livelihood, and benefit people's lives beyond that of the one who caries it.

We understand that people take different lessons away from the stories that are shared. Within the auspices of this book, we want to encourage readers to find the lessons that are being shared in the oncoming chapters and connect with them.

Indigenous methodologies are powerful, heavy, and beautiful. We want to be in conversation with you and hear your stories of joy, livelihood, and community benefit.

### *Lesson #3: Relationships are Central in the Role of Sharing/Gifting Knowledge*

We started this book project through relationships, first between ourselves, and then by extension through invitation with those we've learned from either directly or indirectly about IRMs. These people impacted us on deep levels, and as a result made us want to learn and share more. The chapter authors in this book speak to the importance of Indigenous methodologies in their own scholarship and bring conversations about the application of IRMs with others. The stories/gifts that contributing authors and co-authors brought involve the methods rooted in developing meaning through the sharing of stories to strengthen relationships. Much like Tá who was gifted twice through relationship, we received co-authors' contributions, we have benefitted and are hopeful that these contributions can benefit others; therefore, we want to pass this to you, the reader of this book. If you are unable care for it at this time, you might know someone who would benefit. We ask that you share it with them, the people you know and trust through relationship. There is a lot of work to be done around Indigenous research, and we look forward to hearing about the work that you do that is called for by a realistic representation of, and a legitimate contribution to, Indigenous community.

I wonder if Tá has sired any horses? I will certainly ask Uncle Peter in the near future.

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# PART I

# Palm Upwards: "Reaching Back to Receive Lessons"

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# 1

# HANDS BACK, HANDS FORWARD FOR INDIGENOUS STORYWORK AS METHODOLOGY

*Jo-ann Archibald Q'um Q'um Xiiem [Stó:lō and St'at'imc] and Amy Parent Nox Ayaawílt [Nisga'a]*

## Introduction

We follow Indigenous protocol by first acknowledging the First Peoples' traditional, ancestral, and unceded lands on which we work, study, and play: the Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh, and Stó:lō First Nations. Second, we introduce ourselves.

I, Jo-ann Archibald, am also known as Q'um Q'um Xiiem, which means "strong clear water." My father is Stó:lō (people of the river) from southwestern British Columbia (BC) and my mother is St'at'imc from the interior region of BC. I grew up on the unceded land of the Stó:lō people, so I identify with the river systems and resources of the rivers.

My name is Amy Parent. My mother's side of the family is Nisga'a in northern BC from the House of Ni'isjoohl. We belong to the Ganada (frog) Clan. On my father's side, I am French and German. My Nisga'a name is Nox Ayaawílt (Mother of the Capable One). This name connects me to my mother and signifies the importance of the matrilineal culture that flows through my bloodlines.

This chapter on Indigenous storywork (ISW) will show how we, separately, and then cooperatively with each other, developed intergenerational learning and research relationships; how the seven ISW principles exemplify an Indigenous research methodology within our respective Indigenous communities; and how ISW can be used with other communities. The seven ISW principles include: respect, responsibility, reverence, reciprocity, holism, inter-relatedness, and synergy. These principles facilitate meaning making through and with Indigenous stories, which may be of a traditional nature or about lived experiences. Our article also exemplifies the *Hands Back, Hands Forward* Indigenous teaching in our research interactions, which opens space for others to join the ISW circle. Indigenous tricksters, such as Raven and Coyote, will join our conversations at times.

## Q'um Q'um Xiiem Jo-ann's Story

I began writing this reflective piece about ISW on a rainy day on the west coast of BC, Canada, in Vancouver. Just over 20 years ago, I completed my PhD through Simon Fraser University, *Coyote learns to make a storybasket: The place of First Nations stories in education* (Archibald, 1997). Imagine writing a doctoral thesis about a coyote learning to make a storybasket in this time period! I had finished a marvelous research-focused learning journey about Indigenous stories, storytelling, and meaning-making. The learning journey was incredible, but the thesis writing process was difficult, complex, and often fraught with anxiety. I smile when I think about accomplishments because my two-year-old granddaughter says joyfully, "I did it," when she is proud of completing a task. However, I did not accomplish the PhD research and thesis alone. I had Coyote, Elders, cultural knowledge holders, storytellers, my thesis committee, and my family supporting me. It was this vibrant support system of diverse communities that made me keep going and that provided good teachings so that I could become comfortable with a research approach and style of writing that was both academic and Indigenous. Most importantly, I undertook a research project that was very meaningful to me and beneficial to Indigenous people and education. I learned from mainly Coast Salish Elders- Stó:lō, Musqueam, Squamish, and Snuneymuxw, using mainly Indigenous oral traditions about the nature of Indigenous stories, how they learned through story or lived storied lives, and good ways to engage with them in a research relationship, which will be shared later in my story.

Towards the end of my doctoral thesis, I was able to name the theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical framework that I had developed for understanding the power and beauty of Indigenous stories for educational purposes: Indigenous storywork[1]. In many Coast Salish cultural gatherings, when we hear the words, "My dear ones, the work is about to begin" we stop talking to others and pay attention to the important work that will start soon. I felt that using the term "work" with "story" signaled that it is time to pay serious attention to how stories can be used in research and education, and more. I used ISW for a few years for teaching and research purposes and then published the book, *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit* (Archibald, 2008) after I felt that the ISW principles could be applied in other contexts. An Indigenous teaching that compliments ISW is shared next.

## Hands Back, Hands Forward

*Hands Back, Hands Forward* is an Indigenous teaching from the late First Nation Elder, Dr. Vincent Stogan, Tsimilano, from Musqueam, who was an exemplary mentor and teacher to many at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and elsewhere. In our gatherings, he often asked us to form a circle in order to share some good words and thoughts to establish a comfortable environment before

beginning our work together. In the circle, we extend our left palm upwards, to symbolize reaching back to receive teachings (knowledge and values) from the Ancestors and those who have travelled before us. We are given the challenge and opportunity to put these teachings into our everyday lives. We then have a responsibility to pass those teachings to others, especially the younger generation, which is shown when we put our right palm downwards. In the circle we join hands in respect, reverence, responsibility and reciprocity. Elder Stogan's teaching also exemplifies inter-generational learning.

## Indigenous Storywork Methodology

Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991) introduced the 4Rs in higher education: *respect* for the Indigenous student, *relevance* to the Indigenous student's culture, *responsibility* for making the university more responsive to Indigenous students, and *reciprocity* where those involved with the university and the student share or benefit from each other's knowledges. I adapted the Rs of respect, responsibility, and reciprocity to serve as ethical principles and practices for working with people and their Indigenous knowledge (IK) of which stories are a core part. Instead of relevance, I used reverence to signify deep respect and honor to stories and their use. All of the ISW principles exemplify relevance to Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous stories. I will highlight some important teachings that Elders helped me to learn and use regarding the ISW 4Rs noted below, which should be viewed as a catalyst for sparking research actions. With each Elder and Elders' group, I learned much more.

### *Respect*

Khot-la-cha, Dr. Simon Baker, Squamish Nation, said "Sit down and listen, and that's the thing, our ancestors used to say" (Personal communication, February 1992)[2]. Over a 10-year plus learning/research relationship I learned how to sit down and listen in order to really hear and then to understand what the Elders, cultural knowledge holders, and storytellers were saying about the role of stories for learning. Developing respectful ISW relationships takes time and cannot be achieved in a one- to two-hour interview. Listening involves using all of our wholistic realms of heart/emotional, mind/intellectual, body/physical, and spirit in relationship to oneself, family, community, or Nation.

### *Reverence*

Tsimilano, Dr. Vincent Stogan said to me "We always pray first to the Creator … I think in your kind of work using [spirituality] will help you a lot, it's no shame to pray to the Creator" (personal communication, May 1991)[3]. Tsimilano always used his Indigenous language to say some prayerful/thankful words at the beginning of a gathering. He would make time for people to connect to their

inner being, to each other, and to the Indigenous topic being discussed. The concept of reverence is very personal and subjective. I learned to appreciate and practice reverence in my personal life and in research through prayer, ceremony, and being in nature. Tsimilano also taught me over a 10-year period, and used a method where he would teach me a little bit at a time, rather than expecting that I would learn all that I needed to know at one time. I think that the concept of reverence is one where we can learn about it, a little bit at a time, in order to appreciate its full meaning.

## *Responsibility*

Kwulasulwut, Dr. Ellen White, Snuneymuxw Nation, co-authored a journal article with me. She guided me to learn about the "core" of a story, which is an important responsibility[4]. When she spoke she talked about her ancestors' teachings:

> They said you learn the base, the very basic, the inside, the stem, and the core. It sort of sounds like it when you translate it, the core of what you are learning and then expand out. The teacher will already know that – it is like a big tree, never mind the apples or if it's flowers [instead], we're going to learn inside first, and then out, they said. Never from outside first.
>
> *(White & Archibald, 1992, p. 154)*

I experienced a turning point in my research when Ellen shared these thoughts about the need to learn the core of a story. To me, the core meant learning about the values, beliefs, and the essence of a story, which could transcend time and place.

## *Reciprocity*

I returned to the Stó:lō Elders to learn more about Stó:lō storytelling and making story-meaning through group research meetings that spanned a four-year period, from 1992 to 1996[5]. I learned more about how traditional and life-experience stories filled their everyday lives as children; how intimately culture (IK) and stories were intertwined with experiential, land-based, and intergenerational learning; and why Indigenous story-pedagogy was so important. On this last point, Shirley Leon, former coordinator of this Elders' group and now an Elder said, "The old way, you had to really think … you had to figure it out, they wouldn't give you the answer, you had to figure it out" (personal communication, December 1995). It took me a few years to figure out what the Elders were telling me. The seven ISW principles became my cultural way of "giving-back," which is a reciprocal action that sustains stories. The three other principles of wholism, inter-relatedness, and synergy could serve as actions to create story-meanings.

…

Coyote interrupts saying, "It's about time that I have some space in this chapter to tell a story about me!"

…

Before Coyote tells a story, I acknowledge that Dr. Eber Hampton of the Chickasaw Nation told this story at a research conference. He talked about the relationship or lack of one regarding motives and methods for research. Dr. Hampton eventually gave me permission to use this story and to adapt it to suit my cultural context. I renamed the Trickster, Old Man Coyote because Coyote in all its forms has become my Trickster of learning. Perhaps Coyote can illuminate the remaining three ISW principles?

## Coyote's Story: Searching for the Bone Needle

Old Man Coyote (OMC) has just finished a long, hard day of hunting. He decided to set up his camp for the night by starting a fire for his meal. After supper, he sat by the cozy warm fire and rubbed his tired feet from the long day's walk. He took his favorite moccasins out of his bag and noticed that there was a hole in the toe of one of them. He looked for his special bone needle to mend the moccasin but couldn't feel it in the bag.

Old Man Coyote started to crawl on his hands and knees around the fire to see if he could see or feel the needle. He went around and around the fire. Just then Owl came flying by and landed next to OMC. He asked him what he was looking for. Old Man Coyote told Owl his problem.

Owl said that he would help his friend look for the bone needle. After he made one swoop around the area of the fire, he told OMC that he didn't see the needle. Owl said that if it were around the fire, then he would have spotted it. He then asked OMC where he last used the needle. Old Man Coyote said that he used it quite far away, over in the bushes, to mend his jacket. Then Owl asked OMC why he kept going around and around the campfire when the needle clearly was not there. Old Man Coyote replied, "Well, it's easier to look for the needle here because the fire gives off such good light, and I can see better here." (adapted slightly, Archibald, 2008, pp. 35–36)

When I first heard this story in the early 1990s, I thought that OMC's actions of going around and around the fire were like the types of qualitative and quantitative research that were used "on" or "about" Indigenous people because academics were accustomed to using methodologies that they knew and they either did not know or did not accept that these methodologies were disrespectful, inappropriate, and harmful (Smith, 1999).

But Coyote says that is only one interpretation. Coyote is thankful that I decided to go out into the dark, to not stay around the fire complaining about "bad" research. I am thankful that my mentors (maybe the Owl) encouraged me to let my emotions, my inner spirit do some problem-solving (physical action) about story research in order to find the bone needle. Over the years, I have

pondered various meanings about this OMC story. What is more exciting are the listener responses that are shared when I tell this story for teaching and for research purposes. In the oral sharing process a synergistic action, like a spark, happens when someone talks about an idea, emotion, or action and someone else catches that spark to kindle another idea, emotion, or action. Amy Parent has caught this spark throughout her graduate education and continues to kindle and make it bright. However, the trickster might say that it found Amy and guided her to use ISW, which is why I asked Amy to co-author this chapter with me. Now, it is Amy's turn to tell her story.

## Nox Ayaaẃilt Amy's Story

In being impacted (lit by the spark) by Jo-ann's OMC story, I am reminded of the times that I sometimes travel with a trickster friend, who often joins me in synchronistic learning moments. This friend has been known by many names by various Indigenous communities (Coyote, Napi, etc.). In my culture, we refer to this character as Txeemsim, which means trickster, or miracle worker in the Nisga'a language. According to Nisga'a Elder Bert McKay, Txeemsim displays the best ideals and behavior for which humankind should strive. But he is an approachable demi-god, full of human failings, even as he demonstrates how these failings can be conquered (as cited in Rose, 1995). In many of the stories, the Trickster also teaches us how to create balance and harmony in our lives; in this way, Txeemsim demonstrates how I have attempted to prepare for ISW while also highlighting a number of "teachable moments" that are filled with humor, complexity, and transformation. For this part of the chapter, I detail my preparation and ongoing training with ISW under the mentorship of Q'um Q'um Xiiem, Jo-ann.

I begin engaging ISW by saying a prayer, making a food offering to my ancestors and request K'am Ligii Hahlhaahl (Chief of Heavens) to guide my work in a balanced and heart-centered way. I have learned this from Jo-ann, Elders, and community spiritual leaders. Showing my deep reverence for all of creation through prayer and ceremony has become a stronger presence in my life as I continue to expand my knowledge and understandings of Nisga'a epistemology and ontology and is the first ISW principle (reverence) that guides the opening of this chapter.

It has been 10 years since I first began formal mentorship with Jo-ann, who has transformed from being my master's (Parent, 2009), to my doctoral (Parent, 2014), then post-doctoral supervisor and now life-long mentor. Txeemsim chuckles and says "She can't get rid of you." I am deeply appreciative of her patience and gentle guidance in teaching me about ISW over the years. It is an incredible honor and a gift to be invited to write this chapter with her. I understand this mentorship to be a pedagogical enactment of the ISW principles of respect, responsibility, reciprocity and reverence (Archibald, 2008), which are

ultimately an act of kindness that connects us and brings us into relationship with each other. Through the reciprocal act of mentorship and learning we enact Elder Vincent Stogan's *Hands Back, Hands Forward* teachings and *Sidaxgigat'inimhl Gagoodim* (We strengthen ourselves and our hearts).

I began working with ISW on Musqueam territory as a master's student in the Faculty of Education at the UBC. Here my friend Txeemsim makes an appearance and cajoles me by reminding me that I did not know that I was engaging an ISW process in my master's research until after it was completed (Parent, 2011). For my master's study (Parent, 2009), I examined urban Aboriginal youth's experiences of wholistic education that was delivered by non-profit Aboriginal youth organizations in Vancouver, BC. I used an intergenerational methodology with Elder Jerry Adams who is also from the Nisga'a Nation. Jerry provided mentorship to me and co-facilitated a sharing circle with eight Aboriginal youth to learn more about their thoughts and experiences of IK and wholism. I then did follow up interviews with the youth and Jerry to learn more about the understandings they derived about IK during the sharing circle. As I reflect on this research, it is clear that I was engaging ISW principles of respect, responsibility, and reciprocity as well as Kirkness and Barnhardt's "R"— of *relevance* and with an additional "R" *relationships* as ethical guidelines for the research. I see now how wholism, interrelatedness, and synergy impacted my research story and the analysis that I created as result of these ISW principles being put into action. It was also during this time, that I first encountered my friend Txeemsim who taught me a lot in those early days about working with Elders and the high ethical standards that are required to work with Aboriginal youth in research.

I have since worked with ISW for my doctoral dissertation (Parent, 2014, 2017), recent scholarship in teacher education (Kerr & Parent, 2015) and in my pedagogical practices in the university classroom. My doctoral research project focused on high school to university transitions for Indigenous youth at four research-intensive universities in BC, Canada. I created an Indigenous northwest coast bentwood box research design by weaving together key research stories with Txeemsim and the teachings I received from Delgamuux (Earl Muldon), a master carver and hereditary Chief of the Gitxsan Nation. I engaged ISW in my interviews with Aboriginal youth, staff and faculty who had worked or participated in an Aboriginal early university promotion initiative or Aboriginal transition program at a BC university. I am also grateful to my Aboriginal guidance committee (AGC) that provided mentorship to me throughout my doctoral research journey. The AGC included various Indigenous people with extensive professional experience working with Aboriginal youth in BC. Working with ISW in this study reaffirmed my awareness that many Aboriginal people grow into storytellers in the course of their lives. It was a challenge at times to ask youth to share their stories because of their shyness and I learned that including a photo-voice method in ISW was useful for working with young participants. I did not have this challenge with the faculty, staff and community members that I interviewed for the study, all were well-versed storytellers of their experiences, and I was grateful to learn from the stories that were shared with me in the study.

As hinted at by Txeemsim, my experience of preparing and training for ISW has been circuitous, full of surprises and synchronistic moments and is certainly a life-long and life wide process. It was not until the end of my master's program that I began to learn the importance of connecting with the land when engaging ISW in research. Although I had grown up with a deep connection to the land and waterways in Gitxsan territories, the time that I spent in the academy and city began to sever this relationship. It was also during this time that I began to embrace ISW as a research methodology by coming to know and learn more about my family history and through the mentorship that I received from Elder Jerry Adams.

Later, during my doctoral research it became impossible for me to work with the stories that I was analyzing without first going out onto the land to show my appreciation for her life giving presence. I have learned it is important to enact the ISW principle of wholism in a heart-centered way by being in sync with my body, mind, heart, and spirit when working with stories. I often walk amongst a majestic family of cedar trees on Squamish territory. I visit this place frequently as part of my writing and life-long learning process so I can listen to the wisdom of the cedar trees in solitude. In doing so, I also create a space in my heart, mind, body, and spirit to be open to the questions and answers that come to me. The deep reverence I feel when I am in communion with the land and trees allows me return to a heart centered place that facilitates the ISW process and allows me to return to my computer to write, *think*, and *feel* with the stories that I am engaging through the seven ISW principles that I spend time defining below.

In research, the principle of responsibility means that I honor all ethical protocols and community expectations before, during, and after each research project. I also ensure that my research is accountable to my family, my community, and my Nation by expanding my understandings of Nisga'a epistemology and ontology by learning more about our *adaawak* (oral history stories) and *ayuukwl* (laws and protocols) through the Nisga'a language.

Reciprocity in research is understood in terms of affirming relationships and sharing (Kuokkanen, 2007). Not only is sharing vital to the collective benefit of Indigenous peoples, it also serves as an active form of resistance to the hegemonic forces of research and contributes to decolonizing methodologies (Smith, 1999). At the completion of my master's and doctoral work, I undertook a number of knowledge mobilization projects to ensure that the research findings were shared with Aboriginal communities, participants, the university, K-12 school system, and policymakers. I also continue to share the stories of my research in the classroom to teach Indigenous methodologies.

Synergy and inter-relatedness are ISW principles that unfold when I am in a receptive state to receive the teachings that come from a story. They also helped to bring together the analysis of the findings of my doctoral work and my Indigenous methodological research design in another "aha" moment. Usually, my friend Txeemsim signals when these principles come to light.

Reverence was the last storywork principle that I learned. I did not work with Jo-ann's principle of reverence for my master's or doctoral studies because I was uncomfortable writing about it due to the effects of Christianity, colonialism and my exposure to a dominant modernist worldview (that values secularism, segmentation, polarization, fragmentation, and abstraction), and is foundational to the discourse and curriculum that I experienced in Western educational spaces most of my life. I can see now the contradictory ways that I was engaging IK through my engagement with ISW. At the time, I was in my infancy of understanding IK via ISW and am grateful for the mentorship that has been shared with me by Jo-ann, my doctoral committee, Elders, colleagues, family, and research participants.

Ultimately, it was a synergistic moment that helped me to understand the meaning of reverence during the writing of my doctoral thesis. I was on a writing retreat on the Sunshine Coast of BC and was participating in a yoga class when I was asked to move into the women's warrior one pose. I was standing strongly with one leg back on an angle with one leg forward, my chest was lifted with my arms and head tilted extending to the Creator, when I had an "aha" moment about reverence in this position. I remember suddenly understanding what Jo-ann had been saying about reverence all those years. The women's warrior one pose creates strength in all areas of life—physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual—and helps once to face the challenges of daily life with equanimity and poise. Raven pipes in that equanimity and poise were needed to get me through the last stages of my PhD. A year later, I met another mentor, Bruce Robinson, a Nisga'a *Halayt* (traditional healer/doctor). Through my friendship with Bruce, I truly began to learn the practice of reverence in my daily life as result of the teachings he shared with me. The culmination of all of these experiences has helped me to become aware and practice reverence as it relates to ISW in research, the classroom, my personal life, and the various communities with which I interact. I now understand reverence to mean upholding and deeply respecting (at the highest level) all the relationships that I am connected to in a wholistic way including: the land, waterways, Elders, family, mentors, students, friends, and even Txeemsim/Coyote.

## Community Applications of Indigenous Storywork Methodology

In this section, we highlight how Indigenous storywork is used with different communities. The following definition of community suits our purposes:

> Community – describes a collectivity with shared identity or interests, that has the capacity to act or express itself as a collective … A community may be territorial, organizational or a community of interest. "Territorial communities" have governing bodies exercising local or regional jurisdiction (e.g., members of a First Nations resident on reserve lands) … "Communities of interest" may be formed by individuals or organizations

> who come together for a common purpose or undertaking, such as a commitment to conserving a First Nations language.
>
> *(Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2010, Chapter 9, pp. 107–108[6])*

Jo-ann will use an Indigenous graduate student community of interest or learning community, while Amy will focus on her territorial community.

## Q'um Q'um Xiiem Jo-ann's New Storywork

Graduate education and graduate students at the UBC Faculty of Education are an example of a community of practice that I believe develops innovative exemplars of Indigenous methodologies. I have enjoyed the challenge and have witnessed the benefit of developing and teaching Indigenous methodology graduate courses and serving on supervisory thesis committees of graduate students. I begin by highlighting how two former Indigenous doctoral candidates used ISW as part of their methodology: Sara Davidson (2016) and Dorothy Christian (2017)[7]. I served on Sara's doctoral committee and was Dorothy's doctoral supervisor.

Sara Florence Davidson sgaan jaadgu saandlans, of Haida (Haida Gwaii, BC) and Euro-Canadian ancestry uses ISW as an ethical research framework for her community- and school-based research on ways that narrative writing influences high school students' writing and identity. In her PhD dissertation, *Following the Song of K'aad'auw (Dogfish Mother): Adolescent Perspectives on English 10 First Peoples, Writing, and Identity*, Sara operationalizes the seven ISW principles as a complete ethical research framework (Davidson, 2016, pp. 31–45). She first drew upon Shawn Wilson's (2008) concept of relational accountability for research, then she used ISW for building and sustaining her research relationships with the students, teachers, and community members in a small remote community in northern BC.

I highlight one of the ISW principles that Sara operationalizes: reciprocity. She notes:

> This principle of reciprocity, though it was rarely explicitly discussed in her book, was ever present in all of her interactions with Elders and community members. She explained that one aspect of reciprocity is "sharing this learning with others" (p. 48). Of all the principles, the commitment to reciprocity was one of the most important for me in my own work … [it] closely connected to the notion of contribution – the importance of which was a significant part of my upbringing … Throughout this research, I engaged in reciprocity and made contributions to the community as a researcher, an educator, a facilitator, a presenter, and a community member
>
> *(Davidson, 2016, p. 39)*

In her researcher role, Sara developed the research questions so that the findings would be beneficial to the host school district. She shared her findings with the Haida Education Council; in addition, they expressed interest in using the ISW ethical framework for their future policy for reviewing research proposals that come to them for approval. Sara is a seasoned teacher, so she readily shared pedagogical and curricular ideas with teachers in the school district, which were not used in the research site. In her facilitation role, Sara assisted with organizing guest speakers and offering weekly discussion sessions for educators on various Indigenous education topics. As a presenter, Sara shared a research project with various school and community groups at the research site that she had completed prior to her dissertation research, which focused on traditional Haida pedagogy. In her role as community member, Sara shared her cultural knowledge during a school district event. She elaborates on her reasons for taking on these various roles during her research:

> I share these examples here to demonstrate how reciprocity can look in the context of research. Though I know that this was not a requirement for my research, it was an import aspect of my participation in the community. I believe that it [reciprocity] influenced my study because it gave the participant and the community the sense that I was not only there to take but also to give.
>
> *(Davidson, 2016, p. 42)*

Sara's examples of reciprocity in her research setting demonstrate the deep caring and commitment that she has to give back to her community and to the school district so that research is beneficial to them. Her forms of reciprocity are in stark contrast to researchers who took knowledge from Indigenous communities through their research and whose research did not benefit the communities or research participants (Smith, 1999; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996; Kovach, 2009). Another Indigenous scholar, Dorothy Christian, took great care to ensure that her research was carried out in respectful, responsible, and reciprocal ways with Indigenous community members.

Dorothy Christian Cucw-la7, is Secwepemc (Shuswap) and Syilx (Okanagan) First Nations from the interior plateau area of BC. Her doctoral dissertation, *Gathering Knowledge: Indigenous Methodologies of Land/Place-Based Visual Storytelling/Filmmaking and Visual Sovereignty* uses ISW to guide her discussions and analysis of her "shared stories/conversations/experiences" (Christian, 2017, p. 132) with 13 Indigenous cultural knowledge keepers from Canada and the USA about their worldviews on land, cultural stories, and cultural protocols (Christian, 2017, pp. 131–175). She found that the ISW principles were evident in their stories and perspectives. I will highlight some aspects of her discussion about the principle of synergy that enlivened her analysis process. Dorothy listened to and engaged with both the oral conversations and the written transcripts of them in an iterative process:

> In my process of interpretation and search for meaning I purposefully engaged the auditory, visual, tactile and intuitive senses. I listened to the recordings a number of times; whenever I was on a road trip, I plugged my iPhone into the USB connection of my car radio. The auditory engagement was primary for me because each time I listened, I could hear and feel the rhythm of the recorded voices. In my deep listening, I was transported back to the setting of when and where we were sharing stories. I would re-live the synergy of the storytelling experience.
>
> *(Christian, 2017, p. 133)*

The interactions between the cultural knowledge keeper, Dorothy, the place and time of the shared experience, and the orally told stories could be re-lived through the audio recording. In the next quote, Dorothy shows a wholistic engagement with the written research transcript. I have often reiterated the teaching that various Elders have said about listening: that we listen with our three ears; two that we hear with and the one in our heart:

> The textual engagement of the transcripts provided another way of experiencing synergy because in the reflection time I was able to digest, feel and re-experience the stories while I was reading. I engaged all my senses. I reached out for my sense of place in the story. I read with "three ears." I put myself in the story by consciously focusing on the life force energies of the story and the storyteller that is in the space.
>
> *(Christian, 2017, p. 134)*

Dorothy's analysis experience involves additional skill, time, and effort in order for her to understand and make meaning from and with her participants' stories. It may include coding words for commonalities or themes, but it goes far beyond this type of coding. She also mentions the difficulty in articulating the meaning of the ISW principles within a Euro-Western academy that uses a narrower definition for each one. In her words:

> I found that the **synergy** (emphasis in the original) principle is the most difficult to articulate because in attempting to describe an Indigenous concept in the English language proves challenging. I speak of this concept as an exchange of life force energies that infuse the exchange between the story, the storyteller and the listener in that "space between the words" that Kukpi Ignace (2008) discusses (p. 100), which encodes the understanding of spirit. In Secwepemc understanding, the life force is your "soomik" that is your personal spiritual power (Ignace & Ignace, May 2014). An unspoken understanding with all of the knowledge keepers is that the energies are alive because Indigenous peoples believe all things are infused with spirit.
>
> *(Christian, 2017, pp. 283–284)*

The quote above demonstrates the interrelatedness between principles such as synergy and Indigenous spirituality. It also shows an expansive and deeper meaning of synergy. Coyote can't wait to hear what Txeemsim has to say about Amy's experiences of applying ISW.

## Nox Ayaawilt Amy's Storywork

In March 2017, I returned to my motherlands, in search of my bone needle, and wrote this piece about my new ISW experience. I am sitting in our community center hall in the Nisga'a Village of Laxgalts'ap reflecting on how the ISW principles unfold in my community. I have just spent an amazing four days visiting with family, eating our traditional foods, learning more Sim'algax and participating in our Nisga'a Elders & Youth Forum. I am feeling appreciative to have spent so much time listening and learning from our Sigidim Haanak' (Matriarchs) and Simgigat (Chiefs) who had been aptly referred to as our "cultural professors" throughout the conference. I can see that there are some differences in how ISW principles may apply in my community context. As Jo-ann has stated, Indigenous communities will have different stories, protocols, dances, songs, and ceremonies that are connected to a place through a particular language. However, ISW has provided significant markers to guide me in how to think and prepare myself to begin enacting these principles with others in my Nation.

Our first Ayuuk (law/protocol) is the foundation of all our other laws and teaches us the importance of respect. This means that one must know our Ayuukl[8] (laws) and protocol around our adaawak, which are stories about the history of the lands and waterways of our Nation. These adaawak answer questions about the Nass Valley and all the living and spiritual beings that have resided on our lands since time immemorial, and provide significant understandings about the values, properties, and beliefs of each Wilp (house) and pdeek (clan). Some adaawak, belong to all Nisga'a peoples while others detail the history of a particular Wilp or pdeek. This is where understanding the meaning of respect becomes very important when working with our adaawak, because not all people will have the rights to share an adaawak publicly since many are the private property of each Wilp or pdeek (Morven, 1996). It would be considered disrespectful and a violation of our Ayuuk if an adaawak was shared by someone other than the rightful Wilp or pdeek that owns the story. Upon my arrival in the Nass, I was very excited to spend the day in our Nisga'a Lisms (government) building in Aiyansh, which houses our archives and all written records that were required for our treaty, the *Nisga'a Final Agreement* (2000). It also happens to be the home of two books that contain all of our Nation's entitlement adaawak. I was very excited to spend some time with these books because they contain well over 10,000 years of our living history and culture. I remember feeling the power, magic, and awe of learning my House adaawak for the first time.

The following day I traveled to our feast hall in the village of Laxgalts'ap. As I listened to our Sigidimhaanak' and Simgigat speak, I learned more about the important responsibilities that I have as a Ganada (Frog) clan member and researcher to learn our Ayuuk before working with our Nation's origin stories, various adaawak, and the personal life experience stories (of those willing to share). This responsibility will continue to enhance my understandings of Nisga'a epistemological and ontological frameworks in a culturally seamless way. I am reminded of my conversation with Jo-ann not too long ago when she stated, "People may have access to our stories but not know what to do with them" (Personal Communication, 2017). I understand her statement to mean I am responsible for finding my own meanings from these stories (Txeemsim says that I can't ask Jo-ann anymore), and for translating these meanings across time, space, and place through the enactment of our Ayuuk. In doing so, I am grateful to take one step further in my life journey because ISW has assisted me to learn the theories behind the stories in the context of my personal life in a wholistic way.

Engaging ISW can span many communities simultaneously. Being born and raised in northern BC on Gitxsan territories but also finding myself being an urban Nisga'a community member as an adult, I have experienced how these relationships span through our motherlands and into the territories of other Nations as well. As a visitor to Coast Salish territories, I am part of a strong and thriving urban Nisga'a community that continues to be connected to our Nation's homeland both politically and culturally. It is here that I can now see how deeply reverence informs these relationships and the possibilities of connecting with each other through reciprocal sharing and storytelling in many places and communities. I am internally grateful for the Yuuhlimk'askw (the guidance and love that is transmitted through counsel, lectures, and storytelling) of dear mentors, Elders, and family members of many different Nations who have taken the time to mentor me.

Txeemsim swiftly strokes its wings and in doing so brings the principles of inter-relatedness, synergy and wholism into the story. I am brought back to the magical evening that I spent in the archives with Nita Morven, our Nation's Ayuukhl Nisga'a Researcher. Nita would synchronistically appear at a critical moment as I was reading an adaawak, and tell me more about it through her personal lived experience working with our Elders' Council for many years. As we visited in her office until late in the night, she told me that it has taken her years to understand what an Elder has meant by a comment that was made in a meeting. I giggle now, thinking that Txeemsim too has taught me about the time, patience, and persistence needed to understand what Jo-ann has meant by the term being "culturally ready." In another "aha" moment, Txeemsim brings to light my new found understanding of cultural readiness from Dr. Cindy Blackstock of the Gitxsan Nation:

> We have been given the ancestors' teachings and the feelings and the spirit. We can do a couple of things with that. We can say that what we know is inadequate and that we're not Indian enough and that we don't know enough about it or we don't want to pass it on. And we hold our breath and our people stop. Or you can nourish that breath. You can breathe in even deeper the knowledge of others and understand it at a deep level and then breathe it forward. That's the breath of life.
>
> *(as cited in Michel, 2014)*

I first recognized that I was taking a breath of life not long ago after I returned to Squamish territory from the Nass Valley. I found myself in beauty and solitude with my familiar family of cedar trees again. As I was walking, I began taking many deep long breaths. I reflected on the way that I had been holding my breath for a long time because I was fearful that I did not know enough about our adaawak, and ayuuk. While in the Nass, I had been recognized and welcomed home in our feast hall by our Elders' Council. The public encouragement I received from Sim'oogit Henry Moore (Chief Councillor of Laxgalts'ap) and Fran Johnson on behalf of our Elders' Council to "move home, work for our Nation and continue learning our language," enabled me to take this breath of life. I am thankful that ISW has facilitated this process to become "culturally ready" and in doing so being gifted with this beautiful breath of life. I will continue to nourish this breath in all the communities, places and relationships with which I am connected. I reach my left palm upwards and am grateful for the teachings I have received from Jo-ann and all the Ancestors, and Elders who have been with me on this journey so far. I pass my right palm forward to the next generation so that we may collectively continue breathing life into our Nation and various communities, through the power of one interrelated story at a time. The circle is now complete. Txeemsim quickly chimes "for now … ."

## Last Words

Engaging an ISW methodology was and continues to be a meaningful experience for us on many levels. For Jo-ann, I have felt privileged to learn from exemplary Indigenous Elders, cultural knowledge holders, and storytellers who grabbed my hand when I reached for their help. They showed their love and patience with me as I listened to their stories with my "three ears" and then tried to understand ways to engage with stories that brought out the power and beauty of the stories' teachings. I then had to figure out how to work with the stories for educational and research purposes. The seven ISW principles of respect, responsibility, reverence, reciprocity, wholism, inter-relatedness, and synergy guided me. I then extended my hand to the next generation of Indigenous scholars/graduate students to share these ISW principles through teaching graduate research courses and mentoring students through their graduate research and beyond. Now they are practicing this inter-generational teaching.

Along the way, Coyote in all its manifestations became my critical friend, mentor, and cajoler to keep me closely connected to the teachings—Indigenous knowledge—of the land, the Ancestors, family, and community. I have enjoyed travelling with Coyote, Amy, the graduate students highlighted in this chapter, and others of course. Coyote says that it is hard to believe that the learning relationship between Amy and Jo-ann has been a decade long so far. Sharing the space with Txeemsim has been ok too. Txeemsim says "just ok?"

In Jo-ann's words, I have valued the keen interest, valuable insights, and humor that Amy has provided me and I look forward to our continuing ISW relationship. Sara Florence Davidson and Dorothy Christian have breathed new life into the ISW principles for their respective research contexts. Their stories became intertwined with Amy's and mine in this chapter; yet, their research journeys are very different.

For Amy, ISW has allowed me to learn more about finding meaning in participants' stories as well as my own story, helped me to honor reverence and the "synergizing" principle of spirit, and functioned as a vital heartbeat that has directed me towards being culturally ready to take the breath of life. It has brought me back home to my motherlands and with the help of Txeemsim, I will continue to search for the bone needle to learn more about the particularities of ISW through our Nisga'a language, ayuuk, and adaawak.

Both Coyote and Txeemsim want the last word. They think, "Too bad that we didn't have space to tell our versions of Indigenous storywork." Watching and travelling with Jo-ann and Amy, even Sara and Dorothy, on their research journeys has been fun, hard, and meaningful. There were lots of issues related to language/conceptual differences where terms such as reciprocity, reverence, and synergy have particular meanings in the English language, but they mean so much more within an Indigenous knowledge, ISW context. Researchers need to continue going into the dark to find the bone needle, but it is ok to return to a re-kindled fire to get warm and refreshed. It was hard to be patient and our hands got tired as these Indigenous scholars struggled with or didn't understand these or other ISW principles. But they persevered, as did we. Our circle of Indigenous storyworkers has grown over the years. We look forward to travelling with others who take up ISW in the future. We have many more stories to experience and to tell.

## Notes

1 This chapter will focus only on ISW as a methodology. Space limitation prevents me from discussing literature about Indigenous oral traditions that guided my research. Examples include Ahenakew & Wolfart, 1992; Akan, 1992; Armstrong, 1993; Basso, 1996; Battiste, 2000; Castellano, 2000; Cruikshank, Sidney, Smith, & Ned, 1990; Sarris, 1993; Wickwire & Robinson, 1989.

2 See Archibald, 2008, pp. 38–47, for a fuller description of learning with Khot-la-cha, Dr. Simon Baker.

3 See Archibald, 2008, pp. 47–51, for a fuller description of learning with Tsimilan, Dr. Vincent Stogan.

4 See Archibald, 2008, pp. 51–57, for a fuller description of learning with Kwulasulwut, Dr. Ellen White. Also see, Ellen White's publications about Indigenous stories (White, 1981, 2006).
5 See Archibald, 2008, pp. 59–82 for a fuller description of learning with the Stó:lō Elders.
6 The *Tri-Council policy statement* is a joint ethical research policy of Canada's three federal research agencies: the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.
7 Only one principle from each person is highlighted because of the chapter's word length.
8 *Ayuukhl Nisga'a* is the ancient laws and customs of the Nisga'a people. These laws and customs inform, guide, and inspire the learning of Nisga'a culture. See http://www.nisgaanation.ca/about

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# COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN INDIGENOUS METHODOLOGIES

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Tansi, my name is Elizabeth (Liz) Fast, a co-author of this chapter. I have Métis and Mennonite ancestry and, as someone who grew up distanced from what it means to "be Métis," I have spent time questioning my own positioning on different research teams. I have put thought into ensuring that ethics and relationships are always at the core of my work. Tansi, my name is Margaret (Maggie) Kovach. I am of Plains Cree and Saulteaux ancestry and a member of Treaty Four in southern Saskatchewan. A significant portion of my academic life has been devoted to the philosophy and praxis of Indigenous research methodologies and the centrality of Indigenous collectivist knowledge(s) in this approach. Together, we are the co-authors of this chapter.

Why does relationship with the Indigenous community(s) matter within Indigenous methodologies and research? How does a researcher understand their own self-situatedness in relation to community? What relational research practices align with critical community engagement? Through responding to these questions, we highlight the significance of community accountability in Indigenous research within our own research practice and as Indigenous faculty members who assist student researchers. In reflecting upon the Indigenous community-researcher relationship, our interest focuses on method, protocols, and practices of engaging with community. We are equally interested in the Indigenous ontological preconditions of collective reciprocity. This collective reciprocity underscores the value of community-researcher relationship within an Indigenous methodological approach.

This chapter explores the responsibilities associated with community-researcher relationships and the subsequent outreach that is required. This includes knowing community, knowing self, and being aware of the practices that can impede upon or nourish the community-researcher relationship. In this chapter, a commentary

on these aspects of Indigenous methodologies is articulated through two forms of writing. The chapter begins with an analysis, integrated with literature, that considers the philosophical impetus for community-researcher relationship within Indigenous methodologies. In particular, we highlight the relationship between researcher and the community as one which is fluid, dynamic, and necessary from an ethical and ontological perspective. The second half of the chapter shifts to a dialogic conversation between the two authors. In May 2016, the authors collaboratively wrote and performed a script on Indigenous methodologies for the *12th International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry*. Included are three excerpts from this performative script highlighting aspects and challenges of the Indigenous community-researcher relationship. Each excerpt from the script is followed by the authors' commentary. The commentaries were completed post-workshop.

## Why Community Matters in Indigenous Methodologies

In this section, we explore three key dimensions of Indigenous research: the role of community in relationship to geographic spaces; the function of our own story as researchers as integral to a relationship with community; and the ethic of reciprocity in community-research relationships. Before proceeding with a discussion of community relationality in Indigenous methodologies and research, it helps to clarify our understanding of Indigenous methodologies and Indigenous research as interrelated but not identical (Kovach, 2016). Indigenous research involves and serves Indigenous peoples. Indigenous research projects may integrate varied research methodologies such as community-based research, grounded theory, and critical autoethnography approaches. Indigenous research may also include projects based upon Indigenous methodological design. Indigenous methodologies is a methodological approach that has its foundation in Indigenous knowledge systems (Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008). Indigenous methodologies are one research methodology that falls under the broader auspice of what can be defined as Indigenous research. It is our contention that in either Indigenous research and/or Indigenous methodologies, the Indigenous community matters.

We wish to preface this discussion with a note on community. The Indigenous community(s) is not monolithic nor static, and arguably the term "Indigenous community" is problematic in its assumption of political, social, and economic homogeneity. Therefore, local context is critical and researchers must have a clear understanding of the specific Indigenous community with which they are conducting research. To know community also means that the researcher must not only know the researching self, but also the researching self in relation to community. Accountability to community in research requires a relationship whereby both community and researcher are known to the other.

## Relationship to Indigenous Spaces, Community, and Indigeneity

Considering 21st-century neoliberalism which feeds a new colonialism, researchers' accountability to Indigenous communities is a decolonizing ethic and action. To deny respectful and sincere involvement with members of an Indigenous community impacted by research is highly problematic. Decolonizing research must be responsible, relevant, respectful, and non-oppressive in relation to the Indigenous community (Smith, 2013). Being in a respectful relationship with the Indigenous community is a form of anti-colonial resistance. Certainly, the impact of colonialism, trauma, unhealthy coping, and arguably the tension of living a bifurcated existence has fractured social compliance to traditional Indigenous thought that has at its core a collective accountability. Further, to think and be in balance (implying mutuality) is difficult in a constant comparative, detached world of research. In research practice, Indigenous collectivism chafes against a dominating individualistic constant comparative interpretative lens. Yet, if researchers wish to proceed with Indigenous methodologies and respectful Indigenous research there must be an understanding of the significance of community (and more precisely collectivity) within Indigenous contexts.

Taska states that prior to settlement individual identity within Indigenous collectivities was subordinate to a socialization process connected to "wider social and group obligations and cultural practices tied to the land" (Taska, 2000, p. 18). Within Indigenous knowledge systems relationship between place and kinship formations is significant. Implied within relationship to place is kinship/group connection to land, nature, and cosmos. This is about a belonging and connectedness with a sentient world. A self that is deep relationship with place, kinship, and community can be found in myriad Indigenous cultures. For example, a Maori belief is that learning "whakapapa, we learn of our total integration, connectedness, and commitment to the world and the need to let go of the focus on self" (Bishop, 1998, p. 215). Further, connectedness in a Mi'kmaq language context is described as a synergetic experience that "augments the state of being connected with the action of becoming connected, an important distinction for a verb-based language like Mi'kmaq" (Iwama et al., 2009, p. 5).

Connectedness is a fluid process by which there is an ebb and flow between the conditions of place and community and the situation of the self. Certainly, when considering Indigenous communities, a rural geographical place associated with land rights and ancestral consciousness comes to mind. However, increasingly, Indigenous place has been transformed into Indigenous space not bound specifically to a geo-political space as a First Nation community. Yet, even within this broader understanding there is a connection back to space/place. Within the philosophy and ethos of Indigenous collectivity and connectedness, practices exist to reinforce relational-placing. Thus, within Indigenous methodologies, which are based upon Indigenous knowledge systems, there is both an ontological and practical impetus for the centrality of community within this research approach.

Within Indigenous methodologies, the appreciation of protocol generally is critical. Further, knowledge of protocol of the specific community involved in the research is equally important. There are myriad ways in which protocol arises in Indigenous methodologies when conducting research with community. One seemingly straightforward protocol, yet often overlooked by those new to Indigenous methodologies, is the protocol of introducing oneself. Within Indigenous research, this situates the researcher in relation to Indigeneity (and thus Indigenous knowledge systems), research community, and place. For those raised with Indigenous cultural practices, it is often an intuitive act. The protocol of introductions may arise more frequently in small, localized communities yet it is equally significant in all research relationships involving Indigenous peoples.

The following example of a protocol of introduction is taken from an excerpt of a discussion between Marilyn Iwama and Mi'kmaq Elders Albert and Murdena Marshall from the article, *Two-eyed seeing and the language of healing in community-based research* (Iwama et al., 2009). In an excerpt from this article, three individuals take a pause for relational-placing to situate a student:

ALBERT: Who's this guy?
MARILYN: Pie'l.
MURDENA: Speaks several sentences to Albert in Mi'kmaq.
ALBERT: Responds in Mi'kmaq.
MARILYN: as Murdena reads sotto voce from notes … He's Tyson's brother.
ALBERT: Okay yeah, Pie'l, Paul … (p. 10).

In this context community connection and relational-placing is evident. Although this example is not strictly a self-introduction, the introduction of Pie'l by Marilyn and the conversation between Albert and Marilyn provide two significant functions. The first is to introduce Pie'l and the second is to provide a "vouching for" Pie'l, both based upon relational connections. This exchange shows an example of how a non-formal, relational reference check occurs in community and how the protocol of introduction can serve this function within Indigenous research.

Identity statements outlining one's personal relationship with Indigeneity are increasingly normative in Indigenous research, particularly among researchers with Indigenous heritage. Such statements tend to be short, descriptive, and performative in associating the researcher's belonging to kin, culture and/or community: "I am a Plains Cree member of Cowessess First Nation …" (Innes, 2009, p. 441); "As a social anthropologist and as a person of Tsimshian and Tlingit descent …" (Menzies, 2001, p. 20); "As a 'stranger', I write not from a position of belonging but of being peripheral to, or in 'exile' from, indigenous knowledge" (Coram, 2011, p. 39). Followed by contextual narrative, these initial statements of identity are a glimpse into the social nature of identity and its connection back to place, space, land, and Indigenous community. In declaring the ground upon which we stand as researchers, we begin the process of finding our ground in connection with Indigeneity and Indigenous community.

In contemporary society with urbanization and a persisting acculturating education and knowledge producing systems, the nature and utility of relational-placing has shifted. Yet, relational connectedness persists. In reviewing journal articles published post-2000 that integrate an Indigenous methodology and/or Indigenous theoretical perspective, there is a clear indication of the researcher's connection to Indigeneity (Baker & Baker, 2010; Cardinal, 2001; Coram, 2011; Debassige, 2010; Iwama et al., 2009; Menzies, 2001). As with relational-placing that gives rise to protocols of introduction, sharing one's own story is both a philosophy and practice associated with Indigenous relationality.

## The Story of the Self in Relation to the Collective

Story is found in a diversity of cultures and has been taken up within qualitative research. From an Indigenous perspective, we do not think alone. Whether we are imagining the universe in relation with the spirit, nature, or group, we are perpetually in-relation. For Indigenous knowledges, the valuing of many truths cannot be divorced from collective knowledge. Ermine (1999) reflects that the journey into inner subjectivity is a means for greater understandings of the self and existence. Equally, sharing the story of the self is about putting forth one's individual perception of one's belief. From this perspective, self-situating reveals not only our identity markers as gender, heritage, but gives us opportunity to express our individual theoretical stance, what we believe about our world, and who we are within it.

In the context of research, sharing our story offers the possibility of integrity, accountability as it were, in that, as researchers, we are putting forth as fully as possible our biases, assumptions, and theoretical proclivities. Through the expression of sharing our personal story, researchers learn more of the interpersonal self while simultaneously unravelling a false consciousness. If we are Indigenous researchers telling our story, this acts as a resistance to erasure of our peoples and dismantles the single story of Indigeneity. Within this context, the act of self-locating and sharing our story becomes a political project. If as critics charge "that the neutral citizen of liberal theory was in fact the bearer of an identity coded white, male, bourgeois, able-bodied, and heterosexual (Pateman 1988; Young 1990; Di Stefano 1991; Mills 1997; Pateman and Mills 2007)" (as cited in Heyes, 2012), then Indigenous self-location is anti-colonial work.

Critical self-reflection may occur within our silent self or as a communicative act. As a communicative act, story (of which self-situating is) becomes a primary method of oral cultures that is as much about the storylistener as the storyteller. In traditional oral society, the act of responsibly transmitting knowledge required not only critical awareness of the self, but also that there was critical awareness of the listener receiving the knowledge (Brant Castellano, 2000). Having an understanding of who would be receiving the knowledge allowed for a regulatory, social function of what would and could be shared. In considering the act of self-situating

within Indigenous societies, it was traditionally conducted orally and relationally. The relational aspect between the storyteller and storylistener was laden with a responsibility that is somewhat lost when encoded in written text or social media. Within a group membership in a shared geographical place this harkens back to a differing socialization process encompassing a deep knowledge of familial ties, a suave understanding of group relations, and existing relations of trust. Suffice to say for those engaged in Indigenous research—both Indigenous and non—it does not hurt to be mindful that sharing our story or hearing the story of others, as a form of oral tradition, is about relational-placing, collectivist ethics, and a practice of reciprocity.

Situating ourselves as researchers is not only a conduit for grounding and community accountability, but also for vulnerability. It is our vulnerabilities that connect us and the teachings of the sacred circle tells us that it is our connections that keep us strong. In Indigenous research the vulnerable is honorable. While telling our stories may, at times, feel messy, the beauty of this act is that it gives pause as the researcher and invites a shared story to come through. It reminds us, as researchers, to show the same respect and regard to the story of the other as we would hope our own story will be treated.

## Ethic of Reciprocity

The ethic of reciprocity in Indigenous philosophy influences what we share of ourselves. Here relationship is characterized as reciprocal. Reciprocal rather than solely relational, as the former assumes mutuality. In focusing on critical self-in-relation, Elder Grafton offers these words: "No one is an expert; we are part of the whole. All we are is facilitators for others to uncover their own truths, as much as we can" (Wilson & Restoule, 2010, p. 39). In a nutshell, these words imply reciprocity. As Elder Grafton suggests, each individual in the group (including self) has a responsibility to act as catalyst for others to find and reveal their truth. This implies responsibility to the group. The ability or expression of inner understanding within a collectivist tradition allows for a reciprocal, symbiotic participation of individual and group in nurturing a common or shared wisdom. This ethic of reciprocity has historic roots in a socio-political system based upon group or collective membership. As Taska states in commentary on Australian Aboriginal societies: "Australian Aboriginal societies have placed a greater emphasis on social identity and group membership. Prior to European invasion, individual identity was subordinated to the group …" (Taska, 2000, p. 18). Within this context the expression of self and its implications for knowledge creation cannot be peeled away from group membership and group reciprocity however one's group is defined. According to Ubuntu philosophy, "I am because you are."

In reflecting upon the Indigenous community-researcher relationship, as noted in this chapter, we recognize that the "Indigenous community" is not homogenous. In the next section of this chapter, we focus on a research project situated

within an urban Aboriginal community in Quebec, Canada. However, in order to better understand the context in which this research relationship takes place, it is helpful to explore the Canadian urban Indigenous environment generally.

## Urban Aboriginal Community

According to the 2011 census in Canada, 53% of Aboriginal (those identifying as First Nations, Métis or Inuit) people now live in Canadian cities. The most urbanized Canadian Aboriginal peoples are non-status First Nations peoples (or non-status Indians) and Métis, with 74% and 66%, respectively, living in urban areas. There is also a great deal of diversity with respect to how long people have been living in cities. Some Indigenous people have lived in cities for multiple generations, and others are newly urbanized, or mobile, going back and forth between city and community, or even between multiple cities and communities (Fast, 2014; Snyder, Wilson, & Whitford, 2015).

In Canada, urbanization has historically been related to dispossession from Indigenous lands in the form of imposition of the reserve system, mandatory schooling policies and in the case of many Métis, the scrip system where land they were living on was signed away to make room for settler communities (Lischke & McNab, 2007; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). In the current context, urbanization is very often due to lack of funding for services on reserve or in remote communities, insufficient housing, the desire or need to obtain formalized education, and the need for greater access to employment opportunities (FNIGC, 2010; Environics Institute, 2010). Despite the hope of having access to stable housing, once newly urbanized Indigenous people find themselves in cities, racism often results in unstable housing and employment (Fast, 2016; Proctor, 2014). As a result, urban Indigenous communities are sometimes built up in areas where culturally safe or supportive social, employment, and housing opportunities are available. In some cases, urban Indigenous peoples that are active in advocacy work in these areas become the visible figures of the "urban Indigenous community" (Snyder et al., 2015).

Newhouse and Peters (2003) argue that research on urban Aboriginal peoples often focuses on individuals and neglects the larger urban Aboriginal community. Thus, the community is seen as incapable of participating in decision-making that affects its members, and/or the governments fail to conceptualize urban communities as having a right to self-determination in policy-making (White & Bruhn, 2010). The Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS), initially a Canadian federal government initiative, has been providing funding to support networks of organizations that have come together to prioritize key policy areas for urban Aboriginal peoples, including family, health, job and skill training, and support of youth initiatives. Since the late 1990s, thirteen cities across Canada have been funded through the UAS. However, Indigenous rights to self-determination and self-government are not a part of the overall framework of these initiatives (Snyder et al., 2015; Tomiak, 2013).

As a response to the increased demand by researchers, many urban Indigenous organizations have set up their own ethics protocols to ensure community involvement and accountability. For example, the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal now includes a separate application process that asks potential researchers to consider how their research aligns with Indigenous methodological principles. Questions on the application ask the researchers to explain their relationship to the community, how they will undertake the research grounded in reciprocity and how they will ensure community involvement in the research (Nakuset, personal communication, 2015). However, the community-researcher relationship within urban Canadian Indigenous landscapes is complex and there is not necessarily agreement upon how best to approach questions of representation, voice, and enactment of relationship in research.

The next section of this chapter is an attempt to think through questions of representation and relationship of research within an urban Canadian Indigenous context. These questions focus on building relationships, providing opportunities for meaningful input, and being aware of our current connections to, and belonging in, multiple communities.

## A Performative Dialogue on the Indigenous Community-research Relationship

As noted, this section of the chapter integrates excerpts from a script performed by the authors at a qualitative conference workshop. We begin by offering background notes to you, the reader, so that you can better understand the context of the script.

The script involves a faculty/graduate supervisor (Maggie) and a doctoral student (Liz) dialoguing on the community-researcher relationship in an urban Indigenous research project. The setting is a coffee shop in Montreal. To write the script we, Liz and Maggie, held several Skype meetings. Through assistance of a recorded transcript of a Skype dialogue between ourselves, we prepared a performative script (of which the following are excerpts). The following includes three conversation excerpts from the workshop script. Each excerpt is followed by a reflection on relational complexities arising from the research. Much of the dialogue is based on how Liz approached her doctoral research (which has been successfully defended).

The research was conducted in Montreal. In her research, urban Aboriginal youth were members of a committee that oversaw all aspects of the research. Inviting a youth advisory committee to oversee Liz's dissertation research came from a deep engagement with preparing herself to undertake this research. Liz wanted to be certain that her work was relevant to the local Indigenous youth community and grounded in a deep respect for relational and collaborative work. However, she saw this as more than community-based research, it was about the need for a more radical approach where she was fully prepared to throw the entire project out if it was not a priority for urban Indigenous youth. She had

become familiar with working with a First Nations national advisory committee as a coordinator for a large national study on child welfare. This model was meant to respect OCAP® principles where the First Nations representatives had ownership, control, access, and possession over the data and research process. Liz felt that for the purposes of a large research team with multiple collaborators this process was respectful and ensured a high level of ethical oversight. We begin with Excerpt #1.

## Conversation excerpt #1 (as delivered at the conference workshop in 2016)

MAGGIE: Liz, I want to learn more about why you think community involvement is important in your project given that you want to use Indigenous methodologies with an Urban Aboriginal Youth group.

LIZ: The research is an arts-based project for urban Indigenous youth to learn about colonization. First of all, I am only one person and even though I have Métis ancestry being only one person it is important to get a broader perspective. I wanted to gain a broader perspective on the research question and also the process for community input for that research. Research has so often been harmful. It has come from a perspective that the researcher thinks they have a great idea and that the research would be wonderful. For example, in thinking about an urban Aboriginal youth research project, the researcher could think it would be wonderful if to learn of the urban Aboriginal youth perspective, but then doesn't slow down or stop to find this perspective out. The researcher doesn't stop to ask if the research would be wonderful or have any meaning to the youth. There have been a lot of instances where research has benefited the researcher more than the community involved. This is why getting community involved is important.

### *Complexities and Reflections (Post-conference Reflections)*

In acknowledging colonial history whereby research has caused harm to Indigenous communities, the scenario identifies several aspects of the community-research relationship that can unsettle a researcher. The first complexity includes the significance of self-situating by the researcher and the matter of identity in Indigenous research. As second point made by the student is a recognition of the need for a broader perspective than then the researcher's alone (even if the researcher is of Indigenous heritage). Lastly, the matter of who is benefiting from the research is raised.

To further reflect upon the complexities that arise in this scenario, Liz shares a story of a current, post-conference experience that demonstrates, in her mind, the importance of indicating the researcher's relationship with the community and why this matters in Indigenous research. Liz was recently at an academic

conference on Indigenous research and citizenship issues. There were a number of panels each day. The opening presentation was given by a well-known Indigenous political figure and was well accepted by the audience. He introduced himself, his relationship to the work he was doing, and the organization that he worked with.

The next panel was comprised of three researchers each giving lively talks on citizenship and models of political participation within Indigenous communities. None of the panelists indicated their relationship to Indigenous communities. The panelists began their presentation without a protocol of introduction self-situating themselves within the context of the community they were referencing. Liz was sitting with her friend and research collaborator. They both started to get a strange feeling and turned to their iPhones to look up the presenters. They thought that the panelist's relationship to Indigenous communities would be listed on a website or that the panelists would discuss these relationships later in their presentation. Halfway through the second presentation Liz's friend got up and left the room. She whispered to Liz that she felt like a "lab rat." She was triggered. By the end of the third presentation, not one of the presenters discussed their own relationship to Indigeneity. Nor did they discuss their relationship to any Indigenous person/people/community.

A member of the audience, was visibly upset, and stood up to ask the presenters about their relationship to the communities that they were working with and their feelings about the research. The presenters all responded that they had strong connections within the communities they referenced. One of the presenters started listing names of Indigenous people. At this point, Liz spoke up. Liz said that relational connections and protocol of introduction was important to discuss from the start. Liz said that the Indigenous people sitting in the room listening to the presentation were on the edge of their seats waiting for this protocol to occur. This matters because of the history of harmful, one-sided research that has appropriated Indigenous knowledges and done little to reciprocate. Even if they only had fifteen minutes for their presentation, it mattered to ground themselves in their research relationships. After this exchange, one of the panelists came up and introduced herself to Liz. The panelist asked Liz for advice on how to better contextualize her research. This woman was demonstrating humility instead of getting defensive and in so doing, showing respect for her relations.

Without first understanding the relational connection, it was impossible to garner how the research itself was or was not meaningful to the community. Without the community voice and representation (even if they were not physically present), it was difficult to determine who might have been (or might not have been) benefitting from the research. By neglecting to discuss this vital element, to the Indigenous people in the room, the research lost meaning and relevance.

## Conversation Excerpt #2

MAGGIE: I like what you are saying about positioning ourselves as researchers in relationship to community. As researchers, we come from our own identity positionings, our own gaze, and our own experience. Self-situating has the potential to alert others to whether we have different people around us who are offering a broader perspective on the research question and the research process. The presence of an alternative perspective can be a portal for dialogue and rich insight.

I was thinking about politicality of research when it comes to Indigenous community-relationships. If you are conducting research within the Urban context and are from a rural First Nations community, as a researcher you might feel lost because you don't have access to an urban Indigenous perspective. You would want a broader perspective so you can get feedback and insight on context. There is also the matter of who is vouching for us as researchers within the specific community we seek to carry-out research with. It is the "vouching for" aspect of working with community or an advisory group. Community input into research serves the principle of relevancy and respect and it lends the researcher credibility. This is about the politics and practice of Indigenous research. With urban Aboriginal communities, there might not be a formal process for community consultation and approval but these communities still deserve the same respect. It may be a bit harder to figure out.

### *Complexities and Reflections (Post-conference Reflections)*

In this excerpt, complexities that emerge include how to share power with community, insider-outsider status, and the significance of grounding as researchers through ensuring that our research comes from a place of connection with community. Grounding as researchers flourishes when we share our own story as a portal for power sharing. Sharing one's own story is a normative function within Indigenous societies that serves a practical utility of placing individuals within spheres of belonging, within community. This act of belonging serves as a personal, inner exploration of self-knowing; however, it is also social, cultural, and political. As Jones and Jenkins state, "… indigenous peoples—as a matter of political, practical, and identity survival as *indigenous peoples*—insist on a profound difference at the Self-Other border" (Jones & Jenkins, 2008, p. 475). Given the social belonging aspect combined with the political nature of Indigeneity, sharing our own story by necessity requires us to contemplate our relationship with community and whether we hold an insider/outsider (or both) status in our Indigenous projects.

Who is empowered to conduct research in Indigenous contexts? Arguably, insider/outsider discussions are as much about politics as about personal identity. For example, Indigenous scholars such as Swisher argue that research in Indigenous communities ought to be carried out by Indigenous researchers (Innes, 2009). Other Indigenous scholars suggest that questions around insider/outsider, authenticity, and authority can be potentially divisive and limit collaborative research (Baker & Baker, 2010). Currently, academic research does not function in a selfless state. Within Indigenous research we remain cognizant of insider/outsider status. Identity politics arise as the personal becomes political and the self-locating act dances on the edge of cultural essentialism while simultaneously serving as political reclamation in a neo-colonial world. No doubt identity statements (and *how* connected one is to community) work to summon personal scrutiny and can be a painful aspect of Indigenous methodologies and research. Declarations of belonging simultaneously evoke exclusion and can oversimplify the complexity of identity as individuals are sorted (or self sort) into categories of outsider, insider, and those between. Such categories create problematic situations when it is assumed that all insiders know, all outsiders do not, and those between are perplexed. Often the emphasis becomes where we do not belong instead of where we do. The antidote is relationship to community—easier said than done for many researchers.

## Conversation Excerpt #3

MAGGIE: Liz, a strategy for involving community that you are proposing is a research advisory group. How would you go about forming this advisory committee?

LIZ: I could put out a notice to the different youth organizations saying that I am looking for people to oversee this research process and see if there might be youth interested. I could get funding to recognize the time they are putting in to it. I could arrange time to come and chat with them. I could give them an overview of the research goals and get their input on who they see as their community and who should be invited to be involved. I have some relationships with different organizations and individuals. I would start with those individuals I know. I could then go word of mouth to make connections. I could also see if there could be someone from the organization, that the youth are a part of, maybe a parent, an elder. I could ask the youth as well as those leading these organizations.

MAGGIE: You mention that you have relationships with some organizations. For a broader participation are you thinking of inviting community membership via a "cold call?"

LIZ: It would be important to find someone to introduce me. But there is also something to be said for sort of a "cold call" so that I could make sure that people I don't have relationships with have access to being involved. I could

do this by putting out a notice on a network or listserve, that sort of thing. Those would be some different ways. However, to ask specific people it would be through my own relationships.

MAGGIE: I think you are right that in some instances we need to have an open invitation. In the urban Aboriginal setting, people may want to be involved in the research but aren't connected to a formal community. Outreach, by the researcher, through social media and different processes would seem important. You are, however, also saying that to create a Research Advisory Committee you need to have people with whom you have relational connections. For involvement of an elder or a parent it matters that you have someone they know who is able to say that your research is trust worthy. In these instances, you may need to begin with a community connection who can vouch for you. I like the two different ways.

## *Complexities and Reflections (Post-conference Reflections)*

When I (Liz) began my dissertation research, I was actively looking for ways to connect with other Indigenous people and I had been attending meetings at the Montreal urban Aboriginal strategy network. I volunteered to sit on a working group that focused on Indigenous youth in the child welfare system. I previously did some volunteering on a research project/needs assessment of urban Indigenous peoples' experiences within health care. When I began thinking about how to recruit youth to be on an advisory committee for my doctoral research, I had a solid understanding of the different organizations and networks because of this work and these relationships. They were helpful in recruiting youth. They were comfortable vouching for me and recommending youth for a Research Advisory Committee. I knew that research was a scary/distasteful word and that many youth might not understand or might be intimidated by an advisory committee. I have existing relationships which were helpful in connecting with youth for the advisory committee. I also went to several new youth organizations and explained my research and the concept of the advisory committee.

The preceding excerpt speaks to two important aspects in conducting Indigenous research, and in invoking Indigenous methodologies. The first is recognition of the urban community as an entity with self-determination and voice. If research on urban Aboriginal peoples focuses on individuals and neglects the larger urban Aboriginal community, if one is not already connected to this community, it is important to do the work to determine if there are one or more representative bodies that can be consulted prior to beginning research (Newhouse & Peters, 2003). It is too easy, and divorces the researcher from the ethical responsibilities that come with research "in communities" to approach urban Indigenous research with an individualistic lens. Indigenous peoples that now make cities their homes have a right to be involved in research and other decision-making and political activities, not simply as participants, but as drivers of these processes (Fast, 2014; Fast et al., in review).

The second aspect to consider in this particular example is how we as researchers actively acknowledge the impact of colonization in removing Indigenous peoples from our lands and communities, and the important work that needs to be undertaken to ensuring that there are spaces that allow people to re-connect to community and be involved. In this way, a research creation of an advisory board that brings urban Indigenous peoples together might be seen as an active form of creating community and decolonizing research (Smith, 2013).

## Concluding Thoughts

In this chapter, we examined several key themes including: the differing interpretations and understandings of Indigenous community; Indigenous community involvement and politics; trust and grounding; and the practices and processes for involving the community. This chapter also moves forward a conversation about the different ways in which Indigenous communities have or have not been given opportunities to be active drivers of research, and how we consistently need to put thought into the complexities of community involvement as researchers, whatever our positionalities and identities. In the dialogic reflections, we have attempted to highlight the significance of community accountability that we consistently address in our research practices and as Indigenous faculty members who assist students who are also grappling with these questions.

In concluding this chapter, we note three pertinent aspects about the aspects and ethics of the researcher relationship with community within Indigenous research: (1) that the research relationship with community is a valued experience which when expressed enriches knowledge creation; (2) that the researcher holds a responsibility to be cognizant of processes, as protocol, that welcome relationship and that the researcher uphold the practice of humility and respect; and (3) that the researcher's needs ought not to overshadow the benefit to the community (thus a valuing of a collectivist orientation). It is in the collective sphere that personal perceptions of belief moves into the realm of knowledge: "Aboriginal societies make a distinction between perceptions, which are personal, and wisdom, which has a social validity and can serve as a basis for common action. Knowledge is validated through collective analysis and consensus building" (Brant Castellano, 2000, p. 26). Embedded within Indigenous knowledge, and subsequently Indigenous methodologies, is a practice of research that values the critical inner acuity of a researching self in relationship with community. It is this interrelationship between self and community within ancient Indigenous societies that is the foundation for contemporary Indigenous cultures—Why then would this not be central in Indigenous methodologies and Indigenous research practices?

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# 3

# *K'É AND TDAYP-TDAY-GAW*

## Embodying Indigenous Relationality in Research Methods

*Leola Roberta Rainbow Tsinnajinnie [Diné/Filipina and accepted into Santa Ana Pueblo], Robin Starr Zape-tah-hol-ah Minthorn [Kiowa/Apache/Umatilla/Nez Perce/Assiniboine] and Tiffany S. Lee [Dibé Łizhiní Diné/ Oglala Lakota]*

We share this piece as three Indigenous women united as Native scholars driven by a passion to honor our communities through teaching, research, and service (Figure 3.1). We share this dialogue in respect to our relations across our lands, waters, and those who made sacrifices for us to occupy the privileged spaces we operate within. In considering our deepest core value in Indigenous research, we center ourselves upon relationality or *K'é* and *Tdayp-tday-gaw* (in our own Diné and Kiowa worldviews). Our shared understanding of Indigenous research is defined as: An intentional decolonization process that we engage in as Indigenous individuals with many shared values linking our spaces together, inserting Native epistemologies, and honoring the reclamation of how and why we seek knowledge. From this foundation, the remainder of this chapter will consist of: (1) excerpts from a recorded narrative in regards to how we captured this shared understanding and how we have tied it to our experiences as students and our engagement in Indigenous education; (2) our individual narratives on our approach to research and; (3) a recognition of the relationality that connects our individuality back to K'é and Tdayp-tday-gaw.

As scholars we, along with you (as readers of this book), have daily conversations surrounding Indigenous research. We captured our thoughts and intentionally recorded our stories and our conversation on our reflections considering research and methodologies rooted in scholarship and experience. This conversation occurred in the early spring of 2017, but some references to occupations have been updated. We begin with a selection of excerpts from our discussion on how we envision the meaning of Indigenous research.

**FIGURE 3.1** From left to right: Leola Tsinnajinnie, Tiffany Lee, and Robin Minthorn
Photo credit: Catherine Montoya

## Conceptualizing Indigenous Research

TIFFANY: You know, I think, for one, it's hard to call something "Indigenous research" because obviously there's a diversity of Indigenous people. It's like saying "Native American culture." So, when I think about Indigenous research or Indigenous-based methodologies, I think about it in terms of a process that we engage in and values that are shared amongst many of our communities, and how we incorporate that into the research process.

LEOLA: Speaking to that, there's so much diversity and complexity within each nation and peoples and community, I kind of define it in four broad areas, very broadly. The first one is: Indigenous research comes from the perspective of cultural sovereignty, looking at the spirit of our ancestors, and it's honoring their resilience, vision, and sacrifice. Secondly, I see it as: love coming from a place deep in our hearts, of love and desire for community well-being. The third area, I see it as, goes back to our general topic of: it's recognizing our relationships and nourishing them with each individual or community that we're working with and it might be by identifying how we're related by clan, or by our friendships, or professional networks, or maybe shared experiences or shared values. So, it's looking at: what's our relationship there? There has to be a relationship there, in one way or another. The fourth broad area that I look at is: it should be an intentional decolonization project. So there should be a true purpose and objective to research. I think that may or may not apply to all Indigenous researchers, but the way I look at it, that's a part of it because it acknowledges what our peoples have gone through, the impact of colonization. In so doing, it's allowing us to reclaim research and just being very intentional about, you know, it's pushing back. It's claiming our space as our own.

ROBIN: So, I define Indigenous research and Indigenous-based methodologies rooted in scholarship and experience as … I think it's inserting your own knowledge and epistemologies and honoring who you are as an Indigenous person. That can be individually, that can be community-based, because we're all connected to a community in some way. I think it's giving yourself that privilege and that right just as everybody else has their privilege and right to see their own research in their perspective of a Western approach. I think that's how I see that, and I think seeing more people acknowledging their own tribal epistemologies and thoughts into their research, which it's really wonderful to see that because I think you're honoring yourself and how you were taught in your values. I think that's a part of it, too, is honoring your values, right? Understanding what your values are and letting that guide your research as opposed to looking at a Western theoretical framework to guide you, because those have no value in our communities, right? So, I think it's really being able to do something like that. It's really you saying, "This has

no value for us. Let me bring in something else that really makes more sense to me and who I am as an Indigenous person and within our communities." I think it's us giving ourselves that power and that ability to do that.

TIFFANY: As you were both talking, it made me think about, you know, I'm teaching the *Research Issues in Native America* class right now. One of the books we're using talks about research, Indigenous methodologies but also how it's related and aligned with anti-oppressive methodologies and critical methodologies. I think that both of you really spoke to that well.

Our conversations then evolved into the significance of and our value for developing relationships in our research process. This next section highlights that discussion.

## From Western Paradigms in Schooling to Engagement in Indigenous Education

TIFFANY: I feel like I've had to relearn how to do research. When I was an undergraduate student, the college I went to really emphasized research. I went into psychology, and it was a very positivist framework that you learned. I'm grateful for coming back to UNM, and the people I've interacted with, and authors I've read who were just coming out with these amazing books on Indigenous-based research. I've had to really relearn how to engage with my own community and … I know I questioned it when I was in college, but … I'm still always learning, and a lot of it is rooted in relationships and really developing that relationship with the people you want to work with or collaborate with so that it's trusting, so that it's beneficial. I mean, it's all those four Rs that people talk about in terms of respect, reciprocity, relationships and responsibility as a researcher. Making sure it's ethical, and it's anti-oppressive, and it's aligned with community interests and values or … Yeah. So, relationships, I think, are key for me, as well.

LEOLA: That reminds me of my story because I got my Bachelor's in Sociology, and yeah, all the research classes were totally positivistic-minded and that's just the way I thought the world worked, like all around. I didn't know that that was just one framework. I started to learn more, studying American Indian Studies at U of A in my Master's level, … I came here, to UNM for my doctoral studies, and I learned that qualitative research is valued and we can prioritize other types of research and Indigenize it … I think it's awesome that now, as undergraduates, our students in NAS get it purely as an Indigenous research framework with methods and practices. It's just a testament to how far scholars and community members have pushed the field to make this all a reality. There's even more ways, more directions that we can go.

ROBIN: Yeah, I think mine, for Indigenous … Actually, my program, my doctoral program, is higher education policy, and we had no Native instructors, or really even … I think me and there was like, two other Native doctoral students, but I really wanted to try to incorporate Indigenous frameworks and methodologies and so that's very … I used Shawn Wilson, Indigenous relationality and research paradigm, and it was interesting because I really wanted to honor … Even though I was working with college students, I was going out to campuses in different parts of the country with my research, I wanted to honor the relationship. I used the relationality component through my relationships with student affairs professionals that I had already had relationships with, to connect me to those campuses, but also honor the students as well in regards to letting them choose where we met and trying to honor their process as well as when we had … Because of the pseudonyms we have to have in our IRB processes, I let them name themselves. It's really giving them the voice and trying to honor that as well. So, I think that's been a way that I started, but it's grown since then and so now, you know, thinking about the culturally appropriate ways in which we do our research with communities, especially if I'm not from that community … You know, what is appropriate for me to give them? Is it okay for me to give them the Cedar? What is their protocols? Finding that out … But I did do that because I did a pilot study for my dissertation, as well, and I went to three tribal communities in Oklahoma. I tried to find out what their protocols were even though in a lot of our tribes in Oklahoma we don't have IRB, except for one kind of had a process, but not really. I was really trying to honor, like, their traditional ways of, if you're going to ask somebody to do something, what do you do? Trying to do that. Since then, we're finishing our book. It's called, *Reclaiming Indigenous Research in Higher Education*, and one of the things that we're doing is having all Indigenous scholars, editors, be a part of this book and I think it's really validating that we have a presence in building higher education for Indigenous scholars. Everybody had to connect their research, or has connected to the research to Indigenous methodologies and frameworks and also, how do they insert their perspective as Indigenous scholars into their work? Because that's more intimate and more connected, right, in our research and what we do, it's more intentional as opposed to just being removed from it. It's hard to remove yourself from something you really care about and that you feel a part of and so, I think that's how it's grown. It's like, how can we then give people validation that it's okay that you use these frameworks, especially in higher education where it's very like, theoretical and all of that. But it's okay for you to use Indigenous methodologies. It's okay for you to do that. I think we have all done that in different ways, but I think it's just us being able to make space for other people that are going to be coming behind us, or working with.

Our conversation then led to how our understandings of Indigenous research frameworks shape the work we do now.

LEOLA: Finally, going back to there should be an intentional project, a decolonization project. A lot of the scholars write about becoming a part of the community and doing research with the community, you have to invest. It's almost, or it is, like a lifelong relationship that you're entering into. So, for me, I really started intentionally working with Pueblo Education back in 2010, and before that but really intentionally in 2010. My various projects I've done with Pueblo Education has led me to now being able to do a project, an Indigenous Studies and Pueblo Curriculum Project in a border town. It's pure core values, and at the same time, it's pure decolonization within a school system. I'm really excited about that and that's, you know, how my ideas have sharpened over time and how they're playing out to this day.

TIFFANY: So, that makes me think about some of my work with NACA[1] and the teachers, primarily the language teachers, and two teachers in particular who I've known for the last 10 years … In trying to reframe or understand how they are teaching the language to NACA students, particularly Navajo and Lakota. I do not talk about it in terms of the mechanics of learning language but they're really trying to instill a cultural identity and pride in heritage through the language, and a relationship with their language. How I try to envision it now is through being Navajo, this concept of K'é, which is like kinship and family and love. It's all those things, how you relate and interact with people, it's to support one another, it's to just care and love one another and I really see how those teachers are enacting that in the classroom, particularly in the language classes. I think they're doing it in most of the classes, but those are the teachers I worked closely with so it's really inspiring, and also, to see how we can view our own people through our own epistemologies and understand it. It's more relevant, it's more meaningful for us that way. I think it helps us to really … maybe not redefine, but to define and understand and comprehend what it is to do Indigenous research, or Indigenous-based research, because it is rooted in our own values, in our own language, in our own way of interacting with people … And what I see in particular with those teachers is they enact K'é through how they teach students to relate to one another, how they teach students how to relate to adults and how to relate to the language itself, and the protocols of using a language, and then finally how they can use the language to relate to the land, where they're from or where they are at the school, as well. The teachers are connecting them to the importance of land and their heritage through land and so, it's powerful for me, learning this.

ROBIN: I think I want to … One thing I had, in regards to teaching, I guess, and in regards to Indigenous research is the Native leadership cohort that we have, a doctoral cohort, is that we restructured our general program and how it's operated in regards to the research classes. We altered it so that the research … Leadership as Researcher class was offered first as opposed to being offered last.

We restructured it so that it was more focused on Indigenous research and methodologies at the beginning so that it was something that they could see themselves using throughout their doctoral program. We tried to do that to be intentional because, again, you know, from my own experience, and I'm sure from many of our experiences, we very rarely have like, a Native professor in our doctoral program. Being able to deconstruct that and to make it something that is Indigenous-based has been really helpful because now the students can really utilize their way of thinking and their tribal way of thinking in all parts of their classes but also, in their research. I think that's been something, and then also trying to connect them to Indigenous research … Doing Indigenous research with communities before they even start their dissertation. I'm trying to give them that experience ahead of time because I think it becomes intimidating for us to wait until the dissertation process. I think some people are able to do that, but not all of us. I think it's, again, that reciprocity and like, how can we help other people who, maybe, we didn't have that opportunity to be in that position and how can we create that.

LEOLA: I think that's awesome that on the doctoral level you're enacting what I had mentioned, you know? As our undergraduates get to experience, or get this framework of Indigenous research now, but even entering our first semester of doctoral studies, the three of us didn't necessarily have that, you know? That pure Indigenous research training that you're offering now. I'm hoping you're going to publish on it and document it and share it because what I really appreciate is your work, Tiffany, is you do that for schools like NACA and CBE at Santa Fe Indian School because … What I tell my students is, "All this knowledge, it exists in our elders, in our communities." But at the same time, for elder scholars to publish it, it allows us to experience it simultaneously in the classroom, it's like a whole world opens up. It's just so grounded in these real experiences and it is powerful. Thank you guys for doing that.

ROBIN: I think all of us, as a whole, we all … Again, our research is guided by who we are, and I think that by being in NAS and being in, or you know, other spaces, creating more spaces, is that we've been able to really embody ourselves as Indigenous people but also to give opportunities for our students to do that, and the people that we work with. I think sometimes we ask for permission to do things, but I don't think we're asking for permission to be ourselves and I think that's something that's powerful, in a way, because for so long we've waited for somebody to give us permission and sometimes waited … Like, it's taken years to get to this point where this book is being done and other things are happening. I think it's really powerful to see and I can't wait, what happens like, 10 years from now and seeing what other students do and other faculty do and how they embody that. I think it's all relational, or we always have that connection and honor the people that have worked with us and like you said, honoring our ancestors, too, and thinking about how that influences who we are.

TIFFANY: As a researcher.

ROBIN: And as a person.

LEOLA: My final thought goes back to just being authentic and honest about our positionality, because I think a lot of young Indigenous researchers, Indigenous students, they come in feeling hesitant because maybe they didn't grow up on a reservation or they don't know their language, or they feel disconnected. I feel like for me to be honest about myself, saying, "You know, I don't know the language either. I'm not the most traditional person, but I do have these values rooted in my community." I think that opens doors and I really, I envy those Indigenous scholars that can be super true to their tribal-specific worldviews and they can create a research paradigm off of that. But for me, like I said, it's pretty broad because of the way I was raised and being half Diné, and actually being truly, first, a Filipino woman because my mom is Filipino, my late mom is Filipino. I guess that's kind of where I'm at is, you know, be as Indigenous-minded as possible but be honest about where I truly am coming from, but that my heart is grounded in the well-being of all Native peoples and, you know, all humanity. I think that's a common core value of Indigenous peoples is it's not just about the people themselves, but it's for all of humanity.

TIFFANY: Right. I think you being here and you, Robin, and our programs in NAS and programs like NALE [Native American Leadership in Education] and POLLEN [Promoting our Leadership, Learning, & Empowering our Nations], they're so important for showing students our own diversity, like you were talking about the importance of positionality, that's what was making me think of it. Our own diversity, we provide a place, I think, through NAS and through programs like NALE and others … As Indigenous women scholars, we provide, I guess, a model and show our own struggles as well. I think we do that in our classes and in our scholarship, and I think it helps students to relate. When I did interviews with NAS students years ago, they talked about NAS being like that, a place for them to feel like a home away from home, and a way for them to feel like they can contribute to Native America because they felt this sort of question of perhaps their own authenticity when maybe that was coming from outside influences because they didn't speak their language, or they didn't grow up in a traditionally Native lifestyle, for example, from their own communities.

I'm just really grateful that you guys are here and, yeah, it's exciting to see in the future, what's to come.

## Our Indigenous Research Praxis

After our conversation, we each took the time to continue to reflect upon our practices and journey toward Indigenous research. Here we share our personal narratives for theorizing and engaging in research practice, which for each of us, are rooted in our value for relationships.

## *Leola: Research as Cultural Sovereignty, Love, Nourishing Relationships, and Decolonization*

Indigenous research predates western research that has been practiced in the tradition of Euro-American colonization. Furthermore, in Native American Studies, Indigenous research frameworks have grown to eclipse the exploitative and objectified research paradigm. By practicing research from a worldview that values the humanity and power of Indigenous peoples, research as decolonization is richly layered by the sacrifices of our ancestors and their resilient spirit. Knowledge is both born and reborn. From Wilson's (2008) *Research is Ceremony*, to Kovach's *Indigenous Methodologies* (Kovach, 2010), to Smith's classic *Decolonizing Methodologies* (Smith, 1999), and more, we have been generously gifted with Indigenous models of research to propel Native-centered narratives into the spaces of our homes and academic institutional structures. As a Filipino-Diné Professor at the University of New Mexico, I am privileged as a teacher to be able to share with young Indigenous student-researchers the words of our scholar elders. Likewise, I continue to grow in my own right as an academic grounded in my relationships (K'é) first and foremost. I respectfully remind my students, whether I may see them as younger siblings, nieces/nephews, or aunts/uncles in relation to me that the privilege of being in the classroom learning these values is given to us through the sacrifices of those who love us. In sum, having been inspired by the Indigenous research movement of the last few decades and the history of my peoples, I present from the position of a teacher-scholar humbled by the responsibility I have to honor our stories. As previously stated in conversation, I situate myself as being lifted by four butterfly wings of Indigenous research: cultural sovereignty, love, relationships (K'é), and decolonization. Depending on the direction and energy of the research question, any of the wings could serve as the lead or foundation (Figure 3.2). They work together, depend on one another, and exist out of the same essential being.

Cultural sovereignty is essentially the ownership of our core beliefs through the spirit of our ancestors (Coffey & Tsosie, 2001). A few years ago I worked with a group of students at the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. As both a teacher and researcher, I completed a project entitled: *Student Expressions of Nation Building from an Indigenous Education and Decolonization framework*. The school was established in 1971 and is operated under the US Department of the Interior in relation to the many treaties that were signed between tribal nations and the USA. By attending a Bureau of Indian Education institution, SIPI students are widely exposed to the bureaucracy of federal language and regulations. Nonetheless, the intention of this project was to capture the cultural sovereignty of the students as they discussed their plans for their futures as engaged tribal members pursuing education and professional aspirations. I saw their stories as honoring our ancestors and all the sacrifices they made through treaties and survival, just for us to be here. This exemplifies how the energy and direction of cultural sovereignty was central in how I considered my research purpose for this project.

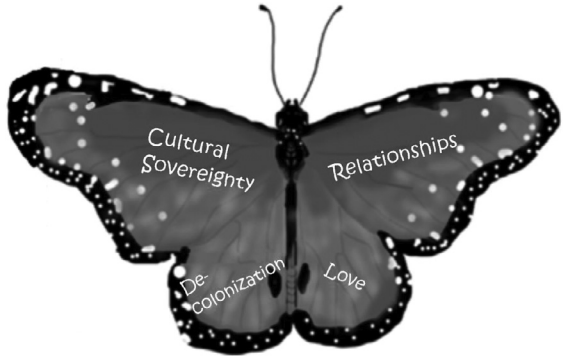


**FIGURE 3.2** Butterfly as a Model of Indigenous Research

Love in my experience is to design and pursue research projects that come from a place of wanting good things for your people. This was pivotal as I was trying to find graceful traction for my dissertation. I was looking at Native participation in the military through a somewhat critical lens. It was and is a delicate topic, but what the late Diné scholar Larry Emerson told me was just explain that I am coming from a place of peace. So that is what I always went back to, love and peace. Love as an Indigenous methodology, to me, is selecting a research topic through reflection and prayer for our peoples. To come from a place of peace is to convey that my passion as a relationship driven knowledge seeker is to enrich our inherent sovereignty. The core of my research agenda was for all of our Native communities to be healthy and valued.

Acknowledging or developing relationships is vital from how I approach a research topic to establishing rapport with a research participant. Even if I am not related by clan to those I meet along the research pathway, I strive to find our connection through networks/friendships, experiences, or shared values. One of my favorite memories of this was getting to know Donovan Barney who contributed his story to my dissertation. He has since become a dear friend and colleague. Before even getting to my list of questions on his experience in the military, we connected on the value of how we saw the projects we engaged in. He spoke to his filmmaking as a prayer he was engaging in for our people. Likewise, he understood that was the nature of my research project as well. It was a ceremonial process in which neither of us saw ourselves as being driven by individualistic pursuits.

Lastly, going back to Smith's 25 projects, there should be an intentional decolonization project. Decolonization is essentially intelligent resistance and is more fully articulated by Wilson and Yellow Bird (2005). To decolonize in the practice of research is to truly commit to a community, to engage in the active agendas of that community, and to ultimately assist in the recreation of institutions embedded in a Native paradigm of sustainability. Through my experiences

working within Indigenous education, I am extremely heartened in how cultural sovereignty, love, and K'é has been broad yet has led me to a clear path in decolonization projects by investing in community values and their constructs. Whether we label our contributions as *research* or not, our various projects work in relationship to the decolonization movement.

## *Robin: Embodying Indigenous relationality in research methods*

When we begin talking about ourselves and our projects that embody the notion of relationships it is important to contextualize the term. The term that I chose to use is, "Tdayp-tday-gaw" which is the plural form of family or kin in Kiowa the first language of both of my grandparents and to add a layer of meaning and depth to how we envision relationships in an academic sense. When you think about our tribal languages and how they are interpreted in English, they hardly receive justice for what the actual meaning is and that in one term there is so much behind it. So, when we speak of family and kinship there is a layer of responsibility and protocol that is followed. Similar to research, there is responsibility and protocol in the western sense but, even more so in the Indigenous approaches. When we think of family and kinship there is a layer of responsibility and protocol to honor the Elders, our protocols between different types of family members, and to honor our family and tribe in what we do in our actions. When we go into a Kiowa community and introduce ourselves we tell them who our family is, so that person can find a connection to your family and know who and where you come from. So, in your actions and what you do is direct reflection on your family, your community and your tribal nation. There are three areas that I will cover in regards to the Indigenous research that I am a part of.

### *As an Individual*

The first area that will be covered is the research I do as an individual. Again, it is important to emphasize that although I may be doing research on my own or collaboratively, research as an Indigenous person is never just us as individuals. We carry the values of our ancestors and stand on the shoulders of the Indigenous scholars who came before us and this we carry with us in all our research and work. When I was working on completing my dissertation, I was fortunate to have the support of my non-Native dissertation chair and advisor who supported my idea of utilizing an Indigenous research paradigm and relationality approach by Shawn Wilson as my theoretical framework to inform my dissertation research. This guided a "grounded" theory approach that honored the Indigenous knowledge and experiences of the Native student leaders. This included traveling to their campuses and communities to complete the interviews and focus groups having the students pick out their location of choice to be interviewed in and to name themselves to protect their identity. In every aspect, I tried to recognize

and honor the students' voice and the place where we sat on. This experience allowed me to be where I am at today in trying to be more intentional in my research to honor the protocols and approaches of that person's tribal nation and their beliefs, as well as my own in gifting cedar (a medicine from southwest Oklahoma we use to bless ourselves and purify) to those who share their time with me and to ground our time together.

## *With Others (Mentoring)*

In the second area, through our experiences as Indigenous researchers, whether early or Elders in our careers, we try to create space for others through mentorship. This has been done in my experience as an Indigenous faculty member through the creation and development of a Native American doctoral cohort. It has been able to be responsive to the needs of the communities in New Mexico and also, in restructuring our mainstream doctoral program to begin with a course that intentionally includes Indigenous methodologies and knowledge at the beginning of the cohort's coursework. This experience for the seven Native American doctoral students has been able to shape their future thinking on research as less western and creating a space for Indigenous knowledge and methodologies in how they think of their future research. A part of the mentorship is not only changing how or what is offered in regards to research specific courses, but also creating opportunities for the cohort to present on their experiences being in an Indigenous-based doctoral cohort.

## *For Others (Sharing)*

The third area that is part of the relationships and responsibility is sharing about Indigenous research and methodologies for current and future Indigenous scholars. Over the course of the past two years, a colleague and I have been able to work on a collaborative edited book, *Reclaiming Indigenous Research in Higher Education*. This book enables the thirteen other Indigenous scholars to conceptualize how their research in higher education uses an Indigenous methodology or framework and the perspective that is deeply a part of their work as Indigenous scholars themselves. Our hope is that it not only creates a broader space for current and future Indigenous scholars to utilize this theoretical framework and methodology, but also to educate mainstream scholars encouraging acceptance of the "other" and "unknown". This book being released in the winter will cast a wider net for more Indigenous scholars to assert their identity in their work and honor theirs and those they work with as equal to and having the ability to be fully Indigenous and tribal people in all parts of our lives.

It is in these three areas of looking at ourselves, mentoring others, and sharing with and for others that we continue to honor the relationships that are intimately a part of who we are as Indigenous peoples and scholars. In sharing this work, it is a part of how we honor our families, communities and tribal nations.

## *Tiffany: K'é at the Native American Community Academy*

K'é is a Diné term that refers to kinship and relationships in one's family and community. However, it can be understood as both a noun and a verb because its deeper meaning refers not only to your family relationships, but also to a way of interacting and supporting your family and community. K'é for Diné people is the cornerstone of community life and how they come to understand the nature of their community, their identity, and their role for participating in their community (Benally, 1994; Haskie, 2013). Diné scholar Kulago characterized it well in her research on the role of K'é in schools and as a philosophy of community. She stated, "K'é dictates how one should relate to other people and nature as to maintain harmonious relationships that promote wellbeing and prosperity for all" (Kulago, 2016, p. 3). K'é involves loving, supporting, providing, and sacrificing for your family, and is practiced at family or community events, ceremonies, celebrations, and in everyday life.

I raise this definition and discussion of K'é to provide the basis of the relationships I have observed, learned from, and participated in with a local school community in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I was excited to learn in 2004 about a young educator who was motivated to open a Native-focused charter school, which would integrate Indigenous perspectives and values in curriculum, pedagogy, and the overall school climate. This young educator and the school's founder, Kara Bobroff[2], began to organize community gatherings and focus groups with families, educators, researchers, tribal leaders, and other interested folks to discuss the vision and mission for the school, which was named the Native American Community Academy (NACA). This process for creating the school as a community was a first step in practicing K'é. It was through community conversations that NACA shaped its philosophy rooted in students' health and wellness and how NACA identified its core values to be mirrored in all aspects of the school. Those values include: Respect, Responsibility, Community/Service, Culture, Perseverance, and Reflection. NACA opened in 2006 as a middle school and grew into a high school. It now serves about 400 students in grades K-1, and 6–12. The elementary school started in 2016 and will add a grade each year until NACA is a K-12 school.

As long as I have been involved with the school, I see K'é in practice at NACA in the way the teachers, parents, and staff prioritize the relationships they have with students, with one another, and with the local communities. I have been able to participate in the NACA community as a parent, a governance council member, a volunteer, a researcher, and most recently, as an assistant volunteer hurdler coach for the track team. I also actively connect my university students in Native American Studies to internship and other volunteer opportunities at NACA. The relationships I have developed over the last ten years with teachers, parents, staff, and students are not solely as a "researcher" but intersect my roles stated above in multiple ways. My primary purpose, along with other teachers, parents, and staff, is to support NACA and its students to build and sustain our community.

There are many examples of NACA's practice of K'é, such as at sports events, fundraising events, planning for class trips, and parent meetings. I will describe two that I believe are consistent and institutionalized practices. By institutionalized I mean they occur as a deliberate exercise and activity of promoting K'é since NACA first opened. The first example is the NACA Community Feast Day. A feast day in Pueblo communities across New Mexico is a ceremonial and celebratory event where the community members dance, sing, pray, and feed their family and guests (Cajete, 2015). It is a representation of K'é in practice. NACA has identified a day in the second week of October each year to celebrate their feast day, with recognition of students, families, teachers, and staff. Students are the focus of the event. Speakers focus their words on them, and student speakers provide word of support for each other. There are speeches, prayers, and songs followed by a huge feast for all of the NACA community, usually about 200–300 people. Families and staff members bring home-cooked food, assemble it along long tables, and personally serve all the students and guests. The feeling that day is filled with laughter, love, teamwork, support, and care for one another.

The second example comes from my research with NACA's language program. I have found the program promotes relationships and practices K'é in three significant ways. The program promotes students', teachers', and staffs' relationships with each other (peer to peer, peer to teacher), relationships to cultural values and protocols, and relationships to land, place, and communities. The outcomes of this relationship-based approach is the holistic development of NACA students and their ability to connect to each other, to the cultural values of their families and people, and to the land and community at NACA and at their home community.

Practicing K'é in all schools seems like a natural way to prioritize the relationships between students, families, and educators. Kulago (2016) asserts that schools have a responsibility to engage with families and communities in ways that are in congruence with the community's collective practices. Family, community, and education are inseparable in this context and when viewed through the Diné concept of K'é, a practice for showing love, care, support, and responsibility to one another (Benally, 1994; Kulago, 2016). In this regard, relationships are a priority and reciprocal, and schools can promote student success by understanding, aligning, and actively engaging families and communities on principles grounded in K'é. Shíyázhí (my children) have attended NACA since the 6th grade; one is now in the 10th grade and the other is a 2016 graduate. NACA has guided my boys to become more strongly connected to their multiple Native heritages of Diné, Lakota, and Cochiti Pueblo. Through NACA's practice of K'é, my boys' heritage and youth identities in relationship to their education are valued and nurtured at NACA.

Our three narratives of Indigenous research praxis describe the basis and connections of our research as they are focused on deep relationships with our research partners. Those relationships present examples of K'é (Diné) and Tdayp-tday-gaw

(Kiowa). Indigenous-based practices and relationships in our communities exemplify significant components to Indigenous research methods. But these practices and relationships permeate our personal lives as well. The following concluding section ties K'é and Tdayp-tday-gaw to our personal life connections within our families and among each other.

## Our Shared Connections

An important overlapping experience amongst the three of us was our familial connections to education. While we each have a unique story to tell about our family experiences, our stories deeply connect each of us to education, and we observed that this process of storying together revealed where our pathways intersect. We share each of our individual connections to family below and then how those stories connect us in our lives now.

### *Leola Shares her Familial Connection to Education*

I grew up going to school on the reservation in Pine Hill and then Torreon each morning with my mother and father, Myrna and Robert Tsinnajinnie. From Kindergarten to Junior High, I attended school wherever they taught. My mother passed away on Saturday morning, May 26, 2007 only hours after the last day of the school year in Torreon. My father continues to teach in the community school. I try to visit him in his classroom to meet his students at least once a year. His kids bring back the fun memories of learning in that same classroom, singing "Country Roads," and being silly with my friends. I see the faces of my classmates in their children who now sit in their place. Because I grew up centered around schooling, the life and values of an educator were always naturally ingrained in me. My late Grandmother, Iola Tsinnajinnie, is fondly remembered in our community as being a leader, Principal, and teacher at Torreon Day School from 1944 to 1969. Her legacy as an educator also set the foundation for two of my paternal aunts who also dedicated their careers to Native education. My brother is a Professor at Santa Fe Community College where he teaches math. My sister recently completed her PhD in Hydrology and is now a Professor in Community and Regional Planning here at UNM. They both ground their research in Indigenous epistemologies. The three of us love education although it never felt pushed on us. We grew up breathing it in like air. We are thankful that our family was able to present it to us in a manner of love as opposed to the violent history in which schooling was imposed on Indigenous peoples.

### *Tiffany Shares her Familial Connection to Education*

The strongest connection in my personal life to education was through my mother, Marian Dodge Lee. She was an educator her whole life, first as a teacher, then a principal, then as a line officer for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (like a

superintendent for the Bureau of Indian Education schools) in this region of New Mexico. She would take me to meetings all over mostly Pueblo communities, and I remember being in those community schools. I had favorite schools I liked to visit based on whether I was allowed to play in one of the classrooms, or whether I had to sit in the meeting room with her listening to boring adults (ha ha). Her influence on my passion for education is also especially strong because she was pursuing her PhD at ASU until she became ill and couldn't pursue it further. This is what really motivated me to earn my PhD.

But work in education runs throughout my family. After my mom passed, I lived with my aunt and uncle who were both educators for over 30 years at Rock Point, a well-known community-controlled school on the Navajo Nation. All but one of my aunts on my mother's side (four of them) were educators. It is a strong maternal tradition! Only a few of my cousins/siblings decided to pursue a career in the field of education, but now I see my nieces and nephews pursuing this line of work at levels ranging from elementary teachers to university faculty. That makes me really happy!

### *Robin Shares her Familial Connection to Education*

I grew up thinking that our connection to education had always been there, yet not really knowing the background of our historical familial connection. Both of my maternal grandparents had interesting connections to education. My grandmother had actually grown up in a boarding school most of her life, with the exception of a few years in a public school setting. Her mother had passed away at the age of two. So, her upbringing was within a boarding school and seeing her dad and other family members occasionally during the summers. She graduated from Haskell Institute when it was still a boarding school. My maternal grandfather had grown up around Rainy Mountain (a Kiowa community) but had only attended school up until the 8th grade. He never went to high school; this was during a time when having an 8th grade education was more common than not in his area. Despite both of their educational experiences, they both ended up working in some ways directly within education. My grandmother served as a teacher's assistant within the local public school district for a number of years and even up until she was close to passing away she would meet people who she had worked with as a young child. Meanwhile, my grandfather ended up working with the local public school district as a truancy officer for a short time before becoming a minister. He would drive around to find kids who had skipped school or didn't make it to class and take them to school.

They encouraged my aunts and uncles to pursue education and many of them have worked in an education setting. I have one uncle who has worked as a public school teacher and now administrator of a number of years in an urban school district. I have another uncle who, while not a teacher, is a resource and training person who works with school districts, administrators and at the state

level to provide these opportunities. His wife also worked as a school teacher driving an hour each day for years to teach Native children in a semi-rural school district with a high Native American student population. There is an aunt who I grew up close to who worked as an elementary teacher for years and retired in that position a few years ago. Lastly, I have an uncle who ended up working as an instructor in social work at a college in California.

Despite my own parents not having received a higher education degree, I do have connections to education in various ways, and they have encouraged me to do what I do today in working with Native students and communities in areas of education and leadership. My husband is a high school teacher who worked at all levels of education before I met him, and continues to teach at a charter school that serves two Pueblo communities. Our connection and legacy to education continue.

## Conclusion

The intersections in our familial connections to education are grounded in our grandparents, aunts, uncles, parents, and siblings who inspired us to find our own connection to education at the higher education level and to continue to work at the school and community level. For some, it was a matriarchal role that had the largest influence, and for others, it was a pathway that found us. In another interesting coincidence, we found that we are each connected through the local charter school, NACA, where Tiffany's children attend, Robin's niece attends, and Leola plans to send her young toddler. While many of us as Native peoples have had a somewhat tainted experience in education historically, there is encouragement in our communities to pursue a higher education and then make what we have received ours to serve the community and provide a smoother pathway for future generations.

As Native women scholars, we engage in Indigenous research practices that embody and prioritize K'é and Tdayp-tday-gaw—our relationships with our research partners and with each other. Engaging in research methods that prioritize relationships affects the entire research process from what questions are asked to how our findings are interpreted and shared. For Leola, she positions relationships within a metaphor of four butterfly wings of Indigenous research: cultural sovereignty, love, relationships, and decolonization. Depending on the direction and energy of the research question, any of the wings could serve as the lead or foundation. They work together, depend on one another, and exist out of the same essential being. This approach lays the foundation and framework for the research process from beginning to end.

For Robin, she prioritizes relationships through her researcher responsibilities as an individual, with others through mentoring, and through sharing with others. Research processes involve layers of responsibility and protocol to honor the Elders and to honor our family and tribes. The entire research process encapsulates this responsibility. Her individual research approach carries the values of our

ancestors and the Indigenous scholars who came before us. Her research in collaboration with others involves a responsibility in mentoring, and lastly Indigenous research methods involve the responsibility of sharing with others for current and future Indigenous scholars.

For Tiffany, her research methodological approach involves developing meaningful relationships over time so that her role is more than "researcher" in the community of study. At NACA, her role intersected many areas (e.g., parent, coach, coordinator) with the primary purpose to support NACA and its students in building and sustaining the NACA school community.

Individually and collectively, with all of our relations, we contribute to the sacred waters that give nourishment to the growth of research that is rooted in Indigenous values and well-being. Our shared understandings not only live in the heart that connects the work we do, but also in the prayers of those who dreamed the gift of our Indigenous reality in this world.

## Notes

1 NACA has given permission to use their real name.
2 Ms. Bobroff has given permission to use her real name.

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## PART II

# Palm Downwards: "The Challenge and Opportunity to Live These Teachings"

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# 4

# ENACTING INDIGENOUS RESEARCH METHODS

## Centering Diné Epistemology to Guide the Process

*Valerie J. Shirley [Diné] and Deidra Angulo [Diné]*

> Indigenous researchers are incorporating tribal epistemologies into their research. What seems equally evident is that these researchers are taking action in at least two ways: (a) they acknowledge the breadth of tribal epistemologies, their relational and holistic qualities, and their necessity; and (b) they *use* tribal epistemologies in preparation for and conducting their research, in documenting the sources and methods of their knowing, and in acknowledging their influence on their research.
>
> *(Kovach, 2009, p. 61)*

> [A]s we awaken, a revolution of remembering will bring us back to what is valuable about life.
>
> *(Meyer, 2008, p. 218)*

In the spring semester of 2008, I (Valerie) began preparing for my preliminary exam during my doctoral program. One of the questions given for this exam was to discuss the Diné epistemology and learning theory and to describe how principles of knowledge and learning are put into practice in Diné education. Though I had many personal experiences within cultural and ceremonial contexts, this was a difficult task as it required me to uncover the years of Western education and experiences that suppressed the Diné epistemology within me. In addition, this was *the first* academic experience I had that required me to articulate the Diné epistemology to non-Native individuals (committee members). Awakened consciousness is what Hawaiian scholar Manulani Aluli Meyer (2008) described as the process of becoming aware of our own peoples' distinct beliefs about knowledge that are specific to place; this awakened consciousness is exactly how I would describe what I was experiencing in this particular moment in my life. In retrospect, I would describe this moment as "a pathway toward liberation" that opened up a doorway into "finding [my] way back into meaning" (Meyer, 2008, p. 218) and, therefore,

taking this pathway toward privileging Diné epistemology within my research. The journey that began from inquiring about how Diné principles of knowledge and learning are put into practice in Diné education through the preliminary exam was the foundation for privileging Indigenous Diné epistemology within my overall research process. Likewise, Deidra also experienced an awakened consciousness within her graduate studies.

In 2010, I (Deidra) was immersed in an intense clinical psychology graduate program and experienced a visceral response with confronting the historical context within the field of psychology and research "on" Indigenous populations. In one instance, the themes in a specific class revolved around psychology and racial differences that illuminated racist conceptions about early psychological testing and eugenic philosophies; hence, such personality testing of minority groups categorized and stereotyped Native Americans as "stolid and savage" (Guthrie, 2004, p. 81). While working on my dissertation proposal, I became incredibly frustrated with the literature review that unearthed the harsh realities of colonization, mandated assimilation, and historical trauma on Indigenous peoples. In these moments, I felt a true cognitive dissonance that awakened my consciousness and was compelled to reach out to family and Elders for feedback relating to self-care, for I, too, am a product of historical trauma. Eduardo Duran stated, a "liberation discourse involves taking a critical eye to the processes of colonization that have had a deep impact on the identity of Original Peoples; as a result, a new narrative of healing will emerge" (Duran, 2006, p. 1). I found myself in a state of healing throughout this dissertation process as I entered the space of uncovering historical trauma and reclaiming traditional Diné knowledge simultaneously.

In this chapter, we share our narratives regarding the various aspects of enacting Indigenous research with our Diné communities; particularly centering Diné epistemology in our studies. Margaret Kovach explained that Indigenous researchers have a choice in privileging tribal epistemology in academic research. When and/or if they choose to privilege their tribal epistemology, "they are encompassing holism in their research" (Kovach, 2009, p. 58). Also, Indigenous researchers may serve as "a bridge" as they are in an academic space while also embodying Indigenous knowledge systems. This role is a unique role that empowers such a researcher to be culturally responsive by integrating core constructs of Indigenous worldviews into their work. When we were invited to contribute to this book project that focused on the application of Indigenous research methods, our initial conversation began with catching up on our lives (motherhood, weekend activities, academia, our professions) and concluded with a discussion on praxis within in our research methodologies. We described the amount of love we poured into our work and how difficult it was to navigate such work as first generation doctoral students. We were so grateful to the Indigenous scholars before us who had paved the path and influenced our thoughts on Indigenous research; particularly how Indigenous research is inclusive of Indigenous values. We discussed how our Indigenous Diné values and

epistemology helped create our research topic, the questions we developed as well as the ways in which we responded to and interacted with the data (Meyer, 2008). In the following sections, we share our stories of being Indigenous researchers through the research we conducted with Diné participants in two different fields—education and clinical psychology. We emphasize what it means to center Diné epistemology of *Sa'ah Naaghai Bik'éh Hózhóon* in the research process and discuss how we conceptualize the core constructs of *Nitsáhákees* (thinking), *Nahat'á* (planning), *Iiná* (implementing), and *Siih Hasin* (assessing, evaluating) as praxis within the Diné epistemology, and end with sharing our personal stories with this process of praxis. It is important note that in order to protect the integrity of Diné sacred knowledge inherent in the Diné epistemology of *Sa'ah Naaghai Bik'éh Hózhóon*, we explain parts of this knowledge system by relying on a combination of our personal experiences and published sources from a variety of Diné scholars in order to explain the philosophical concepts.

## Our Research Journeys

As I (Valerie) reflect on my personal journey of developing my research, I find myself meeting my future advisor, JoAnn Phillion, in the summer of 2005. While meeting her for the first time, I vividly recall her asking what my research interests were. Taken by surprise, I immediately responded that I was interested in my tribe's goals of centering the Diné philosophy in Diné schools and that I wanted my research to contribute to their goals. Although I was somewhat familiar with Indigenous movements to decolonize educational structures (after being exposed to Linda Tuhiwai Smith's book, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, in my master's program), I did not have a clear and in-depth understanding of what Indigenous research entailed. This did not happen until I entered the PhD program and was given opportunities to explore the intellectual conversations on decolonizing research methodologies in several courses that provided me with experiences that nurtured and supported my internal motivation to develop a research study that was meaningful and beneficial to my tribe.

As the only Diné student in my cohort, I (Deidra) realized that my personal journey in developing my research and using an Indigenous framework would be a task in itself. I was mindful of the need to identify an ally on the faculty who had insights and understood the importance of an Indigenous worldview. It was imperative that such a faculty member would have to also become an advocate and be willing to take on such a challenge. Dr. Louise Baca believed in this work and supported the project wholeheartedly. The research process also included much self-reflection and self-care, but it also required me to identify colleagues who were previously successful in this journey. Dr. Valerie Shirley naturally became a mentor as her dissertation centered Diné philosophy so powerfully. Her dissertation research and findings served as the impetus for convincing my chair that the incorporation of an Indigenous framework was possible.

In this section, we describe our research journeys with the key aspects of reciprocity and responsibility at the forefront because "giving back" to our communities was the motivating factor for completing our doctoral work. "Giving back" entails having a relationship with the community in order to know and understand what may be useful to them (Kovach, 2009). Thus, the idea of "giving back" embodies a heartfelt connection to the community and thus requires the researcher to be accountable to the community. This heartfelt connection to the community came naturally for us as we were both raised and educated within our homelands (in our homes with Diné teachings and at school with academic teachings). In fact, we both graduated from the same high school in Ganado, Arizona; so, the connection we have to our Diné people and culture is deep within our hearts.

## Indigenous Subjectivities: Diné Youth (De)Construct Identity (Valerie Shirley)

I conducted my research with Diné youth (aged 12–14) to learn about how they conceptualized their identities in relation to the historical process of colonization and assimilation as well as traditional Diné stories (Shirley, 2011). As a former elementary school teacher, the emphasis was to focus on the pedagogical process of developing a critical consciousness within the youth around the history of colonial policies and practices and to incorporate traditional Diné stories and philosophy. The pedagogical aspects of the research engaged the youth in an emotional and enlightening journey toward: (1) self-reflecting on their own identities and examining how they were being influenced by surrounding social forces; (2) critiquing colonialism to expose how the present inequalities and situations existed among their people; (3) entering into a dialogical and dialectical space that allowed them to examine their own points of tension and contradictions within their identities; and (4) envisioning how they could actively engage in self-determination for themselves and their people. Within this pedagogical process, I referred to the traditional aspects within the Diné philosophy of learning to carefully expose the students to critical learning that embodied dialogue and self-reflection of their identities.

In addition, I was intentional in developing research questions that centered Diné epistemology to guide the research process. The research questions that guided this study were: (1) How do Diné youth produce and make meaning of their identities when they are exposed to a process of critically examining Diné history and contemporary issues while simultaneously learning Diné stories, values and philosophy? (2) How will their engagement with this process produce various forms of identities and subjectivities as they negotiate their Diné values and experiences in relation to the larger US society? (3) Will the students develop agency and become empowered to create social change, self-determination and sovereignty for themselves and Diné communities? It was my hope this research would generate change and action in the expansion of a Diné philosophy of education for Diné schools and toward an infusion of a critical culturally Diné-based curriculum in Diné schools.

## Incorporating Diné Epistemology to Develop Culturally Responsive Practices in Psychology (Deidra Angulo)

"We don't talk like this … we don't think like this here so I don't know how this applies to me." This statement came from a 13-year Indigenous male client in response to an initial therapy session where he was exposed to an "evidenced-based" treatment intervention. The standardized treatment manuals included session-by-session protocols and handouts. My client was cannabis dependent since the age of 8 and was heavily gang affiliated (his family had ties to this gang spanning two generations). Over time, it was evident that my client was not benefitting from this intervention. It was important for me to acquire feedback from him, as he looked over the handouts he repeated, "I don't know how this applies to me." I understood what he meant. It was imperative for me to consider a cultural adaptation of this framework and that was my goal. Each session, I took time to modify the content so he could relate to these concepts by incorporating tribal specific narratives and aspects of his cultural language. The informal adaptation process of this material was essential. My intervention with this young man had to be creative, and after establishing a strong therapeutic alliance, he benefited from intensive outpatient treatment, consisting of multifamily groups, a process group, and experiential treatment. He celebrated a year and three months of sobriety when he was discharged from my caseload. The reality of this type of "evidence-based" treatment (EBT) is that they have been shown to be effective somewhere in the USA. My concern was that this material was not easily generalizable to Native populations, but there was an assumption that it had to work.

I share these clinical experiences because they influenced my understanding about the inappropriateness of empirically supported treatments in Indigenous communities. The lack of effective treatments and services for Indigenous populations motivated me to return to school as a way to bridge the gap in services. My research study intended to contribute to the Practice Based Evidence (PBE) model literature as this model incorporates a culturally specific framework, which relies on cultural knowledge and traditions for treatment (Isaacs, Huang, Hernandez, & Echo-Hawk, 2005, p. 16). The PBE model promotes a culturally responsive approach and takes into consideration local communities' concepts of healing. As a result, my research focused on how Diné clinicians understood and applied aspects of our Diné epistemology of *Sa'ah Naaghai Bik'éh Hózhóon* in their work. The objective of this study was to gain insights from Diné clinicians as they adapted various EBT treatment approaches with respect to the core constructs of their Diné worldview. Additionally, it was natural and fitting for *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hózhóón* to guide this phenomenological qualitative study. The purpose of my research was to utilize a qualitative analysis to acquire multiple perspectives from Diné clinicians who provide culturally congruent healing interventions and/or practices. The study relied on a focus group consisting of eight urban Diné participants as a way to acquire insights into the context in which therapeutic

interventions are culturally adapted and deemed culturally responsive for the Diné clientele. The research questions that directed this study were: (1) How do Diné practitioners integrate cultural knowledge? (2) How do Diné practitioners consider cultural traditions? (3) How do Diné practitioners promote a culturally responsive approach that considers local communities' concepts of healing (i.e., the healing needs of clients into their practice). It was my hope that this research honor the voices of Diné clinicians and that the results of this research yield valuable implications for advocating culturally responsive services, education, and a collective outlook that promotes wellness and *hózhó* (balance) with and for Diné communities. We now turn to contextualizing the Diné epistemology of *Sa'ah Naaghai Bik'éh Hózhóon*.

## Diné Epistemology: Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hózhóón

> Anchor your research in Indigenous teachings. If you need guidance in Indigenous methodologies, follow the teachings. Indigenous theory-principles (or teachings) in Indigenous methodologies ensure that your research is and feels Indigenous.
>
> *(Kovach, 2018, p. 223)*

All peoples have their own belief systems of "what knowledge is and what knowing entails" and these belief systems are all distinct because they are all specific to *place and people* (Meyer, 2008, p. 218). Inherent in Indigenous knowledge systems is a deep spiritual connection to Indigenous lands and sacred places; therefore, Indigenous knowledges can never be standardized. Because Indigenous knowledge systems are centered on place, this relational worldview within Indigenous knowledge systems explains that there are "relationships between all life forms that exist within the natural world" (Deloria Jr. cited in Kovach, 2009, p. 34). In essence, "You came from a place. You grew in a place and you had a relationship with that place. *This is an epistemological idea*" (Meyer, 2008, p. 219).

Dolores Subia BigFoot and Susan Schmidt stated that the American Indian worldview "relies on a belief that all things that surround us are alive. Central to wellness and healing is the core AI/AN[1] belief that all things, human and earth, have a spiritual nature" (BigFoot & Schmidt, 2010, p. 850). Similarly, Eduardo Duran and Bonnie Duran stated, "for Native American people there is a spiritual presence at each of these directions which gives a specific type of wisdom, teaching, and relationship to the world" (Duran & Duran, 1995, p. 75). Monica McGoldrick, Joe Giordano, and Nydia Garcia-Preto expanded upon this premise and stated that a group's ethnicity and "values are transmitted over generations by the family and reinforced by the surrounding community. It is a powerful influence in determining identity. It patterns our thinking, feeling, and behavior in both obvious and subtle ways, although generally we are not aware of it" (McGoldrick, Giordano, & Garcia-Preto, 2005, p. 2).

Diné Indigenous knowledge and epistemology, *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hozhóón*, are grounded in unique ways of knowing, perceiving and interpreting the world

that are quite distinct from the Western worldview (Haskie, 2002). The traditional foundational teachings within *Sa'ah Naaghái Bik'éh Hozhóón* are specific to our place within the four sacred mountains and is distinct from all other Indigenous epistemologies in terms of Indigenous peoples' location and relationship to their specific places. We are informed by our place within the four sacred mountains and the stories and knowledge within that particular space—these shape our way of thinking and being. Our stories and knowledge within "Navajo traditional stories inform us that the Holy People organized the universe, and that is sacred and holy" (Benally, 2008, p. 1). It is a highly complex system, rich with many values, and it takes many years to live and know the philosophy in order to fully understand it (Benally, 1994). We believe the Holy Ones as spiritual beings created this world. They have lived *Sa'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hozhóón* and for this reason, we are following in their footsteps. All of the traditional stories within this system of knowledge detail how this world came to be as well as the experiences that occurred as the Holy Ones were creating this world (Begay, 2002; Haskie, 2002). Smith explained such beliefs:

> Some earlier accounts of how and why individuals behave as they do were based on ideas which often began with a creation story to explain the presence of people in their specific environment and on understandings of human behaviour as being connected to some form of external force, such as spiritually powerful beings, "gods" or sacred objects.
>
> *(Smith, 1999, p. 47)*

In his book, *Diné perspectives: Revitalizing and reclaiming Navajo thought*, Lloyd Lee described the foundational knowledge system of *Sa'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hozhóón* (SNBH) as:

> a powerful and sacred paradigm that comes from the Diyin Dine'é (Holy people). The Diyin Dine'é instructed the people to follow the SNBH path to ensure wellness, happiness, quality of life, and sustainability. This path helps the people believe in themselves and have trust in what they are doing. This belief and trust helps the people understand and know where they are going in life. SNBH is a course for the Diné way of life. If the people follow the way, then life will be healthy, happy, and prosperous. Some Diné peoples refer to SNBH as the corn-pollen path. Corn pollen is offering that Diné peoples use in their prayers, rituals, and ceremonies. Corn pollen represents the essence of life and will always be the security of a person and the community.
>
> *(Lee, 2014, p. 5)*

Such teachings inform identity and when one is firmly grounded in these spiritual teachings and traditional wisdom, a person finds strength and stability (Begay, 2002; Benally, 1994).

In *Preserving a Culture: Practicing the Navajo Principles of Hózhó dóó K'é*, Miranda Haskie (2002) described *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hozhóón* as the journey toward living a balanced and harmonious life:

> [It is] a system from which the Navajo people gain teachings and learn how to achieve a healthy well-being throughout life. Learning the Diné way of life as interwoven with traditional legends and values on becoming a whole person and to receive the spiritual blessing and guidance from the Holy People … It emphasizes wholeness and is the wholistic [*sic*] and ordered essence of life that encompasses the universe. It is the life force which is the reason for being and becoming; the pathway for continual learning and the renewal of aspiration.
> *(Navajo Community College General Catalog, 1987, cited in Haskie, 2002, p. 32)*

Traditionally and socially, these spiritual stories have been told and retold to generations of Diné people for the purpose of teaching, learning and maintaining the culture. Since Diné individuals are on his or her own corn pollen path, we acquire knowledge through our experiences that are guided by traditional values and stories. As a result, we place the concept of *hózhó* at the center of our consciousness as we reason through our decisions. *Hózhó* is the last word in *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hozhóón*. It is an important concept (of many) that we continuously strive to achieve at all times. Benally defined *hózhó* as "the state of much good, leading to a peaceful, beautiful and harmonious life" (Benally, 1994, p. 23). It is the notion that everything in life is "connected and influences everything else … so Navajos make every effort to live in harmony and balance with everyone and everything else" (Alvord & Van Pelt, 2000, p. 14). The Diné Philosophy of Life encompasses concepts of *Hózhó* (balance) and the need to maintain a spiritual balance and to be cognizant of the fact that all things possess a spirit or power. This core concept resonates throughout healing songs, stories, prayers, and all facets of our lives. Thus, a traditional Diné individual inherits a cultural responsibility to adhere to a cultural protocol throughout their lifetime.

The enactment of maintaining *hózhó* and living *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hozhóón* is characterized within the domains of *Nitsáhákees* (thinking), *Nahat'á* (planning), *Iiná* (implementing), and *Siih Hasin* (assessing) which are reflected in the process of praxis. Praxis is embedded in critical thinking, reflection, action and analysis (Ayers et al., 2017). By engaging in research that is guided by *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hozhóón*, the inherent practices are embedded in and guided by the core constructs of *Nitsáhákees* (thinking), *Nahat'á* (planning), *Iiná* (implementing), and *Siih Hasin* (assessing). Diné scholar, Ferlin Clark, described this framework by relating it to how Diné College, a four-year tribal college on the Navajo Nation, adopted this philosophy as its guiding principles in the early phases of planning. He acknowledged:

> SNBH … designates the balance between the *Naayéé'jí* (male-protection way) and *Hózhóojí* (female-beauty way) principles which creates *Hózhóon* (beauty and harmony). It allows for one to live into old age with all physical attributes, and mental faculties, and to see one's grandchildren and great-grandchildren toward the end of life's journey. As a process, SNBH is represented "with domains as *Nitsáhákees* [thinking], *Nahat'á* [planning], *Iiná* [implementing], and *Siih Hasin* [assessing]."
>
> *(Clark, 2009, p. 87)*

The spiritual teachings and beliefs (thinking) of Diné College were intentionally grounded in the early planning phases and therefore have deep significance and impact for how they integrate the philosophy throughout the college and educate students attending Diné College. As forerunners in developing the first Tribally Controlled College, the intentionality in following such philosophical and epistemological teachings helped them believe in themselves and trust the principles that guided them in building college. As such, we are connecting the application of these constructs to the research process as an approach to center Diné epistemology within academia.

## Research as Praxis: Nitsáhákees, Nahat'á, Iiná, Siih Hasin

"Stories are our theories … Stories are not separate from theory; they make up theory and are, therefore, real and legitimate sources of data and ways of being" (Brayboy, 2006, p. 430). As such, stories serve as the basis for how our communities work and should therefore be thought of as "theory." Kovach explained, "Stories are who we are. They are both method and meaning. Stories spring forth from a holistic epistemology and are the relational glue in a socially interdependent knowledge system" (Kovach, 2009, p. 108). The Diné stories are the theoretical underpinnings of *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hozhóón* as they "orient [us] toward the world and life" (Brayboy, 2006, p. 439). These stories within *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hozhóón* are pathways for continual learning and renewal that are ultimately manifested and enacted through *Nitsáhákees* (thinking), *Nahat'á* (planning), *Iiná* (implementing), and *Siih Hasin* (assessing); guiding the inquiry and praxis within the research process. In her chapter *Indigenous and authentic: Hawaiian epistemology and the triangulation of meaning*, Aluli Meyer (2008) referred to research as a spiritual process because Indigenous research should ultimately center tribal epistemology.

Centering Diné epistemology within our research was not an easy endeavor due to the years of Western education that marginalized our Diné cultural practices within our minds and daily life. As we shared the details of our experiences during our initial meeting to discuss ideas for this chapter, we reflected on the emotional components of "not knowing enough" and the multifaceted impact of "uncovering colonization in Western research." We talked about the importance of self-care (prayer, focusing on *hózhó* and balance within our minds and hearts),

and we engaged ourselves in and how we deliberately worked to reclaim and recenter the Diné knowledge pushed back in our minds. We discussed how we entered the early phase of research by examining "*Nitsáhákees* (thinking)" and how we worked through that initial phase to begin planning and conducting our research—*Nahat'á* (planning) and *Iiná* (implementing)—and then ended with the implications that emerged for and from our participants, our fields and for us—*Siih Hasin* (assessing). This process involved making choices and decisions during all phases of the research process, and we share some of our experiences below.

## Nitsáhákees—*The Act or Process of Thinking*

*Nitsáhákees* is the act or process of thinking. According to Herbert Benally, *Nitsáhákees* is associated with "One's need for guidance through life is provided by internalizing the teachings and knowledge" (Benally, 2008, p. 56). The guidance needed to navigate the research process was reflected in trusting the teachings of our parents, grandparents and ancestors. The internalization of this knowledge provided us with clarity and strength in navigating the aspects of a PhD program that were previously unknown to us in detail. The Diné concept of *T'áá hwó ají t'éego* (it's up to you), for example, encouraged me (Valerie) to strive and continue on my pathway of life and learning within the doctoral program. This philosophical construct guided my thinking on a daily basis and such Diné concepts had significant impacts on the decisions and choices I made throughout the program and each phase of the research process.

Due to cultural assimilation processes, we have both felt a deep sense of incompleteness when centering Indigenous Diné knowledge as we began to acquire the knowledge within our epistemology. Although we were raised with Diné cultural ceremonies and practices, years of being immersed in the Western education system alienated us from our traditional beliefs and disrupted the Diné consciousness with which we were inherently born. We have come to understand that the decolonization process is about critical learning and growing, it was and continues to be a very unique and personal process in recentering our Indigenous Diné ways of being. With regard to research, adapting such a decolonizing lens was imperative due to the idea that Western research was used as a colonizing tool among Indigenous peoples (Smith, 2012).

Historically, Western researchers extracted and claimed ownership of Indigenous peoples' knowledge, imagery, and objects (Smith, 2012). In turn, Western researchers distorted, misinterpreted, and misrepresented Indigenous peoples and their cultures (Smith, 2012). For these reasons, ensuring ethical conduct is essential in conducting research with Indigenous communities. Indigenous research protocols have been developed within the past two decades to protect research participants in Indigenous communities from ethical misconduct. These protocols, according to Kovach (2009), function to ensure that sacred knowledge is kept sacred and not shared in public documents, and that the research is ethically responsible and approved by the community.

While working to center Diné epistemology in our studies, we share our experiences with becoming aware of colonial tactics of research on Indigenous peoples. Graham Hingangaroa Smith (in Kovach, 2009) explained that it is impossible to conduct research with Indigenous peoples without an examination of colonial tactics of research that subordinated Indigenous peoples. The history of research among Indigenous peoples tells a story of colonization and racism, and, according to Kovach, Western science "has worked to first subjugate and then discredit Indigenous knowledge systems and the people themselves" (Kovach, 2009, p. 77). Decolonizing research, according to Beth Swadener and Kagendo Mutua, recognizes the subjugation, marginalization and discrediting of Indigenous epistemologies and peoples and ultimately works to legitimize and center Indigenous epistemologies (Swadener & Mutua, 2008).

Duran stated, a "liberation discourse involves taking a critical eye to the processes of colonization that have had a deep impact on the identity of Original Peoples; as a result a new narrative of healing will emerge" (Duran, 2006, p. 1). My (Deidra) research journey propelled me in a direction where I was uncovering historical trauma and steered me in a direction that helped me learn deeper aspects about my Diné culture and traditional practices. My interest in research specific to healing provoked me to examine the effects of historical trauma on Indigenous people and communities. When sharing my educational experiences with my late *Nálí Adszáá* (paternal grandmother), Lorena Williams, she cautioned me to be careful with this type of inquiry. She articulated her concerns in a manner that only a matriarch can, while strongly redirecting me to focus on the future as a way to promote healing and the restoration of *hózhó* (balance) for myself and Diné communities. It was unclear to me what she was talking about in that moment. To clarify, my *Nálí Adszáá* attended boarding school and from this experience she shared her knowledge and wisdom, reflecting on both the good and bad memories. I was amazed by how she was intentional in reframing this experience, eloquently changing the narrative as only an elder can and reflecting upon her lived experience from a "*Siih hasin*" lens. Although, she was grateful for the acquisition of new skills and insights from that Western educational setting, she reinforced traditional Diné teachings and values while stressing the importance of a bicultural identity. The insight from her inspired me to conduct work that ultimately focused on healing aspects of our communities. These influences helped me to understand that the integration and balancing of a traditional culture and Western education would be essential in my learning and research.

Situating self in relation to the research is an important method in conducting Indigenous research. Kovach explained, "As a reflexivity method of research, situating the self authorizes expression of the relevant narrative from personal experiences, those reminiscences of life rooted in our earliest experience that shape our understanding of the world" (Kovach, 2009, p. 112). For this reason, situating the self in the research is necessary, as this process "shows respect to culture, community, the research audience, and to self" (Kovach, 2009, p. 112).

In addition, critical self-reflection is essential in Indigenous research because Indigenous researchers have experienced a system of domination and oppression, and critical self-reflection serves as a fundamental process in decolonizing our mindset (Kovach, 2009; Swadener & Mutua, 2008; Wane, 2009).

Internally, as Indigenous researchers, we are faced with conflicting and contradictory experiences that can be exhausting for us as we negotiate every step of the research process—we have to be conscious and careful not to become absorbed by Western thought in the academic setting in order to place our Indigenous values at the forefront. Jeanine Carriere (in Kovach, 2009) explained this internal struggle as being conscious of how "our Western mind … is always in the background … [T]he … struggle [is that we are] always having to push it back all the time, that other voice" (Kovach, 2009, p. 85). Indigenous researchers need to be accountable to both the Indigenous community in which we are engaging in research as well as to the university—it certainly becomes a struggle, and the ways in which the researcher negotiates this tension should be included in the research process. Including such negotiations offers a form of analysis that makes conscious our own levels of colonialism and thus brings awareness to how our colonial mindset may be silencing Indigenous knowledge systems.

Grande (2004, 2015) asserted Native scholars need to not only renegotiate their personal identity, but should also analyze the power dynamics of being a researcher because of the omnipresence of colonial structures. Sofia Villenas (1996) problematized her role as a researcher through "questioning the self." The rationale for "questioning the self" emphasizes that we need "to pay close attention to how we manipulate our identities and how our identities are manipulated by others" (Villenas, 1996, p. 729) because without being conscious of it, we may be complicit in the Western system that marginalizes and oppresses us and our own people. The result is that "we are like colonizers … when we fail to question our identities and privileged positions" (Villenas, 1996, p. 713). G. H. Smith asserted that the process of conscientization is an important tool when it comes to self-reflecting and analyzing power and power relationships (in Kovach, 2009); in essence, it helps the researcher situate herself or himself

Lastly, situating the self provides the researcher with the opportunity to problematize his or her own positionality and is essential within the phase of *nitsáhákees* (the act or process of thinking) as Indigenous researchers enter the *nahat'á* phase of planning that promotes and centers Indigenous knowledge and values in the research process.

## Nahat'á—*Planning*

*Nahat'á* means planning. It requires the application of knowledge acquired and is associated with a specific task in life. In preparing to engage in research, for us, the planning process consisted of prioritizing reciprocity and "giving back" to our communities, examining our positionality, and being informed by the literature

from Indigenous scholars who contributed to *nitsáhákees* (our thought process). In designing our studies, we were strongly influenced by Indigenous scholars who disrupted Western research methods and developed Indigenous ways of conducting Indigenous research; as well as Diné scholars who specifically integrated *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hozhóón* into their work in various capacities. In this phase, we explain the ways in which we acquired different definitions and insights about the meaning of *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hozhóón* as a way to inform our knowledge and understanding of how it was applied to the research process.

I (Valerie) was significantly inspired by Diné scholar Lula Begay's research study that integrated Diné creation stories into the pedagogical process of working with Diné youth. Begay (2002) examined Diné students' experiences of hearing traditional Hózhóójí[2] stories in the school classroom and found that the spiritual stories affected their self-perception, enhanced their identity as Diné people and reversed the cultural shame that existed before hearing the stories. Begay's study reported that the students were highly interested in hearing more stories because the stories reflected their history, their heritage, their language, their culture, and their ancestral way of life in the past. Traditional Diné stories are the foundation for stabilizing one's identity, and this study showed that strengthening one's identity enhanced students' self-perception and contributed to academic success in school. She concluded:

> It is important that teachers provide a foundation for both the cultural and educational growth for the Diné children by utilizing the traditional Diné stories in the classrooms. Perhaps as a result of this intervention, in spite of the continued Western education, Diné society will be able to retain its unique Diné identity, and perhaps save themselves from extinction.
>
> *(Begay, 2002, p. 108)*

Begay's study had a profound impact on my thinking and thought process as I planned the details of the focus group sessions with the youth participants in my study. Her study inspired the focus of the last focus group discussion which included an introduction to the Diné creation stories and Diné philosophy of life. Although I negotiated how much information to share with the students (avoiding the risk of exploitation and disrespect in sharing such sacred knowledge), I intentionally chose stories that were public information in books written by Diné individuals. The creation stories came from the book *Reclaiming Diné History: The Legacies of Navajo Chief Manuelito and Juanita* by Diné author Jennifer Nez Denetdale (2007). The stories told of *diyin dine'é* (Holy Ones) emerging from each world—the birth of Changing Woman, the *kinaaldá* (coming of age ceremony for adolescent girls), and the twin warriors seeking their father, the Sun. The stories were surface level understandings of the traditional Diné stories and did not go in-depth with details. I am appreciative of the work of Diné scholars such as Denetdale and Begay.

I (Deidra) was also informed by the published work of Diné scholars and a peer mentor, Valerie, whom I engaged in conversation. She taught me about the importance and potential significance of using this philosophy in the psychology field or with helping professionals, as we need to focus on planning and self-care in order to help others who are off their life path and out of balance. Essentially, self-care is crucial to this process and planning helps to instill a sense of self-discipline on many levels.

In addition to being informed by the literature, *Nahat'á* also consists of thinking about establishing relationships with participants and the community. Reconceptualizing aspects of qualitative research methods to support Indigenous notions of engaging in research was also important. One example of this was reconceptualizing what it means to "gain entry" into a community and build trust and rapport with participants. According to Shawn Wilson (2008), respect, reciprocity, and responsibility are important in maintaining any healthy relationship, and these values should be included in conducting Indigenous research. Conducting research with Indigenous peoples requires the researcher to establish, maintain and nurture reciprocal and respectful relationships with research participants.

In my (Valerie) study, I planned to integrate the cultural concept of *k'é* to initiate and maintain healthy relationships with my participants. *K'é* represents the ethics of Indigenous research as maintaining healthy relationships with participants. It is a value that means deep respect and care for others, compassion, humbleness, and kinship (Haskie, 2002). When practiced, it means having respect for all relations defined by clan, family, ecosystems and the sacred landscapes we occupy. *K'é* encompassed and guided my thinking at all levels of the research process.

We were conscious of the need to draw on constructs within *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hozhóón* as a way to honor our journey in understanding Indigenous qualitative research methods. As a result, new insights developed and an integrative awareness revealed a need to carefully balance and bridge multiple perspectives and various theoretical frameworks. For us, these new insights and awareness honored the pathway toward *hózhó* (balance).

## Iina—*Living*

*Iiná* means living, or following one's mature life. *Iina* is about living and being "in the process" of reaching maturity/old age; living and being "in the process" of research refers to the implementation of the study—data collection, analysis and relationships with participants and community members. This phase entails much responsibility as decisions and choices reflected in upholding *k'é* were made on a daily basis with our participants. The *Iina* domain reminds us to appreciate the process and reinforce respect, care and humility—being ever mindful of ethical responsibilities while interacting with our participants and analyzing the data. In our studies, the data collection process consisted of semi-structured interviews,

focus group discussions, a self-reflexive researcher journal, and field observations (the classroom for Valerie and the clinic for Deidra).

For Valerie, each focus group discussion reinforced a pedagogical process that combined a balance of critical pedagogy (critical examination of social issues and hegemony through self-reflection and dialogue to develop a critical consciousness) and Diné epistemology (*k'é, hózhó*, creation stories, philosophy of life and learning) to examine Diné youth identities. In finding the best ways to engage the Diné youth to examine their identities, I made it a point to first and foremost center my pedagogy on the Diné philosophy of learning, *Sa'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hozhóón*, and then make connections to the theoretical framework. The first two sessions focused on uncovering colonial tactics of assimilation, dispossession and oppression (the Diné Long Walk period and boarding school experiences); the third discussion focused on contemporary influences of popular culture, the media and technology; and the fourth and final session incorporated traditional Diné stories and philosophy of life. The initial focus group session included traditional introductions with our clans, which grounded how we engaged and treated one another. The collective voices and testimonies during these sessions linked the situations of colonization to their contemporary understandings of being Diné.

The focus group sessions were central in my (Deidra) data collection process. The natural inclusion of formal introductions, acknowledging *k'é* (kinships) with clan introductions, being mindful of a balanced male and female presence, and inviting elders to share a blessing were key components in this phase. The phenomena of the Diné person's conscious experience and understanding of *Sa'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hozhóón* were shared in the focus group study which allowed for a reflection of what was necessary for the restoration of harmony and balance for the Diné client. Throughout the study, I incorporated reflexivity via a narrative account and a journal which allowed me to focus on identifying emerging themes rooted in the Diné Philosophy of Life (i.e., *SNBH, Hózhó, K'é*) that reinforced healing aspects for the Diné client population.

Another component inherent in the *Iiná* phase of the research process is the data analysis. Combining an Indigenous way of thinking about the method of triangulation with qualitative research methods, I (Valerie) analyzed the data (interviews, focus group discussions, classroom observations, student work and self-reflexive researcher journal) using the coding procedures of open coding and axial coding. The method of comparing data that Aluli Meyer (2008) described in *Indigenous and authentic: Hawaiian epistemology and the triangulation of meaning* initiated a way of thinking through the process of coding and analyzing from an Indigenous perspective. I utilized this process as a whole to compare the data within the parts of *Body* (classroom observations, field notes, curriculum documents and student work) and *Mind* (interview transcripts, focus group discussion transcripts and self-reflexive researcher journal) to organize into themes in the *Spirit* part of analysis—this occurred during the axial coding process when the categories developed in the open coding process were refined to help expand on and share themes from the data.

The spirit aspect in data analysis was where the data began to transcend "toward usefulness, moving toward meaning and beauty" (Meyer, 2008, p. 229). It is the part where all three categories connected. By utilizing this Indigenous framework for making in triangulating the data and making meaning, I was consciously and simultaneously related this part of the process to the Diné principle of *hózhó*, where everything comes together in balance and beauty—in essence, the messiness of the data was organized during this phase into the results that coalesced into representation. Because I had so much information, I struggled with the coding phases. I became overwhelmed with and lost in the data, unsure as to how I could categorize and make sense of the themes. I prayed to *diyin dine'é* (spiritual beings) for guidance, strength, clarity and wisdom many times during this phase. As time progressed and as I delved deeper into analyzing each theme and category, clarity and order began to emerge. The themes within my research have deep meaning.

## Siih Hasin—*Assessing and Evaluating*

*Siih hasin* is wisdom gained from tested experience, skill, knowledge, and understanding. *Siih hasin* is an area that I (Deidra) have been reflecting on and thinking about at length. In conceptualizing *siih hasin*, I reflect on the words of wisdom of my 103-year-old *Nálí Adszáá* (paternal grandmother), as she had lived through an entire century and then some. She was one dynamic woman because of her abundant life experiences. She acquired vast knowledge and wisdom from the Elders before her and through her experiences as a child, a student in boarding a school, a mother, an advocate, and a grandmother. She embodied all that is resilient. She advocated for sovereignty rights with my paternal grandfather and helped to set a precedent that would benefit all of Indian country. At the age of 103, she epitomized a true integration of *siih hasin* (wisdom and knowledge), she was *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hózhóón*.

The *siih hasin* that emerged from my (Valerie) research study is characterized within the implications that advocate a critical and culturally sustaining educational experience for Diné youth. The study examined the impacts of colonialism while centering the Diné philosophy of life and learning which contributed to the profound engagement by the youth, who by the end of the project, intentionally reinforced the Diné language and culture within their lives and consciousness. Based on the youths' statements and stories, they purposefully called for Diné schools to implement similar pedagogical and learning processes in their schools. Specifically, they advocated for teachers to create spaces of learning that embraced critical dialogues and self-reflection in the classroom as such approaches encouraged them to critically examine inequities and oppressive structures that affected their community situations and circumstances. In turn, they shared the ways in which they were moved to action in various ways to revitalize their Diné ways and consciousness.

The *siih hasiin* that evolved from my (Deidra) study emerged from the Diné clinicians as they provided invaluable feedback and helped shed light on culturally responsive treatment for the Diné clientele. Their insights also helped clarify and further our understanding of the past and present issues impacting the Diné, all of which included a vital tribal specific perspective. The focus group gathering intended to honor their voices and nurture a sense of healing and wellness was promoted by these clinicians. The Diné professionals also demonstrated their competencies that is indicative of the fact that Indigenous professionals and communities are becoming empowered to create and sustain innovative clinical practice. Lastly, by integrating an Indigenous framework of *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hózhóón*, it allowed the Diné clinicians, and myself, to make meaning out of our cultural identities and embrace the bicultural role in a contemporary society. It appeared that each person who participated in the focus group, including me, gained greater awareness of the Diné Philosophy of Life and how these values are ever-present in our lives, whether or not we knew it. In addition, all the Diné professionals who had a part in this research project contributed to a body of work that is greater than the clinical psychology field, as Larry Emerson states, "we have a responsibility to identify ways of knowing that can help us understand the nature of our struggle [by relying on the] vital principles of [Dine] life" (Emerson, 2014, p. 50)

It is our hope that our research journeys will advance our understandings of healing and conscientization for our Diné communities while also situating *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hózhóón* in the forefront of our thinking. Collectively, the domains of *Nitsáhákees, Nahat'á, Iiná*, and *Siih Hasin* are beautiful teachings of our ancestors that have guided us and are truly innate aspects of our lives.

## Conclusion

> Epistemology, or how we come to know what we know, provides the philosophical foundation through which we gain perspectives of the world. In turn, our overall philosophy guides our individual and collective behavior in the world. How we apply philosophy forms and informs our culture and society.
>
> *(Cajete, 2014, p. 9)*

Our research processes exemplify the ways in which Indigenous research methods informed our work. We acknowledge and honor those who have paved the path for us to center *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hózhóón* in our work. We have been careful to only utilize published literature to describe sacred cultural knowledge in order to preserve and adhere to culturally appropriate protocols. Together, we shared the ways we anchored Indigenous Diné teachings as a way to guide the implementation and methodology of our work. The principles within *Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hózhóón* were integral in every aspect of our research process as we relied on our knowledge system to guide us in making research decisions in each phase.

## Notes

1 American Indian/Alaska Native.
2 Begay defined *hózhóójí* as, "The word made of the verb stem, '-zhó,' meaning 'beauty or happiness' and 'hó-,' meaning 'whole locality.' *Hózhóójí*, then may be interpreted as positive surroundings, or The Beauty Way of Life, Harmony Way of Life, or Good Way of Life that Diné people, accordingly, have lived by" (Begay, 2002, p. 5).

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# 5

# RESEARCH BEFORE AND AFTER THE ACADEMY

## Learning Participatory Indigenous Methods

*Sandi Wemigwase [Waganakising Odawa] and Eve Tuck [Unangax]*

This chapter was created through a recorded conversation between Eve Tuck and Sandi Wemigwase in fall of 2017. Eve Tuck (Unangax) works as a professor at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), at the University of Toronto and Sandi Wemigwase (Waganakising Odawa) is one of the doctoral students she mentors. In this chapter, we discuss the academic preparation we have received as Indigenous researchers and its relevance to the research we desire to see and participate in. Focusing specifically on participatory research, we discuss how Indigenous Research Methods can be used with Indigenous communities while maintaining good relations with those involved. Covering topics such as attending to relationships with human and non-human beings, sharing of findings with communities, and comprehensive citational practices the aim of this chapter is to provide readers with practical knowledge of how participatory research can work. Lastly, this chapter discusses the relationality of Indigenous scholars working and learning from other Indigenous scholars through storying and connection.

Eve Tuck is Unangax, and is a member of the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, Alaska. She grew up outside of her community, in rural Pennsylvania, but was lucky to live near her grandparents. She moved to New York City at age 18 to attend Eugene Lang College, The New School for Social Research, and after completing her undergraduate degree, worked as a community educator. Soon after, she entered into a new PhD program in Urban Education, at The Graduate Center, The City University of New York. Upon completing her PhD in 2008, Eve joined the faculty of the department of Educational Studies at The State University of New York at New Paltz, where she taught courses in educational foundations, multicultural education, and also served as the coordinator of the Native Studies program. Eve is the author of *Urban Youth and School Pushout* (2012), and co-author (with Marcia McKenzie) of *Place in Research* (2015). She

has edited several books with K. Wayne Yang, including *Youth Resistance Research and Theories of Change* (2014), *Toward What Justice?* (2018), and *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education* (2018, also edited with Linda Tuhiwai Smith). She also edited *Land Education* (2016) with Kate McCoy and Marcia McKenzie. In 2015, Eve accepted a position as Associate Professor of Critical Race and Indigenous Studies in the department of Social Justice Education, at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. She moved to Toronto with her family to be able to mentor doctoral students, especially Indigenous graduate students. She was named a Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Methodologies with Youth and Communities in 2017.

Sandi Wemigwase is a citizen of Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians (Waganakising Odawa) located in Harbor Springs, Michigan. After growing up in Michigan she traveled to Southern California to pursue higher education. She earned her master's from California State University, Long Beach in the Social and Cultural Analysis of Education program, and continued her work with Indigenous students. Her positions varied as she worked with K-12 students and then moved into student affair positions at two different public universities. Working closing with Indigenous students in higher education she was inspired to pursue a doctoral degree and deepen the understanding of the Indigenous experience in universities. Broadly, Wemigwase's research centers on fraudulent claims of Indigeneity in the academy. She is currently focusing on document-based and self-identification practices during the admissions process of public universities in Michigan.

## Deciding to Learn to be a Researcher in the Academy

EVE TUCK: You came to the academy to further your own work, but you could have pursued so many other paths; how did you get the idea that the academy was a place for you to do the next bit of work? What did you know about the academy before you initiated this path?

SANDI WEMIGWASE: I felt the academy was the right place to do work next because it is where I wanted to see the change. My work is on fraudulent claims to Indigenous identity in academic settings, and I felt in order to make the change within those settings, I would have to become part of the system and be able to speak the system's language in order for them to hear what I have to say.

Part of that language involves the academic credentials to actually have them listen to me and my concerns. There was a project that I did as a master's student concerning Native students in university, and it became more apparent to me work needed to be done to impact the ways that Indigeneity is claimed in academia as a whole. In order for the changes I wanted to see in student affairs to occur, I needed to step back and examine the possibility of making

foundational changes. I felt without addressing systemic changes I would be putting a band aid on any ideas I had about Indigenous students' access to higher education. I didn't feel I could make changes as a community organizer because it's outside force to the academy. I also didn't expect they would listen to me unless I had the credentials. I want to be able to say I learned your language and now you will have to listen to what I have to say.

Will you tell me about your first experiences in doing participatory research?

EVE TUCK: I learned about participatory research methods after I had already been doing it on my own, without formal training. This actually makes me have more confidence in participatory methodology and methods. That I, and that many others I have met over the years, could start doing it without having formal or academic language for what we were doing makes me think of it as a method for the people. When I think about what gets referred to in academic settings as the "validity" of a method, or how we know a method is strong, part of that for me is that the method could pop up from places all over the globe without it having one origin story. This means people are arriving at that method or approach from doing their regular everyday work, and to me, it means it's a good one.

Before I went into graduate school, I worked as a community educator in the South Bronx in a youth-led community organization. We were doing work in support of a variety of youth-led campaigns; one around environmental racism, another on contesting police presence and surveillance, and police brutality. I was working with young people who were really phenomenal community leaders and organizers who were, at the same time, being pushed out of their schools. I started to understand it was very important for us to be working on these different campaigns, but we also needed to be doing research and advocacy work on school pushout.

We started by trying to use other people's data but found it impossible because the data that can be used to demonstrate that a school system is not fulfilling its responsibilities to a community will always also speak *against* the young people and the community. What I mean by that, education data often only show a young person's supposed deficits, the lack of support at home, or the lack of appropriate books at home. After seeing how flawed and compromised the data were, I began working with young people to create our own data. I was doing participatory research before I had a name for it because the kinds of organizing we were doing meant we needed a data that weren't inherently speaking against us.

SANDI WEMIGWASE: And how was that impacted when you were introduced to it in the academy?

EVE TUCK: I didn't seek out a mentor in participatory action research, the universe just brought me to her. I was introduced to Michelle Fine by a professor from my undergraduate program, Gregory Tewksbury. I went to her office before I

applied to graduate school and I sat there, trying to describe to her what I was working on. I spoke much more in that conversation than she did, and I don't think I came out of that conversation understanding anything about what she did in her scholarly work. I only remember her saying, "you should come here," and I believed her. It wasn't until later I learned the influence of Michelle Fine's work is in terms of describing what participatory work can mean. She always said *participation doesn't mean involving people as decoration, they are a core part of participatory research*. I immediately recognized this as the work we were trying to do with the youth organizers. Once I started to see there was a way to do this kind of work inside the academy, I became more willing to pursue graduate school because I had prior experience doing this work in a community that mattered to me.

What did you know about the academy or what would happen in terms of a graduate program that would help you to have expectations about what would happen? It makes sense that if the site of intervention is the academy that you have to go to the academy, but did you think that it would be something that you needed to simply endure in order to get that legitimacy? What was the work in the decisions you made?

SANDI WEMIGWASE: During my master's program, I proposed a project that was too large for a thesis and learned there are different scopes of research. I knew which research I was interested in and was willing to consider a doctoral degree in order to get the answers I wanted.

I heard students of color talk about their experiences in the academy and it was rarely good. When I was looking at programs and scholars, I was not willing to give up the need to study with an Indigenous scholar. I was concerned about having to endure a terrible experience to get the credentials and I felt an Indigenous mentor would be less likely to be harmful. Also, no one else would really get the gist of the intervention I was trying to make. I didn't want to have to go through trying to explain Indigenous experiences or why my work matters. That was not work I was willing to do because I had much work ahead of me to begin with and I was not willing to put forth the time or labor to try to get a non-Indigenous scholar to where I already was. I also felt, I needed someone who was beyond my thinking about indigenous issues in order for me to grow from where I was at.

I didn't know what I was getting myself in for, I just knew those three letters at the end of my name would mean something to the people that I wanted to influence. What is entailed in getting those letters, I really didn't know. I just kind of came to school knowing I wanted to make an intervention and if this is what I have to do then that's how it would be. I knew it would take years, and a lot of writing, but I didn't specifically know what it meant to pursue a doctoral degree. I am not sure I know any more now. I feel more confused. I don't know if I want to want to be a researcher forever

or become a writer or do both. I just know this was the vehicle I needed to try in order to influence people.

I also felt it needed to be me because I didn't see anyone else working on the things I was interested in. Although lots of people have told me it's a good idea, I didn't see anyone else actually doing it. My thought was if I'm not going to do it, who is? I decided it would have to be me because it was part of leaving a legacy for the seven generations that come after me. I've often asked myself, what would be my one important thing I would want to leave them? And I want to leave them with access to their dreams whatever those may be. Opportunities have come my way and it's my responsibility to take advantage of them. I know many more people who are just as smart and care just as much as I do, it's not about that. I recognize it is my responsibility to take advantage of the opportunities in front of me because they don't happen to everyone.

EVE TUCK: I know that feeling very well. In my prior position, I was mostly doing work to prepare educators. Now, I am preparing educational researchers. I'm still working in the same field, but the kinds of degrees people were pursuing are different. I've had to think a lot about what I'm doing when I'm teaching researchers. We don't learn how to do this in graduate school. We don't learn how to teach other people to do what we're learning to do in graduate school. It becomes very much my own. I have been thinking about my own relationship with my mentor who was not an Indigenous woman, but is a person who I continue to turn to and continue to learn from. It is a very important relationship we both continue to take care of.

I've been reflecting about what was at work in my training in terms of working with her and with other faculty all of whom were not Indigenous. I ask myself how did I learn how to be an Indigenous scholar from all of these non-Indigenous people? What is my obligation now, when I'm working with Indigenous and non-Indigenous students to teach them to do research in a good way? What I have found is it is not all the same, graduate mentorship cannot be a standardized what-happened-to-me and now everybody does what-happened-to-me. It's also not the same across students and I do things in a deliberate way. Now, it's how do I teach what I have learned through direct instruction from indigenous scholars who mentor me. Linda Tuhiwai Smith has been phenomenal mentor to me and that relationship began when I was in graduate school. It began because my mentor Michelle Fine introduced me to Dr. Smith. I also consider Sandy Grande to be a very important teacher. I also met Dr. Grande and Dr. Bryan Brayboy when I was in graduate school and each one of them has been so generous to me over these years. Even though they weren't my teachers in graduate school, I have since then found lots and lots of people who have been responsible to me and to what I know. How I might learn from the combination of direct instruction from those mentors and through my own experience and make

that available to the next generation of scholars is something that I am navigating every day.

## The Relations of Participatory Research

SANDI WEMIGWASE: Considering your work in community and the academy, has your definition of participatory research changed over the years?

EVE TUCK: My early sensibilities about the importance of participatory work have shifted because of my own preferences. For example, in doing participatory work, it's important that the outcomes of the research are useful for communities and their own political projects. In every study I have taken on, there have been research products meant for community audiences. Sometimes this becomes electronic reports written to engage community members and sometimes it is meetings held to share our findings in meaningful ways.

I didn't know I would love writing in the academy. I didn't know I would be able to find and craft a meaningful writing life, both for myself and with collaborators. At first, I was quite disdainful of academic writing and the necessity to communicate back into the university because academic audiences haven't demonstrated readiness to hear the kinds of findings that are useful to Indigenous communities, Black communities, urban communities, queer and trans people. Surprisingly (to me at least), over time I've found meaning in writing non-fiction, which is how I have come to think about academic writing. Academic writing is creative, politicized non-fiction which tries to convince a reader to engage in another set of actions.

At one point, it mattered a great deal to me whether something was really participatory or if it was *sort of* participatory. Now, I'm less interested in exacting the boundaries between those two, and I'm more interested in how we make everything—all kinds of research practices—more participatory. Similarly with academic writing, it shouldn't be categorized as this is academic writing, and this is another kind of writing. How do we make *all* writing in the academy thoughtful about audience, responsible to community, and show up with humility and with a willingness to try to put messy stuff into words? I want *all* of academic writing to do that. I want ethical relationships to writing and knowledge creation to be more of what we do in the academy.

SANDI WEMIGWASE: In participatory research, you mentioned having outcomes for the communities and not necessarily the academy. It's important your co-researchers feel closure and not used. My question is, when the research is over how do you maintain good relationships with the communities you're researching with?

EVE TUCK: The relationality of doing research is true whether it's participatory work or not because any work that brings us into relationship with different

people has to have a beginning, and an end. It's one of the ways I have come to understand why research is different than organizing, or why research is different than creating an after school program for example; we have an intentional beginning and we have a plan for when we will conclude. One big difference in doing participatory work is all of the people have the data and there could be any number of projects coming out of one project. Anybody could initiate the next thing in any kind of configuration; there's no single ownership over what is done with those data and what happens next. That means it's okay if we don't continue to talk or interact every day in the same way we did when we were in a project. It's more important we have finished the project in a way that keeps us in good relationship to each other so we could begin another project another time or learn from this project in order to keep going with other work.

SANDI WEMIGWASE: Can you describe how you attend to the relationships with non-human beings; the spiritual, cosmos, land, water, and air when you're doing participatory research? Because there might be how-to guides concerning the things you should do when you're talking with people, but being an Indigenous scholar and researcher means attending to more than relationships with people. How have you found that you attend to non-human beings?

EVE TUCK: That relationship to land and water and to the territories that I'm on and to the practices between humans and non-human persons is extremely influential in the kinds of relationships I cultivate in order to engage in research. The kinds of protocols of beginning work or protocols of gratitude or protocols of invitation have very much shaped to the way that I have begun to do work. It takes a long time to begin to do work with people and that is probably more available after graduate school than it is during graduate school. But, the kind of pacing of time to begin to slowly build the relationship and arrive at those questions is very much informed by those particular places and those particular protocols of those lands and waters.

My own attention to water and land as being threatened by human activity has huge influence in terms of the pacing of my work. I'm convinced by people who are telling us that we are living at the very edge of what can be sustained. We're seeing indicators we're actually beyond that edge and that influences the pacing and the priorities of my work. This is why K. Wayne Yang and I created the Land Relationships Super Collective and why the work I do is very thoughtful about place and relationships to place. I'm a curious person, and I could be doing research on all sort of things, but I make decisions about how I spend my time because I'm trying to generate work that might make change.

In terms of recognizing the agency of non-human persons, that means I don't think the change only happens because of human agency. Change happens because of the agency of non-human and persons too and so, it's

about how do we do our work in order to get out of the way of that change in which the earth is recovering herself or which waters are healing themselves or in which animals are making new pathways for their own recovery or their own people their own nations. How this lives in my work has to do with understanding what we do as a part of a bigger picture and everyday people have a lot of power and that power doesn't come from the same places. That power actually comes from being in those good relationships. When land and people are in good listening relationship to land and water, that power can't be defeated.

SANDI WEMIGWASE: How do you maintain a good citational practice when working with participatory research, especially if the data belongs to everyone?

EVE TUCK: Several years ago, I began to make a shift in my own citational practice by decidedly ceasing to cite people who were known abusers. Often, these were people who were major scholars in a field, whom the auntie networks in those field warned other scholars away from. I also began making decisions about who my work was *for*. Linda Tuhiwai Smith and I have talked at different times about how Indigenous people are often writing to one another in the footnotes of our papers. Then, one time, I worked with an editor who was very discouraging of footnotes—saying, "if it is important, it is in the paper! If it isn't it isn't!" Now, I haven't given up on using footnotes for some tasks, but I do think about the practice of burying the important stuff, especially if it is the stuff that works as underground messages to other Indigenous scholars, in footnotes. So, around 2011, I began to shift in my thinking about the audience I was primarily writing for. I decided to shift so that my work engages Indigenous peoples and Black peoples as the main audiences, because I care very much about the agency of these audiences.

Making this shift in audience has meant making a shift in my citation practices—both in terms of the works that I read, that I cite, that I describe and discuss in my own writing, and that I teach. As a person doing research that attends to community knowing and organizing, it has long been a practice to include work by community educators and organizers in my writing. Indigenous activists are featured as theorists in my work, alongside and sometimes instead of the prominent theorists in a given field. This is a decision.

There is a lot of similarity in the kinds of citational practices that I encourage students to engage in, and the kinds of storytelling that Indigenous students may already have familiarity with when they enter the academy. I mean, that when people tell a story, and they are telling that story in a good way, they say a bit about where that story came from, who told it to them and where, and whether they have permission to tell it again.

Recently I was asked to create a workshop for emerging writers on citation practices. I called it, Citation is political! and it focused on the politics of

citation in academic writing, especially within critical fields of education. In referencing a body of work to make an idea or argument, one is signaling which signaling which genealogies matter, and which can be de-emphasized. While citation is usually an after/thought, intervening on our citational practices might be a most immediate way to shape and reshape what is considered relevant in critical fields of education. One of the things that I try to help emerging writers to understand is that citation does not have to be a mechanism to catch, punish, exclude, or test them. Citation is often an exclusionary practice, made to keep people out of fields, rewrite the origin of ideas, and even intimidate people from saying that the emperor has no clothes. Citation has certainly been used to disqualify people from making arguments which need to be made, but that doesn't have to be the way that we do it. But, there can be more generous and caring ways of thinking about citation. We can think of citation as a way of coming into a genealogy. We can think of citation as an antidote to the appropriation that has so forcefully been wielded on Indigenous communities by settler societies; this is because appropriation does not have a citational practice! Most importantly, citation is a way to prioritize what you want to encourage in the world. What is the work you want to see, to position as expertise, to make known to other people? We have this influence when we are engaging in citation, so it can't be left as a last task before the deadline.

## Learning to be an Indigenous Scholar with Other Indigenous Scholars

EVE TUCK: What do you feel like your academic training is providing you? And what parts of your training are doing what? What parts of the things that are happening now are speaking to the parts that you are wanting to grow and curate for yourself?

SANDI WEMIGWASE: A large part of what is happening is being around Indigenous scholars, Indigenous students, and the Indigenous community. They've had a larger impact than I anticipated. I have the visual of what's happening, but I am trying to figure out how to describe it. I feel myself growing and bumping especially as we go in ways I didn't know were possible. I didn't know exactly what the experience would be like beyond being a student. And I find myself evolving from the relationships I have made because they are more than academic friends. Growth has also come from being involved in the community and in things outside of the academy. Because I think the academy doesn't necessarily understand all of the ways to tend to Indigenous students. Having Indigenous folks around me helps to pad the academic experience a little bit and it feels less lonely for those reasons.

EVE TUCK: Would you say a big thing that you should think about in choosing a graduate program is if it's a city with lots of Indigenous people?

SANDI WEMIGWASE: You betcha. That's really the only way to do it!

Well, it's not necessarily location because it could be a great location and terrible people. It is more about the relationships you make not only with people inside the academy, but outside of the academy too. It's less about city and more about the community you are joining to learn in and with. What is beneficial about a city with a large population of Indigenous people is there are multiple paths and communities to join and it is easier to find your niche. Making relationships with the land and the water here in Toronto is an important part of my life here. It is easier to be Indigenous in the academy when you are supported by and support relationships with human and nonhuman beings. All of that has to come together in choosing a graduate program because it's a place you are going to call home for several years.

EVE TUCK: I know, but so all these universities are thinking really hard. Is there anything about academic training and programmatic offerings the university can do to aid Indigenous graduate students? Something happens in graduate school and it's not just what a person makes of it.

SANDI WEMIGWASE: I think having meaningful presence, especially Indigenous scholars to mentor the students is where it starts. I don't think that that's where it ends, but that's where it starts. Indigenous scholars should also have control to teach the things that need to be taught and not necessarily the things the institution wants them to teach. The freedom to teach based on the needs of the Indigenous students they have and not perform for the university is essential when meeting the needs of Indigenous people in the academy. Because those things aren't always in line it's not just having Indigenous presence, it's also having space for the people to do what needs to be done. And the university needs to know they don't have all the answers to Indigenous issues and sometimes the answers are not contained in these walls, although many of the problems have been exacerbated by universities. There also needs a good relationship with Indigenous community where the university is located. I am not talking about land acknowledgements but so much more. So many things need to happen, not just once, but continuously for it to be a space that Indigenous people want to be in.

# 6

# INDIGENOUS METHODOLOGIES IN GRADUATE SCHOOL

## Accountability, Relationships, and Tensions

*Daniel Piper [White], Jacob Jacobe [White], Rose Yazzie [Diné] and Dolores Calderon [Tigua/Mexican]*

Through our collective insights we grappled with what Diné scholar Glen Coulthard (2014) describes as the politics of recognition that work to subsume Indigenous peoples within nation-states, that oftentimes work against a politics of decolonization. In our own work, we are committed to social justice in education that most likely vacillates between the two positions. Our divergent journeys and life histories determined that we came to the table with different understandings of what this looks like. Collectively, we leave this project working from a shared understanding of decolonization as a goal that must ensure Indigenous futurities. The implications for us are varied. What does this mean for us as a Title VII coordinator, a high school teacher, an elementary school teacher, graduate students, and as faculty? Below, we hope our journey offers others opportunities to continue these conversations, and more importantly the work.

### Introduction

In this chapter, the four of us discuss a semester long course in which we came together to read, learn, and dialogue around Indigenous methodologies. The main goal of the course was to read major texts around Indigenous methodologies, examining what this looks like in application, and speaking with Indigenous community members (on and off campus) who do this work. The texts we read together are the following but not in this particular order:

1. Kovach, M. E. (2010). *Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations, and contexts*. University of Toronto Press. Suggested discussion: January date.

2. Archibald, J. A. (2008). *Indigenous storywork: Educating the heart, mind, body, and spirit*. UBC press. Suggested discussion: February dates.
3. Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. Zed Books Ltd. Suggested discussion: March date.
4. Wilson, S. (2001). What is an indigenous research methodology? *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 25*(2), 175–179. Suggested discussion: January date.
5. Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods*. Fernwood Publishing. Suggested discussion: February dates.

Several of the participants in the dialogue expressed the desire to read and engage in discussions around these texts, research with and in Indigenous communities and students, and what these approaches meant in the context of the institution we were at as well as the regions. Very specifically, we were all interested in the ethical implications of such work for us individually and collectively within an institution that has a Native mascot and is located in a region with an explicit and celebrated settler context (see Boxer, 2015).

Additionally, this course arose out of the challenge that many researchers from our University go to the Navajo Nation, particularly the Utah strip, to do research without any knowledge of what such work entails, without seeking guidance from the Navajo Nation since the research takes place outside the boundaries of the reservation, and perpetuate colonialist attitudes and ideas about Indigenous communities[1]. Surprisingly, in the context of positivist frameworks, these researchers are not concerned with oversampling the same populations as they view Indigenous populations as simply a means to an end. For this reason, in this chapter we focus on how Indigenous methodologies are taken up in the context our College, as we believe our experiences are shared by many other institutions across the country.

This chapter represents a synthesis of major themes that emerged from our meetings, which were transcribed and coded. In our individual reflections below, we reflect on what we understand, relate to, and potentially ally with Indigenous methodologies from our different standpoints (Indigenous, White, teacher, graduate student, Title VII coordinator, etc.) and as researchers interested in doing work with Indigenous communities. Specifically, we explore how our positionalities and locations impact our ability to engage Indigenous methodologies. For instance, how can Indigenous scholars be guided by Indigenous methodologies in the context of our own community? We also explore whether and how White researchers can be guided by Indigenous methodologies. Lastly, we conclude our discussion asking whether the academic contexts we find ourselves in facilitate the application of Indigenous methodologies in our work. Through this dialogue shared in this chapter we can: (1) better understand the contours of Indigenous methodologies; and (2) question whether we can bring ethical, respectful,

and relational qualities to our work in academia, especially as graduate students in a neoliberal setting.

## Context

As stated above, this discussion reflects a synthesis of our discussions. Some of the major themes that emerged from our dialogues included researcher positionality, institutional context, relationships, and research design. Other themes emerged, but these four reflect major themes that were also shared across texts. Indeed, Indigenous methodologies ask both Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers to situate themselves within their research as active participants, as community members, and as people connected to the individuals with whom they research. As Linda Smith poignantly articulates, "In Indigenous frameworks, relationships matter. Respectful, reciprocal, genuine relationships lie at the heart of community life and community development." (Smith, 1999, p. 125). A critical engagement of Indigenous methodologies urges researchers to deeply reflect on their own positionality and investments, as well as untangle and investigate the relationship they have to the research they do. This disrupts traditional conceptions of research as neutral, isolated, and decontextualized. Certainly, these conclusions have been reached by many critical approaches to research. Of interest to us, through Indigenous frameworks, research has a purpose, a goal, a connection, is relational, and deeply contextual. It takes time to do, and the possibility of deciding that the research is not what is needed are important considerations. Consequently, research design that adopts such approaches disrupts the manner in which the research process is institutionalized and programmed.

These notions are clearly reflected in the title of Shawn Wilson's text on Indigenous methods, *Research is Ceremony* (Wilson, 2008). It is therefore a challenge and oftentimes a paradigm shift for non-Indigenous researchers to recognize and respect the process of doing research in Indigenous contexts. Similarly, Indigenous researchers must also consider what it means to do research as community members or in other indigenous communities. What is clear is that the traditional outsider/insider framing of researcher is an insufficient understanding to start from as it is tied to colonialist trappings of research. For instance, and critiqued by the readings above, the idea of an outsider to a community doing research developed out of the expropriative enterprise of research as part of empire building (Simpson, 2007; Smith, 1999). Moreover, the belief that an outsider is a more objective researcher, according to Kusow "… operates from the assumption that objective knowledge relies on the degree to which researchers can detach themselves from the prejudices of the social groups they study" (Kusow, 2003, p. 592). Instead, we understand that more important than an insider/outsider binary is the notion of relationality that is relative to the community, the existing context, and particular work (see e.g., Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000; Simpson, 2007).

Indigenous methodologies ask Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers to situate themselves as individuals connected to the people with whom they research. As Linda Smith poignantly articulates, "In Indigenous frameworks, relationships matter. Respectful, reciprocal, genuine relationships lie at the heart of community life and community development" (Smith, 1999, p. 125). It is often these relationships that motivate and shape the desire to do research. Thus below we explore in detail our individual motivations for this work.

## Individual Reflections (presented in alphabetical order)

### *Dolores Calderon*

At the time of this course I was an assistant professor going up for tenure, in a College of Education that had a relatively new Dean. The new Dean began a new American Indian education initiative through the college, of which I was a part of. There were not many of us in the group and yet there were many faculty who were conducting research in Indian Country, particularly the Navajo Nation. As a part of this group we dialogued around the issues that individualized manner through which such research takes place often undermines larger work in the long run as Indigenous communities are "overrun" by researchers who do not take the time to understand the complexities of such work. Relationality is required not just between researcher and community, but by researchers in their own institutions.

Parallel to this work, a few of us (staff, students, and faculty) came together to read and discuss published work on Indigenous methodologies. I had the task of bringing us together and loosely organizing the books we read as well as the meetings types. Together, we agreed upon readings, with some suggestions on my part. The class fulfilled one of the methods requirement of the department for doctoral students and fulfilled an "applied" requirement for the masters' students. The class did not focus on research design itself; rather we focused on dialoguing around the content of the texts, the impact on our thinking in relation to research, and how to position ourselves vis-a-vis research requirements in our program and discipline.

Relatedly, as a result of the haphazard nature of research in Indian Country conducted by faculty in our College and across campus (a challenge not unique to our campus), the students, staff, and I dialogued about the possibility of pulling together a workshop for faculty on what it means to do research in Indian Country and the challenges therein. It was ambitious and due to a number of factors (mainly my transition to another university), this did not happen. But, for me at least, these challenges shaped my desire to engage in dialogues that addressed such challenges. Being familiar with the above readings, I offered the group that we read Linda Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies* as a way to both theorize and contextualize the challenges we

saw in our own institution as well as our work. Not surprisingly, each of us came to this dialogue because of our relation to indigeneity: whether as Indigenous peoples or non-Indigenous peoples who work with/have worked directly with Indigenous communities.

For me, after almost a decade in the academy and many more years of education-related work, this is not a surprise as Indigenous matters are not necessarily attractive to folks unfamiliar with Indigenous realities (Woomer, 2017). Certainly, Indigenous topics are consumed by non-Indigenous folks, but only so much as they affirm settler desires around Indianness (Byrd & Rothberg, 2011; Grande, 2004; Tuck & Yang, 2012). In my experience, topics that deal with concrete realities of Indigenous peoples that center Indigenous demands and voices and directly tackle issues of power do not get much interest beyond Indigenous folks and committed non-Indian allies. For instance, other students were invited to participate in the dialogue around Indigenous methodologies. Many demonstrated initial interest, but when they received the list of readings they either shared that the class was not what they were looking for or they never replied back. As a student, I experienced this as epistemic violence (Dotson, 2011), and as faculty I found it interesting that I received push back from critical students for insisting on understanding colonization as an endemic characteristic of research and teaching.

I learned a great deal dialoguing with my peers. Most important was sharing the space in conversation that does two things: demystify the research process and make clear the institutional expectations of what research is. These background conversations helped us all understand how to navigate the multiple challenges in doing the relational work of Indigenous methodologies. I have no doubt my colleagues will be successful in their work.

## *Jacob Jacobe*

I am a high school educator and PhD student in the Intermountain West. For this part of world, the myths of Westward Expansion and Manifest Destiny are ingrained in student psyches, passed down from parents, government institutions, and school curriculum. In schools, I often see examples from kids, faculty, and institutions "Playing Indian" (Deloria, 1998) in different ways. At the time of our group's work, I had not read Deloria's *Playing Indian* (1998). However, an Indigenous Epistemologies course I took offered a foundation from which to read and understand Deloria's argument when I read the text the following semester. We see institutions, students, and teachers "Playing Indian" on a regular basis. From the mythology of Thanksgiving taught in elementary schools to the use of Indigenous mascots for high school teams, Indigenous epistemology frames knowledge, identity, and myth in a way that counters these hegemonic practices. This is important, because countering those sorts of stories is difficult for teachers who face inflexible schools, administrators, and colleagues; essentially, we are

attempting to rewrite mythology, not history, when we attack these racist, White-centric views of the world. Indigenous epistemologies seize and re-center the origination of knowledge and critique Eurocentric discourses. As an educator, this type of theoretical perspective is critical to interrogate the mythology that schools perpetuate, regardless of student demographics. The discussions in our course sharpened my own positionality, and as Dr. Calderon already explained, offered a lens to challenge colonialism and imperialistic curriculum and experiences in the school where I teach and in the university where I study.

I do not work regularly within indigenous peoples, but as a PhD student, researcher, and teacher who focuses on Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) (Mirra, Garcia, & Morrell, 2016; Cammarota & Fine, 2008), there are lessons to be learned from an indigenous worldview. As Snow et al. articulate, "there are four axiological assumptions embedded within indigenous research: responsibility, respect, reciprocity, and, taken together as one assumption, rights and regulations" (Snow et al., 2015, p. 4). Foundational to YPAR is a belief that the research comes from the knowledge, expertise, and wants of the community and that the youth are co-researchers, co-learners, and co-teachers in the process, uprooting traditional norms between teacher, researcher, student, and participant. As such, the research is constructed and owned by the youth participants and their community. YPAR that does not respect this relationship is a facade to the YPAR ethos; in this sense, YPAR shares in Snow et al.'s (2015) R's of indigenous research. For example, reciprocity demands "a shared give and take of power when researching" (Snow et al., 2015, p. 4) and "respect is engaging in methodological practices that report back findings and share knowledge" (Snow et al., 2015, p. 4). Indigenous epistemologies can be a framework for conducting YPAR. In my case, the course was the first time I discussed a theoretical perspective that challenged the power structure of positivist and postpositivist Western research norms and offered language to consider decolonization in concrete terms. These are terms I have applied to my work life with colleagues and students, encouraging them to question the mythology of the Western view. Moreover, working alongside Latinx students in my institution who have a familial and cultural connection to the Borderlands, a decolonizing viewpoint offers a strong critique of globalizing forces that they recognize in their immediate histories. In short, all teachers and students can benefit from understanding Indigenous Epistemology.

## *Daniel Piper*

I started my work in American Indian education as a student mentor and Navajo language classroom assistant in Title VI federal grant programs. Through my experiences working with Native youth, I became interested in understanding the relationship between Indigenous languages, public schools, and Native youth navigating Indigenous language learning. As a non-Native person, I also recognized the need for a methodology that would ensure a critical recognition of my positionality and my relationship to the community in which I worked. In our class on

Indigenous methods, we worked through the theoretical foundations as well as practical applications of Indigenous research frameworks. One of the questions that emerged was the appropriateness of non-Native researchers using Indigenous methodology, a very important question. Indigenous methodologies provide a powerful opportunity for non-Native researchers to recognize how research in an Indigenous context functions. Non-Native researchers often do not have the tribal, clan, band, or familial ties to Native communities, but they are at times connected in different ways in which they can exist as respectful, accountable, and reciprocal community members. Perhaps what is to be learned from Indigenous methods for the non-Native researcher is not a co-opting of Indigenous methods, but rather a critical recognition of their own relationship to knowledge production and ownership. A critical engagement of Indigenous methodology asks that researchers conduct a deep reflection on the relationships they have to their research. This process of critical reflection disrupts traditional conceptions of the researcher as an individual who is neutral, isolated, and decontextualized from their research. Rather, the research process inside of Native communities is relational and deeply contextual and the researcher is implicated in their work. Margaret Kovach (2010) provides a helpful guideline to promote critical awareness for researchers and academics working within Indigenous communities:

1. Decolonizing Self and Institution.
2. Knowing the History.
3. Moving Beyond the Indigenous Exotic.
4. Growing Indigenous Scholarship (advocating and actively centering Indigenous knowledge).
5. Evaluation of Indigenous Research and Scholarship.
6. Redefining Roles.
7. Do the Relational Work.

Yet such questions around individual research work also demand we investigate the university as a site that makes this type of research (im)possible.

As an educator working with Native youth, I have reflected on the important recommendations of Kovach and others, particularly the work of Linda Smith (1999) and Jo-ann Archibald (2008) to better understand my relationship to educational self-determination, sovereignty, and decolonization. Insights into my positionality emerged through my own experiences in my work with Native youth. During this time I have had to sit with multiple moments of discomfort, confusion, hurt, pain, and anger. These emotions have often given way to a better understanding of how I can best align myself as a non-Native person working inside of Native communities. Jo-ann Archibald's words are powerful here:

> The issues and the way that we want to deal with the issues—the types of conversations and talks—must be given space for us to fill. This does not mean that

> non-Native people should be forever excluded from the conversations, only that First Nations people need some space to talk so that we can share our stories in our own way and create discourses based on our Indigenous knowledge systems. Then we can open the conversation for others to join.
>
> *(Archibald, 2008, p. 19)*

## *Rose Yazzie*

At the time of this course I was a second-year teacher at Tse'bii'nidzisgai Elementary school, located on the Navajo reservation, only 40 minutes from my family in Dennehotso, Arizona. On the reservation, a 40-minute drive is typical. I was also in my second semester of Masters of Education coursework, which I was completing remotely through distance education technology. As a Diné teacher highly interested in improving educational outcomes for indigenous students, I was a member of an initiative founded by the dean of education to attract indigenous teachers and provide resources and support as they worked through licensure and other teaching requirements. I felt this work was a positive step in creating space for indigenous epistemologies to mold schooling, with us working to break institutional barriers; this was an ambitious goal. As an undergraduate I researched teacher practices and pedagogy as a way to improve educational outcomes in places such as Tse'bii'-nidzisgai Elementary.

At the end of the day, each of these projects only allowed so much Indianness to enter. This is what attracted me to the Indigenous methodologies course. Lomawaima & McCarty (2006) elaborate the myriad of ways educational institutions allow one type of indigeneity while pushing out or ignoring other. They describe a safe Indianess as "outlining safe expression of native cultural distinctiveness—what is allowable in 'remaining indian'" (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. 72) and dangerous Indianess that threaten settler status. They propose "safety zone theory" to identify how whites judge certain Native beliefs and practices as "safe" and "tolerable," while others are "too dangerous, different, and subversive of mainstream values" (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. 5).

Through our readings we began to discuss our connections to indigenous research paradigms and our relationships and responsibilities to decolonization as something we reflected on often. As I stumbled through issues of curriculum, discipline, and policies it became clear to me that in order to decolonize my classroom I would need the research to back it up. I would need to engage in dangerous Indianess especially in the realm of research. I witnessed settler colonial practices of erasure and replacement (Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013) become policy all to easily through things such as basal implementation and state-mandated school turn around models. What would it take for Indigenous epistemologies to become policy? Certainly, a best practice manual drenched in western epistemology was not enough to cut the colonialism.

## Collective Reflection

As Rose describes above, what is offered is not enough to "cut the colonialism." How do we cleave the relationship between colonialism and research, between expropriation and community, and other such histories that Linda Smith's seminal text *Decolonizing Methodologies* describes? Rose, in essence, is referring to what Coulthard has identified as a challenge for Indigenous Peoples (and other subaltern peoples) in settler states: being absorbed into nation states via the politics of recognition versus working towards a politics of decolonization that "cuts the colonialism." While we discuss this dilemma, we contend that it must be a key part of a conversation when we consider how we go about doing the work required of Indigenous methodologies. The university has not traditionally been the space to have these conversations, and yet we did, recognizing that outside the university, such discussions are more prevalent.

Inevitably, a theme that drives this collective reflection is that of institutional context. We acknowledge we were fortunate to find ourselves in one of the few remaining educational foundations departments in the USA that offers the curricular space within our respective programs to undertake this study together. As educators attracted to a department that centers social justice, we systematically dialogue around what social justice means in educational work. However, in education writ large, the gap between how educators research and talked about social justice and the practice of social justice in relation to Indigenous communities is vast (see Tuck & Yang, 2012). This was true in our own department, though there was space to reflect on these differences as evidenced by our course.

Undoubtedly, this quandary is so often identified by Indigenous scholars that the notion of incommensurability has been developed to explain the gap between Indigenous peoples' claims that start from place and settler claims (and those attempting to be integrated into settler spaces) that start from Indigenous dispossession (Byrd & Rothberg, 2011; Moreton-Robinson, 2003; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Thus institutional context directly impacts aspects of our work such as research design. Specifically, we dialogued around the lack of such conversations with regards to research design, how our small department was the only space to accomplish this, and what this might mean entering into a field largely ignorant of these conversations. We understood that our commitment to such type of research practice laid out in the texts we read required us to take time to familiarize ourselves with the challenges of research in Indigenous communities (Smith, 2007)—which has been extensively written about—as well as pay attention to our own research design and our desires to undertake it. In our conversations, we discussed the reality that in critical education circles, we talk about social justice and decolonization, but do not necessarily agree what this means and how to enact it. Such disagreement inevitably leads to the absence of Indigenous voices because in order to articulate decolonization as something that shapes our research, we must understand colonization, how

endemic it is, its ideologies, and how, oftentimes, we don't see it. Indeed, this was an epistemological challenge that was present in and across our discussions.

Although this question has been answered in various ways by many scholars, Indigenous communities, and very concretely by Indigenous developed research protocols (see the Navajo Human Research Review Board), these voices remain marginal to institutional policy and practice. We believe it is thus necessary to theorize how this ignorance in graduate education emphasizes research design that is colonialist in framing and consequently antithetical to Indigenous life. We focus on the manner in which the relationship between Indigenous absence and presence (Calderon, 2014; Bang et al. 2014; Vizenor, 1999) undergirds the ability and opportunity for Indigenous methodologies to be central in departmental culture, indeed institutional research and culture of the neoliberal university (Harvey, 1998; Kamola & Meyerhoff, 2009; Moten & Harney, 2013; Pierce, 2015; Mountz et. al., 2015). All of which exacerbates the existing colonialist impulse of the university identified by Maori scholar Linda Smith. Certainly, under the pressure of the neoliberal university, researchers, and subsequently their students are under pressure to produce as universities move to schemes that measure increased productivity. This compression of time vis-a-vis research has devastating implications for the work of Indigenous methodologies that are time intensive due to their relational imperatives (Smith, 2007). Nevertheless, even without such productivity demands, the reality remains that ignorance of Indigenous life and knowledges are, in fact, a key aspect of western epistemology.

Certainly, Indigenous absence and presence as epistemological markers of western thought helps us articulate how the demand of Indigenous methodologies (i.e., texts, tribal Institutional Review Boards, community voices) makes many uncomfortable because it unsettles *everyone* as we are all caught up in relations that act to disavow Indigenous life. While both Indigenous absence and presence allow researchers to discount Indigenous views on research, we were increasingly unsettled in our conversations, because ultimately, we understood that such approaches are antithetical to the life of the university (Simpson, 2007). Indeed, the proliferation of research from our university in Indigenous communities continues to produce distrust of university researchers because they have not abandoned the approaches critiqued above (Simpson, 2007; Smith, 2007). These approaches are produced by what Mohawk scholar Audra Simpson refers to as "techniques of knowing" made possible by the structures of empire of which academic work is a part of. Simpson offers a compelling insight with regards to work of anthropology that we see as relevant to our conversations, elaborating how techniques of knowing developed in academia come from "… specific technologies of rule that sought to obtain space and resources, to define and know the difference that it constructed in those spaces and to then govern those within" (Simpson, 2007, p. 67). As a result, the dominant mode of much research places researchers as the "interlocutors" or "voice of the colonized" (Simpson, 2007, p. 67) that can both stand in for Indigenous voices as well as replace them.

Indigenous communities understand quite well that the university operates outside their futurities, depending instead on their vulnerabilities to extract knowledge and posit fixes (Calderon, 2016; Grande, 2015; Tuck, 2009; Tuck & Yang, 2014b). For some of us growing up, universities were sites that were perceived to be unreachable. In fact, for one of us, the private, elite liberal arts college they attended often lamented that the small fence that surrounded the college might as well be a ten-foot wall, so large was the divide between college and town. Here, Moten and Harney's (2013) work on the university and the undercommons helps us to theorize the spatiality of the university as a metaphor of power that highlights the implications of centering Indigenous presence (Indigenous Methodologies) within university spaces. They write regarding the representation of colonial settlement in film: "In films like Drums Along the Mohawk (1939) or Shaka Zulu (1987), the settler is portrayed as surrounded by 'natives,' inverting … the role of aggressor so that colonialism is made to look like self-defense" (Moten & Harney, 2013, p. 17). The surrounded settlers in their forts are not portrayed as invaders; rather the "natives" are constructed as the problem, much like the lament of the walls that divide universities and local communities above. Rather than frame the problem that exists *within*, the problem exists outside. This view parallels Simpson's (2007) argument that research traditionally emanates from within structural mechanisms of empire with the goal of knowing and ordering the troubling spaces empire absorbs.

Moten and Harney elaborate regarding the way the idea of the fort is represented in media: "Indeed, aggression and self defense are reversed in these movies, but the image of a surrounded fort is not false. Instead, the false image is what emerges when a critique of militarised life is predicated on the forgetting of the life that surrounds it" (Moten & Harney, 2013). Here the life forgotten is the absence produced regarding how Indigenous peoples acted in defense of their homelands as they continue to do to this day. Indigenous peoples continue to have story. Moten and Harney remind us, "[t]he fort really was surrounded, is besieged by what still surrounds it, the common beyond and beneath—before and before—enclosure. The surround antagonises the laager in its midst while disturbing that facts on the ground with some outlaw planning" (Moten & Harney, 2013, p. 17). For Moten and Harney, and important for us, the fort is symbolic of settler society's ideological and spatial organization. Those people and places that exist OUTSIDE the fort, or its enclosure, unsettle what is inside that enclosure. Consequently, building on the work of Indigenous scholars and communities, we understand the university as a type of enclosure that constructs communities as problems that need fixing. Moreover, Indigenous methodologies, in light of neoliberalization, demand a removal of the fort all together, or what Coulthard would call a politics of decolonization, otherwise our work maintains the enclosure or a politics of recognition. This is unsettling in many ways and yet we believe such honest discussions help us move towards more ethical and incommensurate (Byrd & Rothberg, 2011; Tuck & Yang, 2012) positions vis-a-vis research.

Through incommensurability we come to a conclusion of limits as a starting point, because perhaps this is a more generative space from which to endeavor from. We tried to make sense of the ethical implications between successfully receiving our degrees, tenure, or job security, and committing to ethical research practices. That we encounter limits should not be individualized; rather we must make explicit the institutional ways that places such as universities protect the enclosure. Acknowledging limitations in research design or data collection, beyond the common limitations claim made in research, as a means of refusal must also be an important part of this process. Audra Simpson (2007) writes about the limitations she encountered in her work as an anthropologist in the Mohawk community she is from:

> The work of Indigenous scholars rests upon Empire as well, and through the vocabularies and analytics it put into play. They might, however, work from different historical vantage points and locations within the space that Empire has claimed for some peoples. In this, theirs might be the centuries of warfare, exchange, alliance-making, diplomacy, petitioning, letter-writing and, most recently, armed resistance to the settler societies that have claimed and now claim North America as their own. I argued that this may produce different forms of analysis and thereby produce some of the anthropological limits that are discussed in this paper. Rather than stops, or impediments to knowing, those limits may be expansive in what they do not tell us. I reached my own limit when the data would not contribute to our sovereignty or complicate the deeply simplified, atrophied representations of Iroquois and other Indigenous peoples that they have been mired within anthropologically.
>
> *(Simpson, 2007, p. 78)*

This notion of refusal in Simpson's work showed up in multiple ways, from her communities' refusal of the settler mechanisms of governance imposed on them, to the daily forms in which refusal takes place (such as the way Mohawks negotiate border crossing) for Indigenous peoples.

In education, the work from different disciplines can be slow to seep in, but we believe that they offer important groundwork for our work in education. Subsequently, we collectively identify a variety of positions vis-a-vis Indigenous methodologies and the impact on research process in design in graduate education that are useful going forward. Although we did not name them formally in our dialogues, here we conclude with work that we identify as allowing us to refuse and thus remake our work from a more ethical standpoint that allows for the limitations Simpson identifies above to be expansive. Although the positions below are at times at odds with one another, we find that in dialogue they help us to consider own role in the university.

With regards to institutional context, Brayboy, Solyom, and Castagno (2014) offer the notion of self-education as a means of tribal nation building in higher education. They contend that, "Central to higher education toward nation building is the notion that individual [Indigenous] students sacrifice and commit to earning degrees in the service of their communities and nations. In other words, individual development happens for the betterment of community" (Brayboy, Solyom, & Castagno, 2014, p. 589) which was a common theme found in the works we engaged. Adopting what the authors refer to as a "nation-building orientation" universities such as ours should identify this oftentimes self-education by Indigenous students and "… translate [it] into policies and practices that honor that engagement and facilitate success. It calls for a rethinking of the 'numbers and test scores' that have previously guided institutions of higher education" (Brayboy, Solyom, & Castagno, 2014, p. 589). Such commitments are required by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, faculty, and staff committed towards tribal nation building that also makes the room for refusal.

Consequently, it would also call for pedagogical acts of *refusal* (Simpson, 2007; Tuck & Yang, 2014b). Tuck and Yang explain that, "Analytic practices of refusal involve an active resistance to trading in pain and humiliation, and supply a rationale for blocking the settler colonial gaze that wants those stories." (Tuck & Yang, 2014a, p. 2). This approach affirms what Kovach (2010) names doing research in a good way that centers an ethics of reciprocity. For researchers, this refusal would mean "… resistance to making someone or something the subject of research" (Kovach, 2010) and researchers, students, and others "avoid building our/their careers upon the pain of others" (Kovach, 2010). If Indigenous methodologies described by Shawn Wilson in *Research is Ceremony* demand that Indigenous communities determine where and what should be researched then we need to be frank with students and others interested in research that, using Moten and Harney's language, they are operating outside the enclosure and into the surround. In doing so they need to make sure they do not maintain the "outside" as the antagonist to the enclosure; rather they need to understand that the university functions to keep Indigenous life outside the inside because Indigenous knowledges and critiques destabilize the enclosure. We need to be honest with ourselves and others that these are the contradictions we encounter when doing such work.

As both Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers and educators, these discussions offered us opportunities to reflect on our positionalities as researchers, and as members of different and varying institutional contexts. In short, we explored the challenges that settler colonialism produces in educational research, paying attention to institutional context, research design, researcher positionality, and relationships within the confines of the space here. While what we offer here is exploratory and more of an outline of what we believe should be rich and ongoing conversations, we are collectively richer for sharing this space together. Certainly, the relationships that have been built from this process will continue to bear fruit.

## Note

1 This represents a challenge for researchers who do community work.

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# PART III

# Palms Joined: "Responsibility to Pass Those Teachings to Others"

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# 7

# INDIGENOUS TEACHERS

## At the Cross-Roads of Applying Indigenous Research Methodologies

*Jeremy Garcia [Hopi/Tewa], Samuel Tenakhongva [Hopi] and Bryant Honyouti [Hopi]*

**Tootimhoyamu Maamanhoyamu (Hopi)**

Little Boys, Little Girls
wiiyahiina wiiyahiina wiiyahiina yo'o' wiiyahiina
wiiyahiina wiiyahiina wiiyahiina yo'o' wiiyahiina
uma aaa tootimhoyamu
uma aaa maamanhoyamu
lolmata sonwayta qatsi'nangwasa'a uma tunatyawyungwni
tsangw uma naato suheplawyungwa tootimhoyamu
tsangw uma lolmat pitsnagwa'yyungwa mamanhoyamu
oovi umma aaa tunatyaltotani
pam sa'a
lolmat qatsiwu'ta
putsa'a umungem umunamu
naawakinaya umungemi ooo hii naa
oovi uma naanami
wuuwayani sonwayngwu
qatsi yep haqam umungem lolmat pitsangwtavilti
o'hii niiyaa
wiiyahiina wiiyahiina wiiyahiina yo'o' wiiyahiina

wiiyahiina wiiyahiina wiiyahiina yo'o' wiiyahiina
little boys
little girls
seek a good, beautiful life
because you are very healthy young boys
because you are beautiful young Hopi girls
therefore pay attention and be observant
that is the only way
you will have a good life
that is the foremost in the minds of your mothers and fathers
children
therefore make a self life evaluation
make a good life plan this is what is meant for you and to be implemented by you
o'hii niiyaa

*(Secakuku & Poleahla, 2008)*

## Sustaining Relations

We open this chapter by way of a song specific to Hopi girls and boys. The values and knowledge reflected within this song offer a purposeful and complex sense of relationship and accountability to the children, families, and lifeways of the Hopi community. During our initial conversations around this work, Hopi teacher *Taawma* (Samuel) shared this song that began this chapter to (re)center and sustain expectations as a Hopi teacher[1]. We too, believe this is a significant way to center our identity in relation to self, our expectations, and notions of accountability to our Hopi and Indigenous communities. Translated into English, it may appear simple, yet within the Hopi language and epistemologies we understand there are deep relations and knowledge underlying a pathway for a good life for Hopi children. A life that embodies understanding one's identity based on clan affiliations, engagement with ceremonies, and a level of self-evaluation that is always forward thinking and grounded within Hopi values. This is a song about strength and beauty that is contextualized in the minds of our mothers, fathers, and ancestors. In listening to this song, we begin to self-reflect and examine the roles and responsibilities inherent in our work. We understand the complexities of sustaining relations, transferring knowledge to the next generation, and the ethical considerations needed to guide this work. We see this song as a way to open the pathway to sustaining the critical work of being educators on behalf of our communities and the field of Indigenous research.

In keeping with Indigenous research practices, Margaret Kovach (2009) suggests Indigenous researchers "situate themselves," which we turn to next as we offer a brief introduction to locate ourselves, the values, and relations within and across this work.

*Nu Taawma yan Hopi maatsiwa, Nu Katsinwungwa niikyangw nu Sistomongaqw.* Greetings, my name is Samuel Tenakhongva and my Hopi name is *Taawma* (To Sing). I come from the *Katsina* clan from the Hopi village of *Sitsomovi* [2]. I am a fourth grade teacher in a Hopi elementary school, but first I'm Hopi. I have had the good fortune to have been raised and educated on the Hopi reservation, as I was afforded the opportunity to be immersed in two distinct cultures, each with their own merits, from which I have been able to draw from as an educator. As an educator and cultural practitioner, I am the "next" generation of knowledge keepers and it is my responsibility to share this knowledge in both respectful and intentional ways with my students and community.

*Nu Mavasta yan maatsiwa. Nu Hotvelngaqw noq nu Is'wungwa.* My name is Bryant Honyouti and my Hopi name is *Mavasta*. I am from the Hopi village of *Hotevilla* and I am member of the Coyote Clan. I am a father, husband, brother, artist[3], and teacher. There are several educators in my family. I was raised with an understanding that family and community help us navigate through stages of our life. In my thirteen years as a teacher, the dynamics of my students and teaching methodologies are constantly changing. I am fortunate to have served in Native communities since I first became a teacher and I plan to continue that service. My purpose as a Hopi educator is to equip my students with the tools necessary to navigate through modern culture with their education and also understand their responsibility as a contributing member and protector of our Hopi culture and society. I try to find ways to design learning units so that my students will appreciate what people before us have endured throughout history to make us who we are today. Our existence is because of our ancestors.

*Nu Duqua yan Hopi maatsiwa, nu Hospoawungwa niikyangw nu Sistomongaqw.* My name is Jeremy Garcia and my Hopi name is *Duqua*. I am from the Hopi village of *Sitsomovi* and a member of the Roadrunner clan. I am a son, brother, husband, uncle, and father to two girls. I grew up and attended school among the Hopi/Tewa Tribal community. I have been a former elementary teacher working with several different Tribal communities. As a faculty member at the University of Arizona, I continue to engage in Indigenous research in education that works to further critical Indigenous pedagogies while sustaining Indigenous knowledge and value systems.

We are Hopi educators who have been in relation through clan affiliations, ceremonial practices, and prior work with other research initiatives and curriculum development efforts within Hopi education. Although we may not have named our work with curriculum inquiry and development as research, this opportunity offers insight to the *process* of how we are, and have been, immersed in Indigenous research methodologies. Specifically, this work addresses the central

questions of: How might Indigenous research methodologies be enacted by Indigenous educators working to include Indigenous knowledge, values, and language in their curriculum and pedagogy; and how have educators enacted Indigenous research methods, even if they may not self-identify as Indigenous researchers? We begin with contextualizing the intersection of Indigenous research methodologies in relation to schools and teachers. Thereafter, we provide case scenarios where the Hopi teachers, *Taawma* and *Mavasta*, self-reflect on Indigenous curriculum and pedagogy to exemplify the intersections of culturally sustaining Indigenous teachers and Indigenous research methodologies. We conclude with some final thoughts regarding the implications of Indigenous research methodologies as a source for Indigenous teachers to draw as they strive to Indigenize their curriculum and pedagogy.

## Indigenous Education and Indigenous Research Methodologies

Within the field of education, Indigenous teachers have most likely been grounded with the expectations of navigating the intricacies of working to enact culturally relevant/responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995) and multicultural education (Banks & Banks, 2003; Grant & Sleeter, 2007). Pending their teacher education programs, they may have been engaged with social justice education (Chapman & Hobbel, 2010), and critical pedagogy (Freire, 2002; Kincheloe, 2008; McLaren, 2007). More recently, theoretical frameworks of culturally sustaining pedagogies (Paris & Alim, 2014, 2017) are contributing to the field of education. Specific to Indigenous education, notions of critical Indigenous pedagogy (Brayboy, 2006; Grande, 2015; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006; Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008; Lee, 2006; McCarty & Lee, 2014; Smith, 2012), community-based education (Cajete, 2015), and Indigenous social justice pedagogies (Brayboy & McCarty, 2010; Shirley, 2017) offer promising theoretical frameworks to support Indigenous students, families, and communities. Granted such frameworks offer possibilities for teachers to honor diverse perspectives and to draw on notions of culturally relevant, sustainable, revitalizing, and transformative curriculum and pedagogies. However, contextualized within Indigenous education that confronts centuries of colonialism imposed on Indigenous communities, there is much to consider in how we can support Indigenous teachers in the *process* of generating curriculum and pedagogy that is a critical culturally sustaining/revitalizing pedagogy (McCarty & Lee, 2014) and embodies notions of decolonization. In many instances, Indigenous knowledge is not reflected in the curriculum and pedagogical practices serving Indigenous students, leaving teachers with the responsibility of enacting elements reflected within Indigenous research paradigms that seek answers to complex (and ethical) questions and the intricacies of accessing and privileging Indigenous languages, knowledges, and values. We suggest Indigenous teachers are at the cross-roads of being informed by—and are informing—the intersection of Indigenous research methodologies. As with Indigenous research methodologies, contextualizing the history of colonialism is critical. As such, we turn briefly to Indigenous education within the US context.

## Native American Education

The ideological and psychological war began with the civilizing agenda to enforce policies within Indian education that removed Indigenous children from their homeland to attend boarding schools, eradicated Indigenous languages, cultures, and knowledge systems (i.e., songs, stories, ceremonies), and privileged a curriculum and pedagogy that would promote Western imperialism and lead to the colonization of Indigenous peoples in the USA. This schooling experience served as the principal force for assimilation into Western society and has been conceptualized by Tsianina Lomawaima and Teresa McCarty as "the grand experiment in standardization" (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002, p. 284). This federal ideology supported the scientific theory of race that was prevalent at the beginning of the 1900s and proposed that people of color were inferior to the white Euro-American race (Adams, 1995; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002). For example, the first Superintendent of Indian Schools, Estelle Reel (1862–1959), espoused this racist ideology; in her words:

> Allowing for exceptional cases, the Indian child is of lower physical organization than the white child of corresponding age … The very structure of his bones and muscles will not permit so wide a variety of manual movements as are customary among Caucasian children.
>
> *(cited in Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002, p. 289)*

Historically, the interaction with teachers, leaders, and the selected forms of curriculum has determined (and continues to determine) how teachers, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, perceive the Indigenous student. Thus, these perceptions based on racist assumptions guided the design of the curriculum and policies toward "civilizing" and "Americanizing" the Native student (Lomawaima, 1996). The curriculum focused on vocational training, which consisted of manual training and labor assigned by gender; male students were assigned to agricultural labor, blacksmithing and woodworking, while female students were assigned to cooking, sewing, and other skills associated with being housewives (Adams, 1988; Dussias, 2001). A congressional report stated:

> Put into the hands of their children the primer and the hoe, and they will naturally, in time, take hold of the plow; and, as their minds become enlightened and expand, the bible will be their book, and they will grow up in habits of morality and industry, leave the chase to those whose minds are less cultivated, and become useful members of society.
>
> *(cited in Dussias, 2001, p. 43)*

The education within these schools was in the hands of Euro-American government officials to oversee the implementation of the educational standards of the English

language; to promote individualism for the sake of self-sufficiency that would work to negate Indigenous loyalty to Indigenous communities; to promote Christian values and beliefs to replace savagism; and to promote citizenship training that would serve both individual sustainability and contribute to the economic welfare of the USA (Adams, 1995; Grande, 2015; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002).

Consequently, assimilation by Americanization became the goal. As a result, Native students experienced a curriculum and pedagogy that perpetuated the "national myths that were central to the [Americanization process], including the idea that the westward sweep of the American empire, that is to say the dispossession of the Indian land, was clearly justifiable" (Adams, 1995, p. 24). Despite the fact that such myths are contextualized within historical experiences of schooling, we know the Americanization process and "national myths" continue to permeate schools serving Indigenous students and communities. In closing, Lomawaima's (2012), poignant remarks in *Speaking from Arizona: Can Scholarship about Education Make a Difference in the World* provides us with a significant understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and differences scholarship has on Indigenous education. Drawing upon the notion of safety zones (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006), which underscores how Indigenous cultures have been deemed safe and dangerous to American ideals, is captured as a source to (re)center our own narratives to engage in social justice outcomes. They write:

> The safety zone perspective teaches us that our research must not only be reactive, responding, for example, to disprove mythologies that assert intellectual proficiencies and deficiencies are racially determined. We must be proactive and challenge the mythologies—the masks—at their roots. We must ask the questions and do the analyses that reveal masks as masks. What are they? Where do they come from? Whose interests do they serve, and how, and why?
>
> *(Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006, p. 17)*

## Decolonizing Curriculum and Pedagogy through Indigenous Research Methods

"Every issue has been approached by indigenous peoples with a view to *re*writing and *re*righting our position in history. Indigenous peoples want to tell our own stories, write our own versions, in our own ways, for our own purposes" (Smith, 2012, p. 29).

Reflecting on her seminal text, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, these opening words by Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) continue to impact the premise of research, scholarship, and its relationship to knowledge construction and dissemination. Across Garcia's own research with the Hopi/Tewa community, and Indigenous peoples, this statement has continued to guide

his purpose and intentions of engaging Indigenous educators and communities in research that centers their own interests, concerns, and is grounded in Indigenous values and knowledge. We see Indigenous research methodologies as a decolonizing process that underscores the critical and transformative nature of (re)conceptualizing an education that is driven by our own purposes and is guided by the spirit of honoring relations, is reciprocal, and is accountable to Indigenous communities—past, present, and future.

As we contextualize Indigenous research methods, we recognize that Indigenous knowledge is contingent upon relationships. Our ontology is answerable to more than one being, and so it is answerable to *all our relations* (Wilson, 2001, 2008). So, when we seek to know more about our reality, we are requesting knowledge that includes more than one source, which increases the magnitude of accountability and ethics in obtaining such knowledge. For instance, when we seek to obtain knowledge, relationships are renewed with clan associations, our extended family members, cultural and spiritual locations (such as the *kiva* [4] and *kiisonvi* [5]), our home communities, and geographic locations—all spaces in which knowledge rests. As a result, we must understand the degree of respect, reciprocity, and trust that comes with doing "good work" for the progress, health, and representation of named relations (Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008).

Specific to Indigenous teachers, many are encouraged to reconsider how they access and interpret Indigenous knowledges to frame their curriculum and pedagogy. For instance, within Garcia's experience of working with pre-service teachers and professional development sessions with Indigenous teachers, some may not speak the language and/or have limited access to deeper cultural understandings of Indigenous knowledge of the communities they are serving. Even if they do have access to the language and culture, they too, are challenged to think about the ways in which they will ethically include this knowledge within curriculum and pedagogy. Thus, like academic researchers employing Indigenous research methods, Indigenous teachers have to enter the space of being cautious, intentional, and ethical about how they will (re)present the knowledge entrusted in them.

We find Manulani Aluli-Meyer's (2008) seven domains particularly useful in assisting our understanding of how epistemology and ontology simultaneously contribute to Indigenous consciousness and thus guide our thinking about the research process:

1. Finding knowledge that endures is a *spiritual* act that animates and educates. These are spiritual principles that, if played out as epistemology, help us enter spaces of wonderment, discernment, right viewing, and mature discourse. It allows knowing to be an act of consciousness that reaches beyond the mundane into connections and alignment with an essence that finds its renewal throughout the generations;
2. We *are* earth, and our awareness of how to exist with it extends from this idea. Land is more than a physical place. It is an idea that engages knowledge and contextualizes knowing;

3. *Our senses are culturally shaped*, offering us distinct pathways to reality. What this means for your research is that you will need to slow down what it means to see something, hear something, or experience something;
4. Knowing something is bound to how we develop a *relationship* with it. Knowledge is the by-product of slow and deliberate dialogue with an idea, with others' knowing, or with one's own experience with the world;
5. *Function* is vital with regard to knowing something. It's not how well you can quote theory; it's whether those ideas affect how you *act*;
6. *Intention* shapes our language and creates our reality. Understanding causation in intention and language helps us critically self-reflect. It can bring a vibrancy of purpose and truth to your findings and style of writing; and
7. *Knowing is embodied* and in union with cognition. Our thinking body is not separated from our feeling mind.

(Aluli-Meyer, 2008, p. 223)

Aluli-Meyer's theoretical explanation of where and how Indigenous epistemology is created offers a powerful confirmation that Indigenous peoples' knowledge systems are intricate, intellectual, living, and part of a larger framework of relationships that shape multiple realities. Thus, the *intentions* and *function* of research and Indigenizing curriculum and pedagogy among our Indigenous peoples carries a complex and menacing level of liability (Aluli-Meyer, 2008). With this in mind, we now turn to our Hopi teachers, *Taawma's* and *Mavasta's*, self-reflexive insights to understand how they embody elements of Indigenous research methods.

This dialogue with Hopi teachers proposes to generate critical insights to the nuances (i.e., questions teachers ask, interpretations and inclusion of shared knowledge/sacred knowledge, moments of negotiation, the use of story as method) embedded in developing Indigenous curriculum and pedagogy that are rooted in Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies. Each Hopi teacher will first situate himself or examine his own positionality as an Indigenous (Hopi) teacher. Thereafter, they offer a *Pedagogical Story* that takes us into their classroom by offering an example of curriculum and pedagogy. We define *Pedagogical Story* as a humanizing narrative grounded in the cross-generational voices (Elders, families, educators, and youth), histories, and sacred relations that give life to the understanding of what it means to be a learner of Indigenous education and an educator of Indigenous students. Following each *Pedagogical Story*, they provide a reflection that gives insight to researching and engaging knowledge grounded in Hopi history, epistemologies, and communities. They employ self-reflexive questions such as: What tensions emerged? How was trust developed/reflected? What ethical issues presented itself? What was I negotiating throughout? What was this process like when I had to consult Elders/community members about including Hopi knowledge/values? And what is my ethical responsibility with this knowledge?

We begin with *Taawma*.

## Pedagogical Stories: (Un)knowingly Enacting Indigenous Research Methodologies

### Tutuqaynaqa [6] Taawma *(Hopi Teacher: Samuel Tenakhongva)*

Any Indigenous person at some point has asked themselves the question, "Who am I, where do I come from?" most often in times of reflection or in times where meaning of self-value is being explored. Throughout my life I have often asked this question of myself in relation to the roles I have been vested with and the required responsibilities I would have to carry out. Long before deciding to become an educator, I was being prepared for a cultural role that few are privileged to hold, and in some instances would be hesitant to embrace. I would no longer be responsible for my own decisions, but for those of the community as well. Rather than view this task as a burden, I welcomed it. Within many Indigenous communities, in the case of Hopi, clans are vested with responsibilities as leaders and caretakers—I was given the responsibility of being a ceremonial leader. As a result, my perspective on life changed from an inward view to one of reciprocity and how I can help to fulfill the greater needs of my people and community. I now became not only a ceremonial leader, but also a parental figure to a whole community. In addition, I became an educator due the observations of "my" children's thirst for knowledge both in the context of Hopi language and culture and the Western ideological frameworks. As such, I relate this experience as part of a maturation process that I relate to our Hopi cultural practice as farmers. A seed is planted, it is sowed, and throughout its growing and maturing process it is groomed to thrive in harsh environments. In some instances, challenges and obstacles arise, but eventually a crop matures and is harvested from which a family or community is nourished. This is a practice in patience, discipline, and respect. A process which I undertook and am now practicing in my role as an educator and ceremonial leader.

Entering my fourth year as a teacher, I am now seeing more opportunities for me to engage in purposeful ways in regards to designing and implementing culturally appropriate and responsive pedagogies in the classroom. I am able to apply cultural teachings in a Western academic setting, while balancing, maintaining, and applying the best avenue of understanding that will allow my students to be successful.

#### *Pedagogical Story: "How are we supposed to know this if it is not in the books?" 4th grade student*

On several occasions, this question comes to mind as I am teaching my students. I question myself in regards to why I am teaching a curriculum from a certain lens and how I can deconstruct Western knowledge and help relate it to my class where Hopi knowledge systems are highlighted. This is done not only to help students to bridge connections, but also to help them build a strong sense of self-identity and pride in their Hopi values. Through practice and process, I have

become comfortable with navigating not only the critical analysis of Western knowledge, but also the introduction of Hopi epistemology, *navoti*.

*Navoti* can best be described as knowledge, not only the sharing, but also the attaining of. Throughout my upbringing and professional role as an educator, often I seek the advice of family and Elders in how I can link and introduce Hopi knowledge in my teaching. In some situations, access to this knowledge would be seen as privileged as in not everyone, even those within my community, would be privy to.

In my unit, "Who am I, Where do I come from?" students are continually asked to engage in the process of discovery, first looking at familial ties, clan relationships, clan responsibilities and lastly responsibility to community. In this unit I not only have students take an honest look at their history, but I myself revisit my own and then engage in analysis for my students to observe and acknowledge how we intertwine and relate to one another. The purpose being a shared understanding that we have gained knowledge that we can now share or provide to our families and future generations.

In the unit, students are tasked with completing a family tree based on clan kinships on both maternal and paternal sides. Following the return of the family tree activity, I rely upon my cultural knowledge of clan (matrilineal and paternal) and develop connections students may not be aware of. From this we then hold a class activity that starts with each person holding a string in which we are first connected as members of a class. That is followed by creating clan connections based upon matrilineal ties, and lastly connections based on patrilineal ties. The result is a visual that students can readily see that they are not an individual, or just a member of the class, but rather they are connected culturally and are a brother, sister, aunt, uncle, father, mother or grandparent to their fellow classmates. We become a family and I am now able to share values we hold in esteem as a Hopi, including *kyaapsti* (respect), *suminangwa* (working for the greater good), and *naminangwa* (selfless giving), and how they support our newly discovered relationships in day-to-day interactions as well as during ceremonial functions.

Throughout this process, I must be aware of tensions that may arise from students or families, especially if there are any social issues that are present in the family structure, or if one of the parents is from a different ethnic background. How do I respectfully provide an accurate representation and how do I include those who are not from the Hopi culture? I am aware that some in my community would feel that this type of learning or information would be taught in the community or home, but as Western ideologies are becoming readily accepted, traditional Hopi familial kinships and connections are no longer being shared, but rather, immediate and extended family relationships are what my students are aware of. As a result, students are left to determine relationships and are often unaware of ties they may have to other individuals in the community as well as awareness of clan obligations. The result is young adults not being fully knowledgeable of their roles and responsibilities as clan and community

members as they mature and become more culturally engaged. It is with this intent that this unit creates an exploration of self-discovery at an early age. I often end the unit with challenging students to "Go home and ask, someone you trust, what your clan's responsibility is?" I often get the following response, "I asked and know a little bit more now, but I can't share all of it because it's just for our clan." As with me, the process of Indigenous research has now begun for my students, and as a practitioner, I know there is a boundary of respect that I must acknowledge as they are now a holder of knowledge.

## *Post-reflection:* Tutuqaynaqa Taawma

Through these processes of teaching and developing curriculum I have come to know more of my community, including the older generations of knowledge holders who now understand what I am trying to accomplish in a setting much different from before. I am met with, "Keep doing what you're doing, someone needs to teach them!" Also as a farmer, I must practice and replant the ideas, thoughts, and knowledge values on a yearly basis in order to ensure our survival. I revisit principles, engage in dialogue and continually listen to those who have entrusted me to transfer *navoti*—the sharing and attaining of knowledge. Through this transfer, I feel I am not only honoring those who have given me access to cultural knowledge and values, but I am also holding myself accountable to being honest with my community and myself. I have built trust and accountability through practice. Through casual dialogue with the parents of my students, our conversations revisit topics we discussed in class and I am often met with, "I wish I was in your class," or "I am glad you're sharing this knowledge with my student." These conversations support my belief and objective for my students which is, "I know who I am, now I must help them learn who they are."

As I prepare to engage students in curriculum designed from an Indigenous (Hopi) perspective, I must carefully and intentionally weigh reactions, outcomes and also questions of validity from community. It would be naïve to think classroom conversations stay within the context of school, but in the case of decolonization and Indigenous pedagogy, that is the point, to continue conversations and knowledge sharing in order to preserve and keep the traditions alive. Questions often asked include: "Are students mature and ready to question self-identity?" "What are the intended outcomes and is there the possibility for something negative to arise?" "How can conflict be handled and who should take responsibility?" and lastly, "How do you provide evidence that what you are engaging students with is factual or knowledge based?" In my case, I have to ensure I am informed and prepared for all possibilities and that I will continue to learn more in these journeys with students as they are self-discovering. For example, after a unit covering westward expansion and manifest destiny, a student posed the question, "How are we supposed to know all of this stuff if it isn't in the book?" My response was simply, "Let us find out why."

I have come to find that the three phases—hours of listening, contextualizing, and practice—are honed through patience, discipline, and respect. Through listening, Hopi values, theory and ways of knowing are embedded. Contextualizing can be done several ways, through internal dialogues about what one has witnessed or through conversations on how a group may come to a common agreement to determine the validity and truth. Lastly, and most importantly, is the practice. Through cultural practice one re-engages all three phases of knowledge transfer, and thus is again able to provide validity and proof before the transfer to the next generation can fully take place. These I believe are the vital components to the success of transferring this knowledge to the classroom. As stated earlier, having been given privilege and access to two distinct cultures, Hopi and Western ideologies, as a teacher I can access and connect knowledge systems that my students will be able to take advantage of and be better equipped to function in multiple cultures as they navigate society.

## Tutuqaynaqa Mavasta *(Hopi Teacher: Bryant Honyouti)*

As a teacher, I have returned to my community school that I attended as an elementary student. The building has many memories of my childhood. As a Hopi educator, I see my students as my children. I am helping them grow, think, and develop; in addition to protecting them from the destruction that has impacted our youth and communities. Our villages may be isolated from cities and towns, but the influence of modern society is very much a part of daily life. I am instructing them to remember what is valuable, useful, and always reliable.

Much of the impact on our village has deep roots in the history of colonization. My village of *Hotevilla* was founded when a group of traditionalists were forced to leave their homes in the village of *Orayvi* because of the intrusion of the US government. Some Hopi men were imprisoned at Alcatraz in 1894 when they resisted sending their children to school and hid their children from agents from US government on our reservation. The trauma they endured has left a legacy of resistance to any form of US government policy. As a teacher, I am in a unique and critical position that requires me to understand the underlying resistance to education from some of my village members due to this history. When I provide my students the hidden side of history, the ugly truth in some situations, they often are upset, ready to fight. They want to do something to the ones who inflicted others with violence. But the battle is not in the physical form like historic times, the battles are in the laws, in the policies, the business deals, and at stake is our natural resources and land that we have strong relations with. I try to change the view of negativity to building solutions and mending what can be fixed. My curriculum and teaching is sometimes met with uncooperative attitudes about history. A remark I heard once was, "This already happened, why do we have to learn about this?" My response was that history often repeats itself, but in different forms. The people involved may be different, the issue involving the controversy may vary, but the battle is the same. So I simply ask, "What are you going to do and how are you going to respond when this happens to you?"

How I have come to make sense of my role as a Hopi community member and an educator, is that education is a tool; it is a weapon that will assist us in making ethical choices about how we will continue to survive. It can allow us to have a unique and powerful voice that is grounded on Hopi values while also addressing broader social issues. I have observed that my students, at times, are unaware of the various current events and issues that our community and country is being impacted by. For instance, if current policies and executive orders within the government do not directly affect our tribe or community, for my students, they almost don't really need any attention. As a result, my approach to teaching is that I need to create opportunities for them to critically think about the impact of historical and current issues. It is within these moments that they apply Hopi knowledge and Western knowledge to understand how they may defend what is important to them, their ancestors, and the future generations. As I have done in my own trajectory of becoming a teacher, I am hopeful my students can use what is deeply rooted in our Hopi culture, language, and traditions and unite it together with modern society to make sense of the world around them. When I take that approach, it motivates my students.

## *Pedagogical Story: Arrival of Kastilam and the Pueblo Revolt*

In 2002, The Hopi Tribal council recognized August 10th as Pueblo Revolt Day: our Hopi Independence Day which replaced Columbus Day. At the beginning of our school year in August, I begin with engaging my students in learning and discussing the Pueblo Revolt[7] against the *Kastilam* (Spanish colonizers) that occurred on August 10, 1680. Within the introduction of this history, we discuss the arrival of the *Kastilam* (Spanish), as new and exotic visitors with strange animals, tools, and instruments that make thunder. There are several sites where Spanish churches were built and destroyed during the revolt. In one Hopi village, Orayvi, the walls still stand as a reminder of what occurred during those harsh times.

In presenting this historical account, I make connections to different published and non-published resources. In particular, I try to connect with our local community members to share their perspectives. For instance, I often will call upon our Hopi Tribal Cultural Preservations office to assist in describing this history with the *Kastilam*. In the past, I have also relied upon passages from a Hopi man's account or version from the village of *Walpi*. One of the important connections I make is asking my students to speak with family members or Elders in the village. In this process, I am specifically wanting them to learn of this history and the Pueblo Revolt from a Hopi perspective. I always find it interesting to learn of the perspectives the students share when we regroup. This opens up discussions on how traditional history is taught through stories and ceremonies in our culture, while institutional learning (schools) is accomplished through textual evidence in books. It re-emphasizes the importance of taking in all forms of knowledge and using it to understand and analyze what and how this history is being presented.

Throughout the activities, we come to learn more about what occurred across the different villages, including those in New Mexico. Specifically, we are informed about *Po'pay*, the Pueblo leader of the resistance. As a way to blend history with contemporary experiences, I include art from Jason Garcia's (Santa Clara Pueblo), *Tewa Tales of Suspense* [8] series, which depicts figures in the revolt, such as *Po'pay*, as comic book super heroes. I profile his work to change the view of the participants in the revolt as heroic and brave. As part of building student interests and creativity with this curriculum, we make our own version of heroes, which makes for some interesting representations that reflect their identity!

An important part of my goal in teaching this history is that they will be able to continue to (re)tell this story and moment of resistance. A key point of the Pueblo Revolt was the coordination, with Pueblo villages across the southwest, of when to take action (i.e., killing of the priests) against the *Kastilam*. I have them balance the oral storytelling with a perspective writing piece where they write a diary as a messenger who is running from village to village, a church missionary or soldier who is suspicious of tense interaction and activity happening, and as a village member preparing for the day of attack. I try to get these activities done in four days to coincide with a knotted chord we weave. Like the original knotted cord made of a local yucca plant to count the days, every day we untie a knot in our chord to commemorate the days the villagers were instructed to attack in unison. On the fourth day we reenact the running of messengers to different locations on the playground.

On the final day of this curriculum, we prepare a meal made from blue corn meal, local tea, and other traditional foods. I stress the importance of gratitude when the food is brought in and how to respect meal time by the offering of food before we eat. As done in the past and during some ceremonies, we sit on the floor. It represents humility in a way where we are equal to all things on earth. It is a great time to connect with my students as we talk and laugh. In closing, I explain that we have a meal to celebrate our existence. Without the action and determination of our ancestors, we would not have the things that we do, speak the language we have, or practice our traditions. At this time, I stress that now, our duty is to carry on and protect our way of life.

In our traditional teachings, it is said that history and events occur in cycles. Our ancestors made the ultimate decision to save our way of life when they chose to destroy and kill others, even some of their own village members. If they did not make this effort, then our whole life would have been altered. A situation may come again that could change our way of life as we know it. It may not come as it did to our ancestors, but it may come in another form. Will we be prepared to make that choice to save our way of life again? How are you getting yourself ready if that moment comes? Those are questions I ask my students in regard to this topic. We no longer have to face extinction as a people, but our resources, land, and language could be in jeopardy in the future. What they do now will prepare them for what is to come.

## *Post-reflection:* Tutuqaynaqa Mavasta

My major was in anthropology before I switched to education and as I sat in a lecture, I heard information about the Pueblo Revolt and I felt embarrassed that I knew little about the subject. I wondered what else happened in our nation's history that goes unexplained. I knew, from that moment, that I would make sure that my students knew our version of historical events even when our schoolbooks didn't mention any of it. Identifying resources and information is always a tricky process for me.

In researching this topic, I came across an article, *The Pueblo Revolt Against the Spanish: A First Mesa Account*, and included it as a resource, since it was one of very few written pieces that includes the Hopi involvement. Of course, like any other story, there are different versions of what happened. I was interested in what other stories were shared about this historical event, especially in the community I was working with at the time. When I assigned the students to interview family members what they knew about the Pueblo Revolt, a student shared the article with her grandfather. Her response was that her grandfather did not agree with the article we read. He instructed her that the information was not reliable. I became interested on what he felt was not appropriate. Perhaps I shared too much or the students were too young for this type of information? There is always a delicate boundary when history and cultural knowledge are shared. I always keep in mind what is ethical in regards to cultural knowledge. In a discussion with her, she shared the fact that her grandfather was a retired archaeologist and through a scientific perspective, he felt the information in the article was not accurate. I invited this grandparent to visit with me, so that I could get a better understanding of how I could teach this subject and to clarify the questions I had about the scientific views behind it. Unfortunately, he didn't respond to my invitation. Perhaps this was another example of whether oral history has validity in the realm of science.

Although this is a curriculum on history, as an artist myself, I am always looking for ways to include contemporary/creative ideas to generate interests. I have known Jason Garcia since I was a kid. Our parents traveled to various art shows together. When I came across his *Tewa Tales of Suspense* series, I was impressed and inspired because of how the figures were depicted. They were heroes, towering over their oppressors, taking back what was theirs. I have never seen superheroes in our traditional clothes, especially the re-telling of our Pueblo history in comic book form. I profile his work because of how it is easy to connect with. This is a modern method of visuals that children are accustomed to and enjoy. When I unveil an image for the first time, the reactions are the same as mine when I first saw it—amazement. I know I have their attention in hand!

Lastly, I want to end with an interesting moment that occurred the last time we had a re-enactment of the uprising. When the last knot on our chord was to be untied, a student blurted out something in reference to the time of preparation, *Totokya* [9]. I agreed with the student that it most likely was a very sacred

time of preparation back then. Our ancestors were getting ready for war, a pivotal point in their lives. He continued to generate an open dialogue of what men do to prepare for ceremonies in the *kivas*. I stopped him immediately! I felt what he was going to begin sharing was not appropriate to speak of in such a space. I pulled him aside and reminded him that we, as respectful members of our ceremonial societies, have an ethical responsibility to keep certain knowledge sacred. I explained that it is unacceptable and disrespectful to speak of things to others who are not initiated into certain societies. He understood the boundary that he was crossing and stopped with his remarks. It is good to find ways to center cultural knowledge, but on occasion I have to be conscious that what may be shared is information that is privileged to a certain audience.

## Creating Entry Points for Indigenous Knowledge

"We know what we know from where we stand. We need to be honest about that. I situate myself not as a knowledge-keeper—this has not been my path—rather my role is facilitator. I have a responsibility to help create entry points for Indigenous knowledges to come through" (Kovach, 2009, p. 7).

In closure, we collectively learned as a result of centering this process of Indigenous research in relation to curriculum, pedagogy, and learning contexts comes with multifaceted forms of accountability. Accountability that is contingent on understanding our relations to each other and the history our mind, body, and spirit embody. This history is not entirely negative, as we understand the strength and value of living in accordance with our Hopi epistemologies that have guided the intentions and movements across our traditional and contemporary lifeways. We support *Mavasta's* sentiments that "it is our responsibility to be contributing members and protectors of our Hopi culture and society. Our existence is because of our ancestors." Our intentions of doing good work and facilitating "entry points for [and the transfer of] Indigenous knowledges" for the sustainability of our communities comes with a deep commitment to engage in building trust, reciprocity, responsibility, and respect through *navoti*—not only the sharing of knowledge, but also the attaining of it. Equally important are the ways in which educators are expected to (re)present this knowledge back to their communities. Embedded in each of our work, we see the significance of knowing the self-in-relation to the location of knowledge—knowledge-keepers, ceremonies, clan relations, and sacred sites. Knowing the self is not only limited to the linguistic, cultural, and social contexts, but this is inclusive of the history of colonization. The problem with history books excluding and/or marginalizing Indigenous histories from our perspectives is that it is limited and not accurate as the full history is not told from our perspectives.

Just as teachers and schools historically represented the psychological war on Indigenous children, self-education has become the key component to understanding what and how notions of self-determination and sovereignty can work to claim our rights to cultural and linguistic expressions that are rooted in

Indigenous epistemology and ontologies. When we understand the rights underlying sovereignty, self-determination and self-education, we may be able to "unhinge [ourselves] from the 'gate-keeping' reproductive elements of the dominant controlled systems" (Smith, 2003, p. 7). As a result, schools serving Indigenous students can be the catalyst by which sovereignty, self-determination and self-education can be endorsed as they develop autonomy in regards to the schooling experience (i.e., curriculum, pedagogy, Indigenous knowledge). Indigenous research methodologies are also about this self-defining process that leads to disrupting injustices and social transformation.

Together, Indigenous research and education are a decolonizing experience if we choose to see the intricacies of this interaction. Through *Taawma* and *Mavasta* we have offered a possibility of understanding this relationship as we contextualize how they have (un)intentionally utilized aspects of Indigenous research methods in their efforts to "Indigenize" their curriculum. Through engaging in dialogue regarding this work, we are fully aware of the need to continue to unpack notions of healing from research that our Indigenous peoples have endured. At the outset of preparing for this chapter, *Taawma* notes, "Research with the Hopi tribal council is a taboo word. How can we rethink this word?" As we observe the benefits of utilizing Indigenous research methods to meet expectations of critical culturally sustaining/revitalizing pedagogies (McCarty & Lee, 2014), we also see possibilities of Indigenous educators assisting with rethinking research within and across our communities.

## Notes

1 Throughout the chapter, we use the terms "teacher" and "educator" interchangeably. We recognize the distinction of the terms teacher and educator. In this work, we consider the term *educator* to be inclusive within the context of our community relations. We use the term *teacher* specific to the context of schooling contexts.
2 Within the Hopi Tribe, there are twelve different villages. They are *Walpi, Sitsomovi, Shongopavi, Mishongnovi, Sipaulovi, Hotevilla, Bacavi, Moencopi, Kykotsmovi, Orayvi*. There is one additional non-Hopi village, *Tewa*, that emerged through relations with the Pueblos of New Mexico during the late 1600s and the Pueblo Revolt era.
3 See Mavasta Honyouti's art work at http://www.mhonyouti.com/
4 The *kiva* is a ceremonial home primarily reserved for Hopi/Tewa men. However, there are moments within the ceremonial calendar when it is reserved for ceremonial activities of Hopi women.
5 The *kiisonvi* is a public ceremonial space located within the centers of the Hopi/Tewa villages. It is reserved for ceremonies that engage the community.
6 In our discussions, *Taawma* spoke about this term, which translates to a teacher, but it has more meaning to it. It reflects aspects of being a role model, advisor, educator, academic, and includes lifestyle as well.
7 See Sheridan, T., Koyiyumpyewa, S., Daughters, A., Brenneman, D., Ferguson, T. J., Kuwanwisiwma, L., & Lomayestewa, L. (2015). *Moquis and Kastiilam: Hopis, Spaniards, and the trauma of history*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, for Hopi perspectives regarding the Hopi Pueblo Revolt.
8 See Jason Garcia's *Tewa Tales of Suspense* and other work at http://www.okuupin.com/
9 A sacred time near the opening days of Hopi ceremonies.

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# 8

# RE-CENTERING TRIBALLY-SPECIFIC RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES WITHIN DOMINANT ACADEMIC SYSTEMS

*Michael M. Munson [Séliš, Qĺispé, and non-Native ancestries] and Timothy San Pedro*

We begin by locating our relationship. Although we (Michael and Tim) grew up just miles from one another in western Montana, it took us until graduate school at Arizona State University (ASU) to first meet one another in 2010. In that first meeting, our connection was instantaneous since our relationship was rooted in place—the Flathead Indian Reservation, the Mission Mountains, Flathead Lake, and the people we both knew. Our work at ASU brought us even closer together as we worked with James Blasingame, Simon Ortiz, Andrea Box, Kyle Wilson and many others on a project called "Native American Next Steps." The purpose of this project was to help schools in the Phoenix area create courses that centered Native American histories, peoples, and knowledges. Through that work, we came to realize we were rooted in the same places, families, and communities. Fate had surely united the two of us, and we quickly became cousins, one another's familial support, and ties to home in academic spaces that, at times, worked to strip that identity from each of us.

Years later (2017), thousands of miles away from one another—Michael in Montana, Tim in Ohio—we reconnect through Skype chat to discuss an upcoming project and the hope for what it may be and become:

"So where did this idea for this research project come from?" Michael asks Tim; between questions, they both sip their tea as if they were sitting directly across from one another.

"Well, I can remember the first time that I realized that research can be done with long-established relationships. For so long, I relied on western research paradigms that put so much focus upon validity, generalizability, and seeking an objective truth. Then, in a personal conversation with Sweeney Windchief as we discussed this potential book project, he asked me a question: 'Where might research take us if it is centered upon already established relationships?'"

"Where might research take us if it is centered upon already established relationships?" Michael repeats. "That reminds me of the work I have been doing for my dissertation. Let me read an excerpt to explain." (Much of the knowledge shared in this chapter is from Michael's dissertation.) Michael reads aloud explaining Sqelix$^{w}$[1] worldview. Being Sqelix$^{w}$ is:

> Understanding identity, building relationships, and having a responsibility to make decisions and do things in a good way… Decisions and actions must be respectful towards the plants, animals, the land, and other humans. Respect for our ancestors' teachings, sacrifices, and gifts they have shared, as well as the wellbeing of our families, communities, and future generations direct these lifeways. Sqelix$^{w}$ worldview is built on relationships and the importance of respecting all who are involved by contributing to the community in which one works from within and through story and by reclaiming voice.
>
> *(Munson, 2017)*

Tim responds "Mmhmm, yes! Where 'one works from within and through story'."

Michael continues reading, encouraged by the connections made:

> Sqelix$^{w}$ worldview, values, and responsibilities require that this work is carried out and shared through relationship, collaboration and a true partnership with the community and all who are involved.
>
> Sqelix$^{w}$ worldview is the foundation of all aspects of life, including Sqelix$^{w}$ education. Therefore, Sqelix$^{w}$ education includes everything a person needs to know to live well and appropriately in the world as a Séliš[2] or Q̓lispé[3] person (Salish Kootenai College Tribal History Project, 2008a, p. 46).
>
> *(Munson, 2017, p. 7)*

Michael looks up after reading and extends her thinking, "My work aims to determine the most appropriate components and approaches for a Sqelix$^{w}$ education for our Séliš and Q̓lispé children. To ensure educational opportunities are available that address all aspects of a person's being—physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual—and further ensure strength in identity, life ways, and contribution, success, and leadership within our communities, the state, the nation, and even the world. But the key, the key is honoring relationships" (A. Incashola & C. Bell, personal communications, August 2014; see also Meyer, 2014).

"Yes, exactly!" Tim says sharing the deep connection with Michael's work. "More and more I'm realizing the crucial importance of our relationships in everything that we do. As you said so well, '[Our] work is carried out and shared through relationship, collaboration and true partnership.' I thought about Sweeney's question for a long time after he gifted it to me. I thought about you, Michael, and about Kristina, Tara, and Faith—all the people who I've had long-standing relationships with since high school and college and beyond. I thought about how I haven't had

as many opportunities as I ought to have had to get to know the children of these amazing Native mothers. I thought about how my being physically so far away from you all, made me, at times, physically and mentally ill from homesickness for the people and places in and around the Flathead Indian Reservation. I reached out to those friends to see if they'd be willing to connect with me to learn more about the lessons they share with their children that center Indigenous histories and ways of being. Of course, Michael, I contacted you immediately since we share certain frustrations with the academy, but also have so much hope that our work might reach the people we love," Tim replied.

"I absolutely know those feelings—of homesickness, frustration, and hope," Michael said.

"So, Sweeney helped me realize that centering established relationships in research, when relying on Indigenous Research Methodologies, is necessary," Tim said. "I reached out to you all about this work. At the time, I thought about how intergenerational learning occurs between you and your children, and how Indigenous knowledges are shared and learned in the home. I thought about how the sharing of those knowledges helps continue construct your children's identity so they may be better equipped to resist settler colonial structures that underlie schooling systems. And it was during our conversations for this project that you really helped me understand the ways Indigenous research methods can be embodied, understood, and relied upon in your own research. That's what I love most about working with you and the others: We teach each other, learn from one another, and in that way we are reciprocating stories, rather than merely taking stories without anything given back."

## Locating Our Discoveries with Those Who Have Created Paths for Us to Walk in Academia

As we enter the twenty-first century, there are multiple movements occurring that work to sustain, revitalize, and nourish cultures and languages, particularly in tribal communities across the USA (and globally) (McCarty & Lee, 2014; Paris & Alim, 2014, 2017; Wilson, 2004). Indigenous Knowledges are being recovered after centuries of systematic erasure of such knowledge systems. Such revitalizing work is "… about regaining the ways of being that allowed our peoples to live a spiritually balanced, sustainable existence" (Wilson, 2004, p. 359).

A foundational pedagogical approach was developed by Sandy Grande (2004), which helps to frame the importance of this work as she explains the fundamental tenets of *Red Pedagogy*. She says:

> Red pedagogy is committed to providing American Indian students the social and intellectual space to reimagine what it means to be Indian in contemporary U.S. society, arming them with a critical analysis of the intersecting systems of domination and the tools to navigate them.
>
> *(Grande, 2004, p. 118)*

Further, *Red Pedagogy* "… asks how traditional Indigenous knowledge can inform the project of decolonization" (Grande, 2004, p. 56). Cajete's (1994) work was instrumental in imagining the purpose of education for Indigenous peoples, which centered upon "… learning about life through participation and relationship in the community, including not only people, but plants, animals, and the whole of Nature" (Cajete, 1994, p. 26). In this way, learning was framed in the context of tribal life and Indigenous knowledges as shared in the home and in the communities.

Thinking about these and many other scholars who helped create paths for us to walk, Tim reached out to his long-time friends from high school and college on the Flathead Indian Reservation and in the towns nearby—Michael was one. With the current project that we are collaborating on—seeking to understand the ways lessons of Indigeneity are shared in the home between parents and their children—Michael shared the lessons she's learned through her dissertation project. This knowledge was important to share with Tim since it situated Michael's hopes and dreams for her daughter and for the many other children who may benefit from knowing themselves, their cultures, their histories.

The remainder of the chapter provides space for Michael to teach the lessons she's taught through their work together. To do this, she weaves self-location, direct transcripts of our conversations, stories, and excerpts from her dissertation. Through these efforts, she aims to share the story of how she has navigated the norms of the academy to center Sqelix$^{w}$ ways and conduct research with and for her own tribal communities. She utilizes Tribally-Specific Research Methodologies (TSRM), Sqelix$^{w}$ Research Methodologies (SRM) for Michael's community specifically, which extends Indigenous Research Methodologies (IRM) to ensure research truly meets the needs of specific tribal communities.

## Locating and Introducing My Journey Toward Tribally-Specific Research Methodologies

In an effort to provide more context and begin building relationships with you, the reader, let me (Michael) locate or introduce myself.

I am a First-Generation Descendant of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT). In being so, I am a descendant of the McDonald and Miles families of Q̓lispé Stulix$^{w4}$. I am also a descendant of my father's non-Native Watters and Munson families (most recently from the Bitterroot Valley of Montana—Séliš Stulix$^{w5}$). Throughout my lifetime, I have been viewed as both the "Indian girl" and a "Suyapi[6] girl from town"—truly belonging to neither community.

A number of experiences throughout my years, both positive and negative, led me to approach the Séliš-Q̓lispé Culture Committee (SQCC), in an effort to begin a journey aimed at strengthening my identity and providing opportunities for others to do the same. Through the experiences I have been blessed to have,

it became apparent that my purpose was to contribute to the communities in which I belong through efforts to provide children, youth, and adults opportunities to strengthen their identities; understandings regarding one another; and, understandings about possibilities to contribute back to their communities—locally, statewide, and nationally.

Within the work I have most recently done with the SQCC, I poured my heart into explaining the journey I have taken to reach the point where this chapter originates. It provides a description of the first project in which I was able to collaborate with the SQCC—the starting point for this work:

> Through [the teachings of my Elders from the SQCC, my family, and other mentors], I learned first-hand, appropriate ways to work with my Sqelix$^{w}$ community. Before my Elders would allow me to learn from and with them, my heart, values, and intentions were assessed while numerous lessons were taught about appropriate ways of being. I was reminded that our Sqelix$^{w}$ community valued humility, love, honesty, courage, truth, honor, respect, and many other morals that my parents and yayá[7] had instilled in me … Atwen [the director of the Séliš and Q̓lispé Culture Committee] consistently reminded me of the academics, scholars, and anthropologists who had come in to our communities as researchers in the past and benefited first-hand but neglected to give anything back to our people. I spent a great deal of time … visiting with [Elders and mentors] Atwen, Lwi, Misel, Patlik, Stipn, Shirley, Octave, Joyce, Penny, Jeff, Lisa and others.
>
> We learned from and with one another. I learned from them mostly, and still have so much more to learn—about who we are as people and who I am as an individual. Through that process, the project [we] initially began was shaped into an entirely different form—for the sake of educating Montana's children about the importance of place, especially Séliš and Q̓lispé place, the ecology of those places, and how many of our sacred places have been altered through colonization. Many turns were taken throughout those four years, but the project was completed, as Atwen had taught us, "when it was supposed to be."
>
> Building relationships was the first step—with [Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' (CSKT)] Tribal Education, the SQCC, with the SQCC Elders Advisory Council, with the flora and fauna we were learning about, and with the experiences that had occurred in each of those places. All of those places and beings are held in my heart deeply now. We ensured we were respectful. We ensured we were responsible. And we ensured we reciprocated by returning a project that had been guided by the Elders and was accurate, authentic, and appropriate for the children of both our Sqelix$^{w}$ and Montana communities.
>
> Each of the projects I have been invited to participate in [since that point], where we have chosen to follow the Elders' teachings has had remarkable

> results. Every person, every topic, every story now holds a special place in my heart. I have grown from each. I have learned from each. Other participants have grown and learned from the process, as well. When Sqelix$^{w}$ values and teachings are held at the center of what is done, higher levels of meaning and understanding are reached. Meaning can be made in one's heart, mind, spirit, and body.
>
> *(Munson, 2017, pp. 12–14)*

After taking steps that led me into working with multiple communities in a state-wide setting, I decided I needed to take the next step to learn more about how Native communities can use sovereignty and determine our communities' educational needs and appropriate strategies for teaching our children, in the ways most appropriate for our children. I consulted with many mentors, advisors, and Elders to seek guidance as I made this decision. One of my Elders reminded me that it was important to continue my education, pursue my doctorate, but that my job was to remain true to the ways and language of our people as I did so. He explained that I needed to be able to talk with our Elders, children and people and how what I learned was less useful if I wasn't able to communicate it with our Sqelix$^{w}$ people (C. Clairmont, personal communication, July 2011).

In these words, he meant many things. First, that the knowledge gained through the process is a gift but that with it come responsibilities I am obligated to. Secondly, that I must be able to communicate with our people in the English language that is used in our communities today. Thirdly, I must also learn Sqelix$^{w}$ and be able to incorporate it into the work that is done. He also meant, however, much more than talking about verbal or written communication. Corky was also reminding me of the importance of returning to our community to live, be involved with, and immerse myself within—to have relationships with and truly learn from and with the people of our community.

Corky's words reminded me about how the teachings of the stories are contained within the language, which hold spiritual value. They reminded about how words are formed with breath, and once spoken have a life of their own, interpreted by those who hear them. And, how storytelling is ongoing and is heard differently based on one's personal understandings. They meant that I have a responsibility for the words I speak. These teachings have remained a central focus throughout my doctoral work and now in my life as a whole (Munson, 2017, pp. 14–15).

Throughout my doctoral journey, I had amazing mentors and numerous opportunities to build relationships with people I am honored to continue to work. At that time, the program I began in stressed research paradigms and methodologies of the dominant system. I felt unable to work within Indigenous education to the degree I had hoped. As a result, I began to question my ideas and motives—these research and education models did not fit what I had come

to know. Most importantly, I was unable to reciprocate to our community as I had been taught was so very important.

These understandings brought me back to Montana. I essentially began my doctoral education again, within a new program, and with new mentors and advisors. It provided, however, the opportunity to return to the communities in which I belonged and to which I could reciprocate:

> In returning to my communities, remembering the philosophies of my Elders, and learning of Wilson's (2008) cutting edge work on Indigenous Methodologies at the inaugural *American Indigenous Research Association Conference* in 2012, I made it my intention to return to my original path utilizing the Indigenous paradigm I was taught initially. I began to understand what I had learned with our Elders earlier as the circle, the journey, the *ceremony* that Wilson (2008) discussed when sharing the stories of his own experiences and understandings within Indigenous research.[8] Through the readings of Wilson's research, I have come to better understand the Indigenous, and more specifically, Sqelix$^{w}$ model we had been following within our work from 2006 through 2010.
>
> *(Munson, 2017, p. 16)*

It is also important to note that as a first-generation descendant from the Séliš and Q̓ispé tribes who is Sqelix$^{w}$ and values of the suyapi (White) heritages of my father as well, I was blessed to be slowly welcomed back into our Sqelix$^{w}$ tribal communities. I was and continue to come to this work with a X̣est Spúʔus[9]—with good intentions. Maybe most importantly, when told about the request to contribute information about the TSRM/SRM we had used, and my journey navigating the dominant education system to benefit other tribally-specific research, a representative of the SQCC felt I should do so (C. Bell, personal communication, December 6, 2017).

As such, the research I was able to conduct with and for my community was flexible, but also held the distinct set of values, methodologies, and protocols determined by and with our Sqelix$^{w}$ community with whom I work. Grande (2000, 2004), Brayboy (2005), Wilson (2008), Kovach (2009), Smith (2012), Brayboy, Gough, Leonard, Roehl, and Solyom (2012), Lambert (2014), and others who led in establishing IRM for those of us who have come since, provided the published research that formed the basis for the work with and for our Sqelix$^{w}$ community. Those who have come before have provided the foundation for us to extend IRM to TSRM, and for us specifically, SRM.

These were teachings I thought important to share with Tim as he began his project. We would like to share our conversation with you, as well. In order to do so, we will share direct transcripts to introduce our next section.

## Using Sqelix$^{w}$ Research Methodologies within the Academy—A Conversation

MICHAEL: When I approached Antoine (Tony) Incashola and Chaney Bell, the Director and Language Coordinator of The Séliš-Q̓lispé Culture Committee, they became very involved about what I should do, what I should research, what would be important for community, based on my experiences and interest.

TIM: Whoa! So, who did you go to?

MICHAEL: The Séliš-Q̓lispé Culture Committee.

TIM: And you asked them: What should I do? Wow!

MICHAEL: Yeah, because, I mean I can do something. Whatever I think is important. Even, whatever my committee thinks is important. But that doesn't really mean it's important. But Tony and I have had a relationship since 2006, and he's kind of been a mentor and I've tried to check in with him periodically. Just about what I'm doing and what I'm learning, and "Can you help me think about which direction I should go? What do you think about this?" Because I did come from such a … pause, sigh, "un-cultural upbringing." I would say I wasn't connected to culture as much as I could have been. So, he's kind of helped me with that along the way. That started when I was involved in my Master's project, which didn't start as a Master's project, but as an intention to contribute to lessening bias. So, he's the Director of the Culture Committee. And the Séliš-Q̓lispé and Kootenai culture committees are directly under the CSKT Tribal Council. So, the Council talks to them regarding cultural advice. They have the Elder Advisory Councils (Elders), which are composed of a number of Elders who meet monthly and discuss various issues. So, I approached them and asked, "What could this look like?" Then, I met with the Elders.

TIM: Mmmhmm.

MICHAEL: That was the most response that I have gotten from them in years. I asked, "What do you think is important to be included in education for our Séliš and Q̓lispé children? What is important to be included in education for our kids?" Every single one of them had something to say, as well as most of the audience. It was pretty packed that morning.

TIM: And it was just for you? It was just for them to give advice to you?

MICHAEL: Well, the entire meeting is held monthly and a number of concerns are brought to the Elders at each monthly meeting. So, no. But, the response to the questions I was asking of them was just for this work. So, one of the Elders, Misel (Mike) Durglo, really made it clear. He said, "You can ask us. People think we have lots of knowledge. But our kids are the ones who know what we've taught them. And, what's been useful and what hasn't been useful. So, I think you should talk to the kids … and to my grandkids."

TIM: (Sigh) That's powerful.

MICHAEL: That was pretty awesome. Mike passed shortly after that, within 6-months, probably. It was heartbreaking to lose him, but his insight shaped the work. Then, I talked with Tony and Chaney again and asked: "What direction should I take this? How many people should be included, do you think?" My advisor was saying, "Two families. You can't do more than two families." At that time Tony and Chaney were saying, "But, we have to come to consensus, two families aren't enough." So, I was going to work with four families, based on age, health, and those people we felt we might be unable to visit with, sooner than later. The relationships I had established with each of the Elders played a large role, as well.

I got married and had our daughter between that time and now. I did nothing related to the project. But when I started again, after she was born, I realized I wasn't going to be able to manage talking with four families. Not in the way I wanted to be able to maintain relationships with them.

TIM: Mhhmm.

MICHAEL: And, not in the way it needed to be done. Because, it's such a large project. What we also realized when I went to talk to Tony and Chaney about it. They said, well that's alright because what we really need to do is talk about all of this in relation to community. Because the people that settled in Jocko, Arlee, Valley Creek areas were generally Séliš, while people who settled in Crow Creek, Ronan, Pablo, and southern Polson, were generally Q̓lispé. The people on the West Side—Hot Springs, Perma, Camas Prairie, etc. were generally Q̓lispé, also, related more closely to the Lower Pend d'Oreille people. Every area is related in a different way and originates from a different place, with different value systems and teachings—kind of like bands or separate tribes. So, centering what we want to teach on community with who is there now—even though some have come in and others have moved out. There's some give and take learning across all communities—there are still some people within those communities who are from those original families.

TIM: Mhhmm.

MICHAEL: So, trying to talk with the people from the families who originally settled in each area and ask, "What's important for your community?"

TIM: Hmm.

MICHAEL: So, we realized four families was unmanageable at this point. And, because I really wanted to get the burden of writing the dissertation, for academic purposes, done with. That way, we could focus our work on what we really need and do. So, we narrowed it down to two families – Patlik's family and Mary Dolly's family. I'm related to Mary Dolly. So, that was kind of fun! She would say, "Well you know, your Grandma Liddy …." And, "Your Grandpa Johnny …." It was so much fun to hear side stories about my great-great grandparents. But ultimately, it came down to—it was really amazing how—Dolly and Patlik both shared teachings from when they were

young. Primarily, their parents were their teachers, but people of older generations, especially family members, also were. Their children shared how what they were taught was not only family-based, but the importance of not stopping and not settling for second-best, was also taught. Patlik taught his son and Mary Dolly taught her daughter, that it was important to always push harder to learn and practice, in order to do the best you can do. Both Patlik and Mary Dolly had taught their children to have persistence—what is often called having an "open mindset" now. From the third generation, I heard a lot about how to use what has been taught. How to use it in today's world.

TIM: Wow!

MICHAEL: From that, there were seven key teachings that stood out. I'm calling them Key Understandings because I don't have a word for them. That's another thing—I'm working on transitioning from English to Sqelix$^{w}$.

TIM: Right.

MICHAEL: One thing I was really narrow minded about is that teaching what was learned should be done outside of public education, primarily. Mostly, because spirituality, one of the seven Key Understandings, isn't going to be accepted within public education.

TIM: Mmhmm.

MICHAEL: But, both Mike and Łxakat, Patlik and Mary Dolly's grandchildren, reminded me that we really need to do a better job working with public schools, also. They had ideas about how to do that and work with community-based education, as well. None of these ideas are entirely new, but now they're all in one place.

TIM: It sounds like they are dialogic understandings. Like you're in conversation. So, they're not your Key Understandings, or your essential understandings, but through being in communication, this is what people have been able to share with you.

MICHAEL: Mhm. Exactly! One of those understandings is that Sqelix$^{w}$ ways and understandings include the idea that knowledge is passed on to an individual and is understood by that individual based on his or her experiences from the past. And, only knowledge that is appropriate to be learned at that time is learned. So, what I have learned from this conversation is going to be different from what you have learned from this conversation. So, exactly what you are saying. That idea of having this conversation and continually learning.

TIM: Mhm.

MICHAEL: So, in order to allow the reader the opportunities to make their own meaning, … You know, you hear about including transcripts? That's one of the things I "fought" with my advisor about. I would say, "No, the transcript needs to be up front." He'd say, "No, it needs to be in the back." We went back and forth several times. To me, it needed to be in the front because it's just as important as anything I have to say. He'd argue that including them up front makes the dissertation too long. In

the end, I agreed to compromise because at least they were included and there for others to access. But most importantly, it's that idea of providing the opportunities. These are the understandings that I've gained from those conversations, through conversation. But, you might make other meaning from it. As I explained within my dissertation, my Elders have taught many things about Sqelix$^{w}$ ways of educating our children. Two of these teachings are vital:1) what is shared is shared when and in the way, it is supposed to have been shared, meaning it is the learner's responsibility to honor what has been shared as it has been shared, and learn from it, rather than break it into pieces and/or reword things as is often done in the academy; and, 2) it is up to each learner to make meaning of what is shared by Elders or others who share information. Each person makes meaning of what is shared differently, based on where s/he is in his/her journey and which understanding s/he has gained previously (A. Incashola, personal communications, 2006–2017).

*(Munson, 2017, pp. 62–63)*

MICHAEL: It is also taught that each learner is responsible for making meaning of what is taught – each person does this differently, based on prior experiences and understandings. Influenced by these teachings, I began making sense of what I was learning as I was able to visit with each person along the journey: It was incredible how each conversation built upon the previous conversation I had with members of families. Without intention, teachings made sense and were relatable to other conversations. As a result, I was able to draw on the relatedness and make connections between conversations with individuals, families, and as a whole.

*(Munson, 2017, p. 63)*

MICHAEL: One aspect of this work that became difficult, however, was finding the most appropriate and effective way to navigate the "norms" of the academy and center Sqelix$^{w}$ methodologies, and ways of being and doing. To meet the academy's expectations, I was instructed to use thematic qualitative analysis to make sense of my data. As painful as it was, I tried to disregard what I had learned from my Elders. I began looking for themes within and throughout conversations after I had completed all of the conversations. I attempted breaking conversations apart individually, generationally, and as families. Although the intentions were good, a great deal of struggle ensued. It forced me to go against our teachings and did not align with the Sqelix$^{w}$ Methodologies I had been using previously:I struggled and struggled through this thematic qualitative analysis process. I struggled with the inability to include each person's story, as it was shared with me, in its entirety. I struggled with the requirement to restate what was shared in my own words. As mentioned earlier, I have been taught that as Sqelix$^{w}$, it is not up to us to restate what has been shared, as we need to remain faithful that it was shared as it was supposed to have been. We can,

> however, explain the understandings we have gained holistically, as we have gained them.
>
> *(Munson, 2017, p. 64)*

MICHAEL: After a very welcome recommendation from one of my committee members, I was able to visit with Dr. Suzanne Held and Alma Knows His Gun McCormick to discuss their journeys as researchers grounded in Apsáalooke ways and community. I had found a research methodology that better matched our Sqelix$^{w}$ teachings, was not my own work, and originated from people and a tribal community my committee could relate to (Francis & Munson, 2017; Hallett, Held, Knows His Gun Mcormick, Simonds, Real Bird, Martin, Simpson, Schure, Turnsplenty & Trottier, 2016).

Like Hallett et al. (2016), the Sqelix$^{w}$ ways I was finally approved to use allowed for the inclusion of each conversation, which honored each Elders' story, what s/he shared, and simultaneously honored every other person who engaged in the project—as participants or readers—by providing the opportunities for meaning to continue to be made (Francis & Munson, 2017). To honor Sqelix$^{w}$ to the best degree possible, I listened to each conversation again, in the order in which they took place. It allowed me the opportunity to relive the conversation, focus on what was shared, what touched my heart, and what made sense for our community.

Atwen wanted me to find consensus. We didn't find consensus in a true sense. But, it sure was clear that after I talked to Patlik and then to Bear, what I heard from Bear was the same. He was building consensus and adding to it. And the next person was building consensus and then adding to it. And then the next person, etc.

Through the SRM I was using to better understand the value-driven lifeways and other teachings that were shared about Sqelix$^{w}$ education, I was able to honor the academic process, make sense of what was shared with a X̣est Spú?us, and share what I had learned with the understandings I had been given. To hold true to the storytelling nature of Sqelix$^{w}$ education, I: (1) introduced each individual and conversation; (2) included each of the conversations in the Appendices; and (3) shared my own understandings. The final chapter included my reflections, a discussion of recommendations for future work in public school and community-based education settings as made throughout the dialogic conversations, and implications for future research.

## Broadening Sqelix$^{w}$ Research Methodologies to Tribally-Specific Research Methodologies

It was the conversations driven by the collaborative work Tim and Michael were engaging in that helped Michael begin to see the importance of the TSRM she had done with the SQCC. The Sqelix$^{w}$ work she was able to learn so much from was informed by key understandings that resulted from conversations with Elder community members, and the Sqelix$^{w}$ families directly involved in the research.

The main ideas can be applied to many Indigenous communities and worldviews; however, the Sqelix$^{w}$-specific understandings that were shown to me were:

1. Sqelix$^{w}$ worldview is the foundation of all aspects of life; it is made up of a set of values. It is a way of life, and includes Snčlep Sq$^{w}$llumt[10], Sqelix$^{w}$ education, and everything a person needs to know to live in the best way in the world (personal communications from employees of the SQCC, July 2010—August 2017; Francis & Munson, 2017; Salish Kootenai Tribal College History Project, 2008, p. 46).
2. Sqelix$^{w}$ education has been passed from generation to generation, generally by Elder family and community members, through story, observation, and other methods, since time immemorial, from when a child is in his or her mother's womb until and after s/he passes on. As a result, Sqelix$^{w}$ research shares stories of how work comes to be, while honoring each person's stories as they are shared, as well as what is learned throughout the process. As a result, Sqelix$^{w}$ research can be shared from the point of view of the person/people doing the work, as they are able to understand it at that time (personal communications from employees of the SQCC, August 13, 2015 and February 2017; Archibald, 2008).
3. To honor a request from a Sqelix$^{w}$ Elder, the work should be shared in a way that is understandable and accessible for all who it is being done with and for. To ensure those opportunities are provided, it is shared by honoring the language of our community members – using our Sqelix$^{w}$ language and language that is understandable and accessible, rather than using the language of the academy (C. Clairmont, A. Incashola & C. Bell, personal communications, July 2010—August 2017).
4. As is appropriate in Sqelix$^{w}$ educational practices, Sqelix$^{w}$ research weaves stories with other appropriate teachings, to ensure what is learned is shared, while also allowing the opportunity for other readers to come to their own understandings. One way to ensure others are able to make their own meaning, is to include the transcripts of the conversations within the main body of the work itself, or at least within the Appendices (A. Incashola, personal communications, 2006–2017; Francis & Munson, 2017; Hallett et al., 2016; Jahnke, Wilkinson, & Te Tau, 2016; Smith, 2012).

These four key understandings regarding SRM can be broadened, however, and accommodate work done that utilizes TSRM. This broadening can look like the following:

1. Tribal worldview is the foundation of all aspects of life; it is made up of a set of values that are specific to a particular tribal group. It is a way of life, and may include creation stories, tribally-specific educational practices, and everything a person needs to know to live in the best way in the world as a person within that tribal community.

2. Tribally-specific education has been passed from generation to generation, generally by Elder family and community members, through story, observation, and other methods, since time immemorial, and throughout a person's lifetime. As a result, tribally-specific research often shares stories of how work comes to be, while honoring each person's perspectives, stories as they are shared, what is learned throughout the process. As a result, tribally-specific research can be shared from the point of view of the person/people doing the work, as they are able to understand it at that time.
3. The work should be shared in a way that is understandable and accessible for all who it is being done with and for. To ensure those opportunities are provided, honoring the language of community members and language that is understandable and accessible, rather than using the language of the academy, is crucial.
4. Tribally-specific research often weaves stories with other appropriate teachings, to ensure what is learned is shared, while also allowing the opportunity for other readers to come to their own understandings. One way to ensure others are able to make their own meaning, is to include the transcripts of the conversations within the main body of the work itself, or at least within the Appendices.

## Living Tribally-Specific Research: Relationship Nurturing

Continuing our initial conversation, where we left off in the beginning of this chapter, Michael says to Tim: "Throughout the time we have come to be family, Tim, you have given me so much—love, guidance, friendship, mentorship, support, and inspiration to name a few. I dearly hope that through this conversation, the work I have been blessed to do within my dissertation, and the work we are doing together, I will be able to reciprocate back to you, half of what you have given to me. As Lori Lambert's (2014) conceptual framework reminds us, I also hope we will be able to reciprocate to the Indigenous Research community that I know we have both learned so much from."

As Michael shares her feelings with Tim, he looks down, smiling. He says, "It's such a strange feeling, Michael, because it feels as though you've gifted me with so much more! As we engage in this upcoming project together, I've listened closely and carefully to the Tribally-Specific Methodologies that centers your work. I've heard the battles you've had to wage in order for those in academia to see it as 'worthy.' I am so encouraged you are doing this work back home. You've given me the courage and the knowledge to proceed with our work in a good way, in a way that's more about giving than extraction, which is what Western research often does. Your words of friendship and family ground me in places so saturated by settler colonial systems. You have reciprocated so much more than you know, and I'm so excited that others have this opportunity to share in that gift with us through this conversation. I have so much hope for what's to come."

Michael, nearing the end of our conversation, says, "I share that hope too! I hope our project – where we are collaborating to understand lessons of Indigeneity in a deeper sense – will help both of us consider the ways in which we do what and how we do, in an even deeper way. Hopefully, what we are learning here, about Tribally-Specific Research Methodologies, will provide a foundation others can work from further benefitting tribal communities, as well as our Indigenous youth and children. Hopefully, what we are sharing here will provide a basis for children, youth, and tribal researchers from our communities to work within their own communities to better understand their histories, cultures, selves, and their goals, aspirations, and opportunities for contributing."

## Notes

1 Sqelix$^{w}$—Sqelix$^{w}$ literally translates to "Flesh of the Earth" meaning people of the Earth. Sqelix$^{w}$ in this context refers to Séliš/Salish and Q̓lispé/Pend d'Orielle people, in general. It is also used to refer to a person who is centered in Salish and Pend d'Oreille life ways.
2 Séliš—Bitterroot Salish.
3 Q̓lispé—Upper and/or Lower Pend d'Orielle.
4 Q̓lispé Stulix$^{w}$—the traditional homelands of the Q̓lispé, or what is now the Flathead Indian Reservation of Montana.
5 Séliš Stulix$^{w}$—the traditional homelands of the Séliš.
6 Suyapi—white.
7 Yayá—mother's mother.
8 At times, as I have within this sentence, I will use authors' first and last names, as well as specific titles of their work. Doing so contributes to building the necessary relationships between myself, you as the reader, and the author(s), as well as with providing emphasis to that particular text, as I feel is necessary.
9 X̌est Spúʔus—good heart.
10 Sncčlep Sq$^{w}$llumt—Coyote Stories.

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# 9

# MOʻOLELO

## Continuity, Stories, and Research in Hawaiʻi

*Sunnie Kaikala Mākua [ʻŌiwi Hawaiʻi], Manulani Aluli Meyer [ʻŌiwi Hawaiʻi] and Lynette Lokelani Wakinekona [ʻŌiwi Hawaiʻi]*

*Moʻo* are mythic creatures embodied in the mix of fresh and saltwater. They are often female protectors and vital to Hawaiian life and lore. The term *moʻo* also relates to things that are segmented, such as the succession of a story, a grandchild, or one's genealogy. *ʻŌlelo*—stitched into *moʻolelo*—to speak, converse or tell, reminds us that our words hold *mana* while the vibration of sound when uttered has power to heal, and likewise has power to destroy. *Moʻolelo*, our Hawaiian word for story, is thus the speaking of recollections that inspire continuity through generations.

In Hawaiʻi, many stories don't end with *happily ever after*. Our stories often end with, *pīpī holo kaʻao*—the tale runs, the story continues. That is where the *moʻo* lives. *Moʻolelo* can then play a vital role in the potency found in place and people because stories hold multiple meanings and although meanings may shift through time, their underlying function remains. *Moʻolelo* are thus filled with knowledge, purpose, and insight. They help us define basic ideas and behaviors inscribed on land and in deeds to bring us to *self-awareness* so that we know how to behave and how to care for *ʻāina* [1], and each other. Here is a (k)new way to approach research methodologies that bring forth the function of narrative as a tool for perpetuating the kinds of knowledge that both endure and inspire.

### Continuity through Story

*Moʻolelo* weaves through all life forms in Hawaiʻi helping them connect so that purpose is clear, and instructions are revealed. The collective body of our *moʻolelo* is passed down from our *poʻe kahiko* (ancients) in the aural/oral tradition.[2] If a story is to remain, however, it goes through our *naʻau,* our stomach region where

feelings are nourished and one *remembers*. Landscapes hold *mo'olelo* and exploits are brought forth anew when we have access to our ancient places. *Mo'olelo*, our beloved cultural stories of people and places, are kept alive in all places of knowledge: surfing, healing, praying, dreaming, teaching, cooking, singing, gaming, farming; and, yes, even research (see Figure 9.1). Every practice has within it the connecting elements of ideas, continuity, flourishing, warnings, or signposts to pay attention to. In these modern times, however, we often read our *mo'olelo* and work toward lifting text into *context*, but as this is an ongoing process, this very chapter is proof of our intention and practice found in how we shared our own *mo'olelo* with each other and worked to link them for a shared synergistic purpose.

## Cultural Empiricism

Listening with our whole body, *ho'olono*, and repetition with perfection, *ho'o-pa'ana'au*, were crucial competencies for learners of ancient *mo'olelo*. Hawai'i remains as an expanding intra-cultural landscape where we listen through all our senses and perceptions. Our eyes, ears, skin, *na'au* [3] are activated when the telling of a story begins, whether ancient or modern. We have come to understand oral speaking offers invitations to interpret the story, even within text, and yet the emphasis of an aural culture is to extend the genesis of a specific interpretation to

**FIGURE 9.1** The young leaves of ohia lehua (*Metrosideros polymorpha*), known as liko lehua

*maintain it*. We are both and neither. No one in Hawai'i can fully understand what it means to be from an oral tradition as text and literacy dominate our societal landscape. We are, however, *hearing* differently and beginning to discipline our senses along cultural lines so we can mend and heal together.

An aural discipline is an intentional endeavor! It ensures that information upholds its integrity and remains in its purest form. Stories and genealogies vital to our people were taught in this manner. In this way information shared with students was not meant to be evaluated. The student's sole responsibility was to record the story, genealogy, or instruction to perfection without flaw as this could mean life or death. It is this rigor that maintained a strong and robust storytelling tradition that prioritized listening with accuracy of expression and detail. In this way, our stories did not disappear and thus could maintain their function. However, many of our stories lay dormant for generations and many were lost after the coming of foreigners, disease, and new governance. Fortunately, our ancestors adapted their natural talents to new ways of teaching and learning and found outlets to keep our *mo'olelo* alive. At the turn of the 20th century, Hawai'i's literacy rate was over 90%, and we enjoyed the highest literacy rate of any ethnic group in world:

> The colossal body of Hawaiian language literature from the 1800's [sic] included Hawaiian classics such as Pele and Hi'iaka, Lā'ie Ka Wai and Ke Kumu Aupuni and western classics such as Ivanhoe, Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea, Cinderella and Tarzan just to name a few. [Furthermore, t]he rich and extensive Hawaiian vocabulary reflected the Hawaiians' symbiotic relationship with their environment. For example, there were more than 64 words for rain and 133 words for house. Hawaiians used figurative meaning, as one scholar remarked, "to an extent unknown in English."
>
> *(Lucas, 2000)*

A cornerstone *mo'olelo* for Native Hawaiians is the *Kumulipo* (the source from the depths of darkness), our *mele ko'i honua* (creation chant). It is also a *mo'okū'auhau*, a genealogy chant, that connects *na ali'i* (paramount chiefs) to the great expanse and to the cosmos. The term *mo'okū'auahu* can refer to:

- *mo'o* (the succession; generations);
- *kū* (the collective standing);
- *au* (sacred flow or current);
- *hau* (a lowland tree that spreads creating an impenetrable thicket).

One interpretation of our word for genealogy—*mo'okū'auhau*—is the *recognition of multitude generations from the deep dark past to the far-reaching future yet to be named*. The Kumulipo, our Creation Story, is a multi-faceted and multi-functional matrix

continuum; it teaches us that all things are connected and lays out the progression of life through stages by organizing the universe and natural world around us. Hawaiian scholar Lilikalā Kame'eleihiwa writes: "In Hawai'i and in Polynesia, our records and oral traditions in the cosmogonic genealogy Kumulipo go back 900 generations, and we can recite to you the names of each generation of those ancestors for that length of time" (Kame'eleihiwa, 2009). It remains a vital source of information on Hawaiian political structure, and natural understanding. The Kumulipo teaches us that our *mo'olelo* is history, science, and a way of viewing the world. It is a process of organizing knowledge, and it affirms this notion of continuity. We are *mo'olelo*. We are each an unfolding story of an infinite cosmos.

## Purpose through Story

M*o'olelo* helps us live the purpose of tradition. We learn the need for strategic relationships between people, land, sea, and gods. We affirm the names of significant persons, places and events. We recognize natural phenomenon and omens to link in with their purpose *as we experience them*. The lessons are endless, the instructions are clear. *Mo'olelo* distinguishes Hawai'i as unique in the world, yet they also simultaneously link us with global peoples who have rich repositories of their own stories that keep their traditions alive, evolving, and relevant. Universal truths are practiced in *specific ways* and they are embodied in people and place. These specifics are the nuanced and culturally distinct understandings cast within our *stories*, and why we laugh or sob at their significance.

Today, kanaka 'ōiwi (native Hawaiians) have re-awakened to our ancestral truths through the uncovering and research of our ancient and modern *mo'olelo*. We have found both process and product of ideas and how to gather them through the discipline of listening/speaking. We see five key concepts to describe the purpose and process of *mo'olelo*. We offer them now as ways to organize how they can be used for research within Indigenous communities:

- *Ho'opono*—paying close attention to *pono* or right behavior shaped by truth as it relates to self, ohana, community and environment. Ho'opono happens when we hear and recognize truth, and respond with kindness, not anger. This is when a mother, reminded of her own teachings by her children, receives the lessons with grace and humility.
- *Ho'āla Hou*—a re-awakening of our ancestral memory deep within us that links intelligence within our visceral knowing; the awakening to be productive. Ho'āla Hou is found in our *practices* and within time spent with people in places significant in our shared histories; that's when *remembering* is activated.
- *Hō'ailona*—observation and recognition of patterns and natural phenomenon or omens in the natural environment that serve to inspire and instruct us.

Hō'ailona arrive when intentionality is clear and observation heightened. This is when a beloved dies and heavy rains drench our view plane.

- *Ho'olono*—a heightened capacity to hear what is said in verbal and nonverbal ways un-linked to personal ego; to give depth and understanding to what is being conveyed; to work toward peace, excellence and gratitude in all messages. This is when a father listens to the *essence* of his son's message and responds with care and insight.
- *'Auamo Kuleana*—to carry your responsibility; it is also a mythic connection of life with others when you find your purpose and express it with excellence and trust. This happens at large lū'au or family gatherings where everyone has their role and shares their gifts with aloha and humility. Here is where excellence is amplified.

These five processes give context to our growing discipline of *mo'olelo*, especially within the writing and thinking of a PhD thesis currently under construction. We have decided to give evidence of each *mo'olelo* ingredient—*ho'opono, hō'ala hou, hō'ailona, ho'olono*, and *'auamo kuleana*—so that we ourselves understand and emulate the practice and need for this kind of research emphasis.

## Ho'opono

### *Ke kū nei au ma ka 'īpuka o ku'u hale. I stand at the doorway of my own home*

In these modern times, the expression of *mo'olelo* as an aural/oral discipline begins by listening to the operating vibrational truth of one's own life, and then expressing it. This can take any form: writing, singing, speaking, praying, dancing, etc. The following *mo'olelo* is told by Lokelani Wakinekona about her beloved home, and we offer it now as evidence of the *specificity of universality* and how this can be approached through the medium of *direct* experience.

### *Meta Memo: Wela Ka Lā*

> An outsider's first reaction to Wai'anae is almost certainly related to the stifling heat and dryness of the area. Set at the point furthest west on the Island of O'ahu, Wai'anae is a place most misunderstood and devalued by outsiders, a stark contrast to the endearment of this place by the people who live here. From the perspective of an insider having grown up in the wela (heat, hot) lands the intense heat of the Wai'anae sun provided the most opportune conditions for drying fish salted fresh from the ocean or pipikaula (jerk beef) in a matter of hours. With little rainfall and seemingly arid conditions these delicacies prepared in the morning could go from ocean or off-the-hoof to table by sun down.
>
> Also esteeming the heat of the Wai'anae sun is the lore of Maui, the Hawaiian Sup'pa Man and ancient demi-god, who made his home on this beloved coast. One such mo'olelo (story) tells of how Maui snared the leg of the sun in order to subdue it and delay its fleeting trek across the sky, thus extending the daylight so Maui's mother

> Hina could dry her kapa (tapa, cloth made from wauke or māmaki bark) from which clothing and blankets were made. Atop Pu'u Mā'ili'ili Kai in Lualualei one can still see the place where Maui secured his magic rope anchoring the sun in this infamous exploit.
>
> This location furthest west on the island meant the days were longest in Wai'anae. That meant us kids could swim for extended hours in temperate waters at Pōka'ī, surf the best wave breaks at Mākaha, or witness the sun dipping below the horizon in its last glows of orange rays finally disappearing in a flash of green bidding the day goodbye.
>
> This is my Wai'anae. This is my place. This is where I learned to love the wela lands and her playgrounds. Her hot sun. Her gentle ocean. Her pounding surf. Her white sandy beaches. Her glorious sunsets. Her abundant fish. Her land. Her people. Her community. My community.
>
> *(Wakinekona, 2017)*

*Ho'opono* is to do what is right; to live a truthful life; to be clear about your purpose in life. *Ho'opono* is also the effulgent coherence of speech with its correlation in action. It is found in Lokelani's *mo'olelo* because of the searing quality of her own search to be useful for her beloved community. In this way, she herself discovered a path of *pono* despite fear and trepidation for what her PhD committee would say. Here is the courage needed to push beyond mainstream expectations to *ho'opono* what has and will again be recognized as *enduring* intelligence.

We offer *ho'opono*—to speak what is right, true, and necessary—as one ingredient to *mo'olelo* and this innate longing to bring out what is true and *pono* about knowledge so we can all be of service to our world. This form of excellence and truth is now recognized and requested. Lokelani was then asked to write with this form of clarity within her thesis. What a celebration for us all!

## Ho'āla Hou

### *I ulu no ka lālā i ke kumu. We are products of our genealogical connections*

It begins in our na'au—the first brain of our body—our stomach region. A reawakening is activated when we enter spaces that are familiar, even though we may have never been there before. It seems that our environment connects us to our ancestral knowing. Even if we've never known it, it is something we've always yearned for. That awareness is what ho'āla hou is about. Environment, our beloved landscapes, and treasured elders activate *something*. It is symbiotic and simultaneous. Land receives as we are being received in. It is the same with research as it is in life. Why is this important? Ho'āla Hou is remembering a *deeper* capacity for how to experience something. It is not as far removed as we think it is! We do not want to go back to the past. We are in it. Now.

### *Meta Memo: Bumbye*

> Just completed my first focus group session with kupuna from my Waiʻanae community. What a special bunch of people. I felt privileged that they each chose to participate in this study. After all, who was I to be so honored by these who really deserve to be honored and esteemed? I felt like that hūpēkole (snotty nose) kid my grandma used to chide when I interrupted grownup talk as a child. Talk about which of these things is not like the others? I was feeling exactly that way.
>
> *(Wakinekona, 2017).*

We are the ones to bring forward this information! We *have* to engage in our own remembering! It is about reaching in and letting it *live*. It comes through agitation and conflict—this growing curiosity to want to know more, to heal our trauma, and to help others and ourselves evolve. We then begin to open the path and walk in! Then we sit. To be *present* helps understanding come through, just like Lokelani with her kupuna. Preconceived ideas that are shaped by uncritical "consensus" is not where the moʻo lives. Continuity changes agitation into sparks of *life* that help us learn something. Hoʻāla Hou is therefore very intimate. It happens within one's own naʻau and it becomes your own story, your own moʻolelo. It can be shared, but it happens first in your own self. Lokelani received this understanding through her process of Meta Memos. She wrote her own reflections after research sessions with kupuna and in that process she experienced her own hoʻāla hou—her own re-awakening:

> Anyway, I began with a setup of refreshments: hot mango tea, chilled water, butter mochi, banana bread, and fresh fruit. No plastics today. Real china, ceramic tea cups, silverware, cloth napkins, the whole deal all arranged on a table draped with an ʻulu quilt patterned table cloth. Nothing crunchy that could potentially be picked up on audio. No rustling plastic wrappers either. Perfect, I thought, for honoring this group of people and capturing their manaʻo. This is the generation who has witnessed the changes in our community over time of the good, the bad, the ugly, and otherwise. I tried to show my appreciation through my gesture of hospitality. Well, of aloha really.
>
> "Can I ask you a question?" Aunty said in a quiet and deliberate manner. "Are you planning to just sit there and listen or are you planning to participate in the conversation?" Well, I thought to myself, I was planning to just sit there and nod politely, but how did she know that? "You must participate," Aunty continued. "You have to let everyone know what your intentions are. You have to not present yourself as cold and distant. You have to be willing to share your thoughts too. It is expected for you to not just remain silent. Do you understand?" "Yes, Aunty," I replied. Oh crud! I thought to myself. I thought hūpēkoles were supposed to be seen but not heard! How do I participate without influencing the conversation to go one way or the other? I was really hoping to be the fly on the wall, but I couldn't not participate now!
>
> *(Wakinekona, 2017)*

## Hō‘ailona

### *Mai kea o lālapa i ka lani. Mai ka ‘ōpua lapa i Kahiki. Reflecting on the wild clouds of heaven. Entering from the turbulent clouds on the horizon*

Journeys from afar may be turbulent, but we find liberation and clarity in the experience.

When the desire to want to know becomes inquiry, the gift of presence then becomes awareness. Intentionality gets put out into the ethereal space and the environment responds. That is hō‘ailona. Our consciousness and thoughts connect to a flow of energy and we then "tap into". As we flow into it, it responds in-kind. It comes in many forms and to the untrained eye it will be just a bird, or the wind, but to those who seek deeper knowing, the sight or sounds of a bird, the silent pause of our elders, or the touch of a breeze affirms, instructs, and guides any process of inquiry:

> "How would you define success for a young Native Hawaiian person from Wai‘anae today and what might that definition be ten years in the future?" I asked. Then it happened. Complete silence accompanied by strange looks as if I had said something completely foreign. "What the heck is going on?" I thought to myself. "Was I not supposed to ask this?" My first inclination was to interject and provide a prompt to facilitate some conversation, but I dared not do it. Instead, I challenged myself to remain silent and wait. "Wait time is good," I told myself. "It might be good," I answered, "but it's awkward as heck. Somebody, please rescue me." The silence continued for what seemed like forever (in transcribing the audio tape following this session it was 45 seconds long). Did I say this was awkward, or what? Then I had a thought. "I've stumbled onto something here. There is something they don't like about this question, but what is it?" Silence is data to a researcher. After what turned out to be the most uncomfortable 45 seconds of my life (just being dramatic) Aunty broke the silence with a "Hmmmmm …" Okay, not exactly the response I was hoping for but a welcomed sound nonetheless, and fifteen seconds later she continued with a response. "Whew!" I thought to myself. "It's about time."
>
> *(Wakinekona, 2017)*

## Ho‘olono

### *Ka waihona o ka na‘auao. A wealth of knowledge*

Knowledge is enlightenment of oneself, which radiates outward to the greater community.

Hoʻolono is the deeper act of listening; it means to *hear*, to invoke the deity of abundance, peace, and to align with our better nature. It is active listening without ego and it becomes a gift we exchange with others in the act of research. We are not listening to what we are wanting to hear; we are hearing what we need to learn. This is a process that research can help us in. We improve our ability to hear an idea because we bear witness to it through our elders, through nature, our peers and the silence/sound of community.

To gain a deeper understanding of what is shared in storytelling we have learned to reflect after they have occurred. These reflections are not merely what was said, but what I as the listener felt and experienced. Here Lokelani summarizes in a "Meta Memo" to herself what went down during one of her sessions with her beloved kūpuna.

## *Meta Memo: Appreciating the Dragon*

> Today I spent time with two kūpuna for a second round of focus group interviews. These kūpuna are amazingly intriguing. I never get tired of listening to them. In fact, I often found myself at a loss for words, unable and unwilling to interject in the conversation that included me but really was between the two of them. I could not bring myself to break the rhythm of their words, their manaʻo, to insert my own silly questions in an attempt to perform my duty as researcher. On this day, I forsook my researcher role and happily settled into the role of the fly-on-the-wall. Sometimes, the deepest revelations come from the times when the researcher takes a back seat and becomes the fly-on-the-wall.
>
> Then, one Aunty turned to me and said, "Do you know how we survived all this time in the work we've done?" Aunty asked. To which my only reply was a hopeful look of, "Please tell me." "I appreciated the dragon," She said. "You what?!" I thought to myself daring not to speak so that I would not interrupt her train of thought. I was hanging onto every word. "I know what he [the dragon] is like. What he eats." She continued. "We knew how to make the dragon do our bidding. Play the dragon's game."
>
> *(Wakinekona, 2017)*

Here is the act of hoʻolono—the discipline of hearing what is both said and not said. One isn't the center of attention within this process. We become flies on the walls of our own research because that is how culture describes itself. Stories unfold on their own terms. Do not manipulate, prescribe or over orchestrate any sharing session. Do not make-up a false story. Cultural is as culture does, and in Hawaiʻi, this is through the clear and delicious abundance found when you remove yourself from the equation and life enters in all its infinite and creative forms found where the moʻo lives.

## 'Auamo Kuleana

### *E lawe i ke a'o a mālama a e 'oi mau ka na'auao. He who takes his teachings and applies them increases his knowledge*

'Auamo kuleana is a mo'olelo by itself. It holds multiple meanings that span the purpose of words and the function of stories. The following trilogy of interpretation from Aunty Pilahi Paki helps us organize what 'auamo kuleana means and can inspire with regard to research:

- Ho'opukakū (literal): to carry your responsibility.
- Kaona (symbolic): to practice at what you are responsible for.
- Noahuna (esoteric): a procreative expansion of life when each of us is engaged in our excellence.

We have each experienced 'auamo kuleana—*collective transformation through individual excellence*—when everyone is intentional and connected to their kūlana (spiritual purpose). Thus, your research is your own story expressing itself through the process and product of your experiences, thinking and writing. Your story is within a story that is by itself within a larger story within an even larger story. How is that?! You can almost see the mo'o's tail winding itself around itself and snuggling into the shadows of caves unexplored. It takes courage to go into your own story and figure out why on earth you are doing what you are doing, but here is where the mo'o lives, through authentic, self-reflective discourse.

### *I Found My Voice*

> Whoa! I've been trying to write my first 3 chapters of my dissertation. The first chapter wasn't half bad. The flow was pretty good. Then, it happened. Writer's block! The aching constipation of trying to force something out that just will not flow. The days and nights of agonizing over and over the need to produce something. Anything! The angel on one shoulder saying, "You can do this" and the devil on the other saying, "Quit! You'll never finish." How deflating.
>
> Then, the heavens open and a little ray of sunlight beams through the black clouds (Angel chorus singing). It happens! I find my voice! MY voice! Not the voice of some uptight researcher trying to get a room in the ivory tower of the who's who in academia. I get it now. I get to write MY story. I get to use MY voice. Forget trying to find room at the Ivory Tower Inn. I'm writing this for me, from me, with love. Well, actually it's for the lāhui. But it's still from me with love. All of a sudden the writing is flowing (what a relief) and I am excited to continue writing. I am actually sad that it's now almost midnight and I gotta go to work tomorrow, which means that I have to stop writing for now and get some sleep. Oh, did I mention that I am excited? I mean TOTALLY EXCITED! Do you even understand what it's like to dread writing sessions every day, all day?

> Trying to write to impress everyone is WAY over rated, but giving myself permission to do me the way only I can do me is completely liberating. Why write something that doesn't resonate with me? Isn't this research a journey about me anyway?—At least that's what my student loan bill indicates. It's my journey and I get to write about it from a place of strength. A place that is me through a voice that is mine. Why it has taken me so long to get to this epiphany I don't know, but boy am I glad I've arrived. Looking forward to meeting the keyboard tomorrow to do some writing. Excited and hopeful. Now, I wonder what my committee will say about me finding my voice. Hmmm … Oh well, I'll save that battle for another day. For today, I am free to be me. I found MY voice.
>
> *(Wakinekona, 2017)*

So, let us look at the tacit knowledge such writing holds out for us within a research process. These pieces are most certainly stories of Lokelani's life; snapshots of history that gives her self-awareness and sheds light on the vitality of land-based education and village life experiences that shaped her thinking, and the thinking of her community. This form of storytelling in research has many synonyms:

- Hermeneutic phenomenology.
- Heuristics.
- Auto-Ethnography.
- Narrative research.
- Indigenous epistemology.

Whatever you call the moʻo, and however stories thrive in the context of your research life, it inevitably thrives in truth-telling in service to our lands, water, and people. Here is where we heal and here is where our Voices are found.

## Hāʻina ʻia mai ana ka pūana. Thus ends our story

Here our story ends/begins. We have brought five Hawaiian verbs into a wider audience and in doing so helped ourselves to understand them within our own context. Hoʻopono, Hōʻailona, Hōʻala Hou, Hoʻolono, and ʻAuamo Kuleana are our specific ways we link to world-wide understanding. It is the purpose of our collaboration to support the writing and thinking efforts of all participants in this tale. Each of us gathered for a story and we each brought our chapter into its unfolding narration. The five values slowed us down so we could ruminate about how Lokelani was experiencing her own research and writing within her PhD. It was a hōʻailona to have found each other during this time-period. The request was made and friends gathered. The story keeps unfolding. *Pīpī holo kaʻao*!

## Notes

1 'āina n. Land, earth; "That which feeds; that which *nourishes*."
2 Aural: adjective—of or relating to the ear, or to the sense of hearing. See http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/aural
3 na'au: noun—intestines, bowels, guts; mind, heart, affections; of the heart or mind.

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# AFTERWORD

## To Be an Indigenous Scholar

*Cornel Pewewardy [Comanche-Kiowa]*

To be true to an Indigenous worldview, the Indigenous scholar must be concerned with the *practical* (resolution of the contemporary Indigenous voices who have survived European colonization and cognitive imperialism that continue to confront: the psychological, social, economic, political, historical, and cultural) and the *esoteric* (the spiritual, metaphysical essence and driving force of our humanity). Our western educational training prepared us to consider dimensions of the practical, while our Indigenous reality demands that we address the esoteric; the immaterial, non-tangible aspects of reality which come to life in such concepts as mind, spirit, consciousness, belief, conviction, mental representation, dream, image, intuition, imagination, myth, symbolism, and more. To abandon or discredit the metaphysics of modern existence would be a major mistake for any upcoming Indigenous scholar.

As Indigenous scholars, our work should not mimic western research methodology or be limited to the intellectual dominion or praxis limitations encapsulating the western tradition of research and knowledge production. In their very nature, outlook, theories, and practices, Indigenous research methodologies challenge western research orthodoxy, research and scholarship. By definition, they question western social and psychological truths (e.g., the relationship between mind, body and spirit) and provide an alternative way of conceptualizing and intervening in peoples' lives.

As an Indigenous scholar, we have a responsibility to our students—to lead not only showing how to decolonize research methodologies but how we practice our application within our respective communities. We must ask ourselves, whose tradition of knowledge are we following? Whose worldview are we emulating? We must help our students move through multiple layers of cognitive imperialism by talking and showing them the wounding that we have endured in

mainstream institutions of higher education; remembering of our story in the nefarious context of globalization; the cleansing from being dysconscious to becoming critically conscious of Indigeneity and understanding the settler-colonial relationship; and the healing that must take place by providing clear guideposts for a harmonious existence: knowledge essential for a generative existence, wisdom necessary for adequate governance, and good character to provide light that we may not stray from that which is right and good. Whether we do this standing in front of hundreds of people or standing in the presence of two or three, we must walk in the way of an Indigenous paradigm with dignity, measured movement, and courage, lest be found guilty in the presence of our ancestors of promoting the history and causes of our oppression.

The history of Indigenous peoples in the USA reflects the metaphor of a double-edged sword. On one side of a sharp sword are the BIA boarding schools, which tried to cut away our tribal languages and trash our cultures. On the other side of that same sharp sword is the concept of tribal critical thinking for liberating the captured or colonized mind. A captured mind that remains stuck in the colonial present and never evolves through stages of critical analysis is forever trapped in a colonial mindset, afraid of his/her own Indigenous shadow and footprint on Mother Earth. Indigenous educators and scholars submerged into this colonial prison will never have a clear, conscious ability to synthesize their tribal history and make liberatory plans for the future of their children. They are so deeply wounded by colonization that they will retreat and drift aimlessly toward compromise that they lose moral and spirit courage to ask critical questions anymore. Some may be so badly hurt that they will turn on their own Indigenous brothers and sisters, which I call recolonization.

The concept of applying Indigenous research methods aspires to be a reconstructive and locative educational and social justice idea. This means that Indigenous research methodologies must be able to provide the outlines for distinguishing themselves from other research projects and methodologies of educational and social advancement. I have tried to make the general contours of these outlines clear in my own career in academe. The present work, *Applying Indigenous Research Methods: Storying with Peoples and Communities*, with its research focus, fits into Indigenous thought and experiences with its aim to develop subject-centered analysis and solutions for Indigenous children. This is necessary not only for the sake of definition, but also for the sake of comparison with other projects. We have seen in this collection brought together by Sweeney Windchief and Timothy San Pedro, the emphasis on theorizing postcolonial Indigenous ways of doing research, exploring the application of these methodologies through conversation and story, and providing illustrative examples. What is necessary is an orientation to knowledge that puts noble obligations ahead of material values.

We need to know the fundamental ways of knowing in order to examine what it is that we do as Indigenous scholars. The requirements to be an Indigenous scholar therefore are for a clear definition, an appreciation of epistemology, and some substantive ideas about how one gains location in an Indigenous sense. All

educational ideas are therefore ideas about culture and language. The process of education is a process of socializing students into a particular social structure. The work of an Indigenous scholar should reflect a concern for human betterment, social transformation, social justice, spiritual liberation, and a never-ending search for the quest of knowledge, a continuous understanding and craft wisdom on Indigenous terms, and with Indigenous interests at heart.

The authors of this volume believe in the revolution that is currently happening in higher education. They know that Indigenous children can learn and are committed to the principles of teaching and educating that will affirm the existence of children who will reach the highest heights if they are met with concrete examples of care and concern. The barriers to Indigenous understanding have been battered down by the ramrod of truth and historical fact. Furthermore, we have seen our children learn to a greater degree than many thought possible in schools that have adopted an Indigenous curriculum and pedagogy. Much of the process of decolonization is to understand Indigenous reality. It is that reality and its problems that are important to analyze and discuss. Theoretically, moving through the processes of colonization redirects one's consciousness in the direction of liberating colonial thinking and affirming Indigenous praxis.

The authors of the chapters of this book are educators with special skills for observing the behaviors of Indigenous children; they are scholars who have studied the patterns of American education and have exposed themselves to the essential theories of human learning, but they have not forgotten the lessons of their youth, the lessons of their ancestors, the lessons of the grandmothers and grandfathers. These are the fundamental elements that are passed from generation to generation. Not to use Audre Lourde's infamous saying "the master's tools can dismantle the master's house," but rather Indigenizing the academy using postcolonial research paradigms to critique colonialism that emphasizes "how we (re)build our own houses" as a resurgent approach to decolonizing research paradigms that builds our experiences of the past to secure a noncolonial present and future. We do not seek education to reign over others or to amass great wealth; we seek education to become better people, which means to work for harmony and peace in the world.

Since education remains a method of socializing children into a society, we are in dire need to socialize our children for effective living in the 21st century. That means that the children must see themselves as contributing to the entire human project. The sustaining of a social and cultural impetus for the education of our children must come from the theorists, the practitioners, and the parents. Teachers must teach children to be all they can be. Parents must encourage children from the standpoint of their culture and background to engage information in a positive way. If Indigenous children are to be prepared for the future, then we must take advantage of the lessons of the past and the working of the present. This book is a clear example of what must continue to be done. We must applaud this work as a practical instrument for the liberation of our children's minds.

This book is also an attempt to illustrate and demonstrate some of the ways we can use our cultural base to educate children. There is nothing unfamiliar to the reader about this process; it has been the fundamental process of education in all societies. You cannot leave the education of your children simply to those whose purposes and knowledge base are different from your own and expect the children to grow up and follow the path of your ancestors. This is precisely why some people go so far as to say that if you want a child to be trained in a certain way then people who espouse views that are anathema to that way cannot teach the child.

Reading this book, we recognize that we are dealing with knowledge production in societies that treat humans unequally. After centuries of domination of some countries, people, classes, and races over other countries, people, classes, and races, we are still asking ourselves how such international inequality has been possible and continues to be so. The question about how such global social order was constructed is unanswered, although all of us must act to change it. For centuries, our modernity has included much ignorance about otherness because the only way of knowing was to eliminate, subordinate, and/or oppress our differences from the Other. Colonization was based on such terrible assumptions, and the effects of such narratives have been substantial, leading to different ways of producing societies and creating knowledge.

Personal pathways of becoming researcher, scientist, activist, or practitioner of any discipline will no longer be mysterious and hidden if books such as this one can create a movement to emphasize the multiple and complex connection between the self and the social. Personal steps toward liberatory practices are a process of decolonization, an inherent tribal right to self-determination. This edited collection is a response by critically-minded educators, activists, and scholars—both a reaction to and a call to action against these vilifications. It is a critical reading for students, professors, administrators, and policy makers involved in public education. This book brings voice to a community of researchers who have much to offer in terms of their rich cultural heritages and expertise in research methodology. The authors of this volume suggest that a well thought-out strategy to educate our children is the best form of bringing about social change. The work in this volume should inspire an entire generation of Indigenous educators to grasp the opportunity presented to us to save our children. We know the problems of Indigenous education and their causes. With our limited time and money, we must now talk only about solutions and their implementation. My sincere hope is that this book will be read widely, as it certainly deserves to be read, and that the ideas of the authors addressed herein will be appropriated by all human beings.

# CONTRIBUTORS

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Now residing back in Oklahoma, Dr. Pewewardy sings Southern Plains powwow songs, composes songs and plays the Native American flute. His music is recorded on Sound of America Records (SOAR), Music of the World, Shortwave Records, and Smithsonian Institute.

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