REBUILDING THE LONGHOUSE: DECONSTRUCTING SETTLER COLONIALISM via DECOLONIZING EDUCATION

by

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ABSTRACT

Rebuilding the longhouse is a restorative approach to reconciliation that applies community, action-based qualitative research methods aimed at re-establishing the social arrangement outlined in the Wabanaki treaties of peace and friendship. Wabanaki peoples trusted the treaty process to secure their ways of living and title to their traditional lands and waterways. The British Empire and then Canada ultimately violated treaty obligations in many ways that continue to impact Wabanaki holistic growth and development. Wabanaki peoples, like so many Indigenous peoples worldwide, find themselves in the position of having to navigate settler control of their sovereignty and right to self-determination to heal the intergenerational trauma of settler colonialism. The first step towards that goal involves critical analysis of the many modern machinations of settler colonialism, and highlighting the neo-colonial ways settler societies empower their own future growth at the expense of Indigenous peoples. Decolonizing education within neo-colonial settler societies is a growing field of study for Indigenous peoples hoping to meaningfully and effectively reconcile the intergenerational trauma of settler colonialism. A restorative concept of reconciliation ultimately means detaching from old-world, colonial attitudes, behaviours, and practices and embracing the idea that before we attach cultural, ethnic, religious, and linguistic labels, we are all treaty peoples first. This thesis will show that when Indigenous societies detach from settler control of Indigenous education they are able to recover, revitalize, and re-establish their traditional knowledge exchange processes and begin to heal the intergenerational damage of settler colonialism.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my children Shaina and Dylan, I owe you both so much for making my life so beautiful!

To my mom, you have always been a strong support in my life, thank you so much.

And to Mernsy, my partner and best friend, your love and support gave me the will to endure this crazy adventure.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

This thesis advocates for a restorative concept of reconciliation – one that involves decolonizing education within an intergenerational framework that re-establishes traditional Indigenous knowledge exchange processes according to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2007). Intergenerational oppression of settler colonialism is regenerated by neo-colonial social arrangements like those dictated by Canada's *Indian Act* (1876); an act that illegally denies treaty rights and maintains settler control over Indigenous holistic growth and development. This thesis argues that *Indian Act* (1876) attitudes, behaviours, and policies create many levels of structural obstacles within Canada that prevent Indigenous peoples from effectively healing the damage settler colonialism inflicted upon them. To disrupt this cycle of trauma, decolonizing education is a two-part process that involves the theorizing and sharing of Indigenous frameworks for the creation of (necessary) processes and direct actions to implement decolonizing agendas. Within neo-colonial social arrangements that essentially assert settler control over Indigenous education on every level, settler governments play a determining role in defining the scope and limitations of decolonizing processes at a local-community level. Thus, settler control must be confronted at a governance level within every institution in Canada. For Indigenous peoples, healing damages associated with intergenerational traumas, through decolonizing education means kinships themselves must continue to build on the cultural resilience which enabled Indigenous nations the ability to survive the onslaught of settler

colonialism, and to detach from settler control while re-establishing modern cultural and linguistic educational frameworks. Neo-colonial social arrangements within mainstream education seem to deter an emergence of this restorative concept of reconciliation within the field of education, and as we know, most attempts to decolonize the academy within Canada fall short of relinquishing control over Indigenous education. This chapter will introduce the problem being studied and the research questions guiding my thesis, the historical background of the problem, the current context of the situation, and the thesis research questions. Additionally, this chapter will also introduce three key concepts that I feel are critical to the fields of decolonizing education, Indigenous resurgence and critical settler colonial studies. I will conclude this chapter by providing insight on my personal reasons for exploring decolonizing education, Indigenous resurgence, and of what benefit I feel my research holds for the broader Indigenous community.

Thesis Framework

This research study will observe the phenomenon of settler colonialism in three ways: 1) A review of leading Indigenous theories of decolonizing education, Indigenous resurgence, and critical settler colonialism; 2) An 8-week auto-ethnography to explore the efficacy of on-line digital technology for healing the damage of settler colonialism on Indigenous languages and cultural worldview; 3) A critical interpretation of settler colonialism in Canada with specific focus on the Wabanaki experience informed by critical pedagogy, a phenomenological inquiry, and a historical narrative analysis that examines how mainstream historical narratives conceptualize the impact of settler

colonialism on the lived experiences of Indigenous peoples. My thesis will close with a discussion of research findings.

Research Questions

1. How has the experience of settler colonialism impacted Indigenous peoples around the world?
2. What are the long-term impacts of settler colonialism and how do they manifest in modern society?
3. How do decolonizing processes within education empower and enable local Indigenous groups to re-establish their respective traditional knowledge exchange processes in Canada?

Background

The Wabanaki Confederacy was established by the Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqey, Penobscot and Passamaquoddy nations in the early part of the 17th century to protect their interests as Europeans began to establish colonies on their territorial lands (Wicken & Reid, 1996; Paul, 2006). The traditional territories of this confederacy include present day Atlantic Canada as well most of the New England area of the United States. My life, especially living within New Brunswick, highlighted this harsh reality: for Wabanaki peoples the colonial period never ended. The same can be said for Indigenous people across Canada as their sovereignty and right to self-determination continues to be denied at local, institutional, provincial, and federal levels.

French and English settler colonialism into Wabanaki territories was a part of a much larger imperialist operation that targeted Indigenous territories for resource

extraction and population re-settlement. Both France and England applied various tactics to acquire control over Indigenous lands and waterways. British settler colonialism would dominate especially during the second half of the 18th century. British colonial attitudes, behaviours, and practices would become much more rigid, hegemonic, violent, and directly assault anyone who resisted British rule (Grenier,2008; Reid, Basque, Mancke, Moody, Plank, & Wicken, 2003). This thesis will argue that Wabanaki ancestors understood the geo-political changes they had been confronted with and entered the treaty making process as a way of protecting their way of life for future generations. By the start of the 19th century the British Empire had become a dominant world power, limited French colonial interests in North America, expelled the Acadians in mass numbers from their newly acquired territories, and were now ready to advance their colonial agenda towards dispossessing Indigenous peoples of their lands and waterways for resettlement of their loyal subjects (Grenier, 2008; Wicken & Reid, 1996). By the time Canada became a country in 1867 the forceful imposition of British colonial, institutional, hierarchy had already begun to have a devastating impact on the holistic growth and development of Indigenous people and would ultimately direct the future course of Indigenous-settler relations throughout the history of Canada.

The Confederation of Canada was the beginning of a neo-colonial agenda steeped in the British colonial agenda of land dispossession and resource extraction through military violence and campaigns of terror aimed at ethnic cleansing and cultural genocide. Canada was a vision created by settler peoples meant to empower their own future holistic growth and development which came at the expense of Indigenous peoples. The *Indian Act* (1876) outlined a framework for Indigenous-settler relations

based on the old-world colonial agenda to remove the Indigenous populations from their traditional lands, extinguish their ancestral rights to their traditional territories, eliminate their cultural existence, and gain ownership and control of Indigenous territories and waterways. The history of government policies aimed at Indigenous peoples in Canada since 1867 highlights this in detail. Education, most notably the residential school system, aided and abetted the cultural genocide and dispossession of Indigenous peoples in Canada (Battiste, 2013). Ultimately this old-world colonial relationship has manifested into a social reality for Indigenous peoples wherein corporate, provincial, territorial and federal agencies have control over their ancestral territories and waterways, and in doing so hold so much sway over the future holistic growth and development of Indigenous people in Canada. The neo-colonial framework at work in Canada presents major obstacles for a fair and equitable reconciliation of settler colonialism because so much of the Canadian system operates on stolen lands and regardless of that reality, settlers are complicity to this conversation as they continue to reap benefits of great wealth from the lands' natural resources, as well as the lands themselves.

The *Indian Act* (1876) imposes a social arrangement aimed at legitimizing the outright theft of Indigenous lands and waterways. It administrates the regulation and control of traditional Indigenous lands and waterways. Indian Act attitudes, behaviours, and practices have created social arrangements that present daunting obstacles to overcome to effectively end the intergenerational trauma of settler colonialism and empower Indigenous holistic growth and resurgence in Canada. Indigenous resistance against settler colonialism led to the treaty making process and made some space for Indigenous peoples to protect their future growth and holistic development. As Canada

grew as a nation, the treaties were ignored and the egalitarian social framework that was established among Indigenous nations was replaced with a social arrangement that favored settler society. The current social framework for Indigenous-settler relations in Canada does not reflect the egalitarian principles laid out in the treaties. Instead, it regenerates attitudes, behaviours, and practices that allow for settler society to knowingly and unknowingly benefit from neo-colonial arrangements at the expense of Indigenous sovereignty, and the holistic growth and development of Indigenous nations.

The social arrangements settler colonialism has created in Canada has also served to embolden the spirit of Indigenous resistance against the regeneration of the trauma of settler colonialism. Reconciling the impact of settler colonialism on Indigenous peoples requires direct political actions to first end its regeneration by transforming social arrangements that prop up the inherited and imposed neo-colonial framework in Canada. Every social structure and institution within Canada in its own way echoes attitudes, behaviours, and practices that historically marginalized and treated Indigenous peoples as inferior to European peoples. Most Canadians do not experience these effects but for Indigenous people they deal with them daily, as nearly every social structure and institution within Canada regenerates those outdated modes of thinking in so many ways. They have influenced generations of Canadians in subtle and overt ways to treat Indigenous peoples as *conquered nations*[1], rather than as targets of an intergenerational, cultural genocide aimed at eradicating their entire existence.

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[1] http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/nova-scotia-premier-apology-mi-kmaq-conquered-people-1.3864818

Decolonizing education should involve more than raising awareness of residential schools, providing culturally appropriate books, and improving the (English) literacy and numeracy rates of Indigenous students through provincial curriculums. Decolonizing processes require deconstructing the attitudes, behaviours, and practices that assume settler society is responsible for directing and controlling local efforts to decolonize Indigenous education. It is about *First Nation Control of First Nation Education* (AFN 2010). Decolonizing processes at every level in Canada must be directed at reclaiming control of traditional lands and waterways, and beginning the transition towards implementing the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2007) as a new social arrangement for Indigenous-settler relations in Canada.

At a gathering of the Assembly of First Nations hosted on December 8, 2015, in Gatineau, Quebec, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau described his plan to re-establish a nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous nations as a sacred obligation.[2] Most recently on May 10, 2016 Canada fully endorsed the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP, 2007), a change from their original position, nearly a decade after it was adopted by the General Assembly in 2007[3]. UNDRIP is a universally recognized document that contains 46 articles directed at transforming Indigenous-settler relations based on the premise of Indigenous sovereignty and treaty partnership. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in its *Principles of Reconciliation*

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[2] http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/justin-trudeau-afn-indigenous-aboriginal-people-1.3354747

[3] (CBC Article: http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/canada-adopting-implementing-un-rights-declaration-1.3575272)

(2015) identifies UNDRIP specifically. At the core of decolonizing education and Indigenous resurgence lies the deeper issue of Indigenous sovereignty. The liberation of education from settler control is intimately connected with settler control of Indigenous lands and waterways. Decolonizing education, or *Indigenizing the Academy*, (however you choose to name it), involves Aboriginal peoples' direct actions to reclaim Indigenous sovereignty over their traditional lands, waterways, and future growth and development. Rebuilding the Longhouse is a concept that aims to re-establish traditional Indigenous attitudes, behaviours, and practices within a modern context that begins with taking back control of Indigenous education.

Research Goals

My primary goal is to explore Indigenous perspectives on decolonizing education as a means for confronting the systemic and structural obstacles within society that are preventing Indigenous people from exercising their rights to self-determination. I feel the best way I can contribute to decolonizing processes at a local level in Wabanaki territory is to include land-based and decolonizing pedagogies into my educational practices going forward. I hope to return to the teaching world in some capacity and continue to build up the next generation of Indigenous learners. I hope to explore further whether Indigenous resurgence can fit into modern academia, and if current post-secondary institutions in Canada are willing and capable of letting go of control over Indigenous education and support Indigenous land-based programs aimed at developing generations of Indigenous learners. I am exploring where to begin resurgence at a local level, and what role if any

do mainstream education and academia play in decolonizing education and Indigenous resurgence.

Key Concepts

An extensive review of the relevant literature pertaining to Indigenous resurgence and decolonizing education highlighted three key concepts I feel are critical for Wabanaki resurgence and will be referred to throughout this thesis: 1) a restorative approach to reconciliation; 2) re-establishing Indigenous consciousness and ways of living within a holistic, modern context; and 3) the recovery and revitalization of Indigenous languages, knowledges, and worldviews as decolonizing tools of resurgence.

Indigenous Holistic Growth & Resurgence

Indigenous holistic growth and resurgence refers to the traditional practices that each Indigenous nation used to regenerate their cultural worldview and maintain their unique ways of living. Settler colonialism nearly extinguished traditional knowledge exchange processes through assimilative education policies. To effectively heal the damage caused by the intergenerational trauma of settler colonialism, any talk of reconciliation in Canada must be rooted in repairing the damage that settler colonialism caused. This is a massive concept to imagine; even more daunting is where to begin. The literature review suggests a two-step decolonizing process that first involves critically examining the social structures and institutions within Canada that govern overall Indigenous future growth and development, then to take direct actions to transform them. The second part of that process is where most decolonizing efforts within mainstream education in Canada falls short. My decolonizing journey began with critically analyzing

my own educational lens and I realized through my experience within mainstream educational structures that many programs directed at bridging educational gaps for Indigenous learners do not consider the contemporary ways mainstream education regenerates the trauma of settler colonialism. Critical for Wabanaki holistic growth and resurgence today is re-establishing traditional knowledge exchange processes outside the purview of settler control that incorporate Wabanaki wisdom and ways of knowing through a fully actualized cultural and linguistic framework. This will enable and empower a resurgence of Wabanaki generations who personify both cultural and contemporary knowledges and ways of knowing. Indigenous holistic growth and resurgence will require generations of Indigenous people who know their nation's history and the sovereign rights of their people to take on the enormous challenge of reclaiming their traditional lands and waterways from settler control.

Indigenous Resurgence through Decolonizing Education

Considering the broad subject of Indigenous resurgence and historical scope of settler colonialism, I chose to narrow this thesis to decolonizing education, which I see as a chance to opt out of the hegemonic, Eurocentric, neo-colonial educational structures within settler society. Decolonizing education in line with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2007) will begin a period of recovery and revitalization of Indigenous knowledge exchange processes as Smith (1999) says a chance to "retrieve what we were and remake ourselves…the past, our stories local and global, the present, our communities, cultures, languages, and social practices – all may be spaces of marginalization, but they have also become spaces of resistance and hope"

(p. 4) . This is critically important especially for Wabanaki nations as linguicide is a serious threat and with the loss of a language a whole worldview is also lost.

Decolonizing education from an Indigenous perspective is an action-based process, that requires developing new educational programs and rethinking the modern classroom to regenerate Indigenous consciousness through a cultural and linguistic framework[4]. Today, Indigenous education in Canada for the most part is administered through the *Indian Act* (1876) and its subsequent localized Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and tri-partite agreements. Decolonizing education sheds a light on how this patriarchal relationship manifests at the individual level, affecting both settler and Indigenous peoples through education. In this system of neo-colonial regeneration, it is almost impossible to take part within settler societal structures and institutions without being impacted in many ways. Decolonizing education focuses on detaching from neo-colonial attitudes, behaviours and practices, and developing educational programs that empower and enable Wabanaki consciousness and navigate modern issues within a cultural context. This can be done but requires incorporating Indigenous knowledge keepers, languages, cultural knowledge and ceremony into the educational processes which cannot be done currently given the social arrangements affecting Indigenous education in Canada. Indigenous societies worldwide are overcoming the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual obstacles that settler colonialism has created by taking back their education from settler control.

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[4] http://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/5-models-of-first-nations-control-of-education-in-action-1.2642733

Reclaiming Indigenous Knowledge Exchange Processes as Tools of Resurgence

Indigenous moves towards resurgence in Canada, and the dire state of so many Indigenous knowledges, languages and worldviews speaks to the historical and ongoing injustices committed against Indigenous societies throughout Turtle Island. The evolution of settler colonialism in Canada and its assimilative demands resulted in the death and near extinction of Indigenous languages, which in turn had devastating impact on Indigenous knowledges and worldviews. The recovery and revitalization of Indigenous languages is critical for Indigenous holistic growth and resurgence. Indigenous languages are irreplaceable resources that require protection and support. Indigenous knowledges, languages and worldviews follow specific cultural guidelines passed on since time immemorial, and since contact with Europeans the holistic flow of Indigenous ways of living has been disrupted by assimilative policies and encroachment on Indigenous territories. Indigenous nations worldwide have re-established holistic growth and development through developing educational models within their respective linguistic and cultural contexts. In doing so, they have improved individual and communal wellbeing, effectively recovered their languages from the brink of extinction, and are now determining the future growth of their society for themselves in their own ways. Undoing the damage is an intergenerational effort, and I feel *Rebuilding the Longhouse* starts with building a solid frame to support future growth of future Wabanaki peoples based on Wabanaki wisdom and ways of knowing, blended with contemporary knowledges.

My Position as an Indigenous Researcher

In my capacity as an educator I have worked at various levels within New Brunswick and have travelled between the two worlds that make up my ancestry. My mother is Mi'kmaq, and she was raised at a time when her parents needed a pass from an Indian Agent to leave their reservation. I learned so much about the damage settler colonialism has had on the family from listening to her stories about growing up on an Indian reservation during the 1940s and 1950s. Her *Indian Status* was taken away by *Indian Act* policy when she married my non-Indigenous father. Bill C-31, a bill to amend the *Indian Act*, effectively reinstated her status, and she could finally move back to Canada from the USA to her home community of Ugpi'ganjig, more commonly known as Eel River Bar. I lived in Ugpi'ganjig most of my life. I raised my children there, and I consider it my home. Existing on the margins of two totally divergent social realities all my life has greatly shaped my perspective on modern society. I want to know how such obvious institutional and social injustices can exist and regenerate seemingly unchecked in a modern society that proclaims itself to be free and democratic has ultimately led me here. When I became Director of Aboriginal Education Initiatives at St. Thomas University (STU) in 2010, my goal was to develop an action plan that identified obstacles for Indigenous learners within academia and ways to overcome or lessen the effects of those obstacles. My initial research involved reading research studies that highlighted best practices, and I also drew upon my own experience as a person of mixed-ancestry, especially as a parent of Indigenous children who has always been fully aware of the social reality they would inherit. Navigating the world through this lens has allowed me to continuously grow, adapt, and expand my knowledge of self and apply those lessons to

my personal life and career objectives. As an undergraduate I attended STU, and both inside and outside of the classroom, I absorbed as much ceremony and Indigenous knowledge I could by volunteering most of my time to support Indigenous resurgence in local ways. I tried to incorporate many of those experiences into my action plan at STU, and focused on improving student wellbeing and providing a safe place on campus for Indigenous learners to have access to their culture and ceremony as a means for stress-reduction. In 2012 the Wabanaki Resource Center opened at STU and Miigam'agan was our very first Elder-in-Residence, and holistic growth, and Indigenous resurgence, was the context for our initial conversations.

In a way, this thesis is a continuation of that effort to better understand the systemic obstacles within settler society plaguing Indigenous holistic growth and resurgence. Miigam'agan is a Mi'kmaq ceremonial scholar whom I first met during my undergraduate degree and was one of a handful of Wabanaki elders who helped me better understand my own Indigeneity. She and I worked collaboratively to empower Indigenous post-secondary learners to build life-long learning skills within a holistic culturally appropriate context[5]. During this time, a colleague in the STU Social Work department introduced me to the First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model which was the outcome of a series of workshops that brought together Indigenous educators,

[5] It is important to acknowledge that we were totally cognizant of the academic setting we were in, and that we were part of the *Indigenize the Academy* movement. Recognizing this we did our best to achieve our goal given the limitations we worked within.

community practitioners, researchers and government agencies to begin discussing and identifying the many aspects of lifelong learning that contribute to success for Indigenous communities[6]. The learning model represents the link between lifelong learning and community well-being, and was used as a sort of framework for measuring success that Miigam'agan and I used at the Wabanaki Resource Center at STU. It introduced me to a visual representation of a concept I refer to throughout this thesis as Indigenous knowledge exchange processes. As an educator, this model introduced me to another metric for success than I had been used to working within the mainstream educational system. This model highlights the critical role of mother-tongue language, ceremony, and worldview in holistic growth and development, as well the influence of outside factors.

I am currently a research assistant at the Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Center (MWC) at the University of New Brunswick. The supervisor for my current research assistant position, David Perley the Director of the MWC at UNB, is working collaboratively with many people (including the co-supervisors of this thesis) in many ways to empower Indigenous resurgence throughout Wabanaki territory and beyond. At MWC, the recovery and revitalization of Indigenous knowledges, languages and worldviews as decolonizing tools of resurgence is happening, and Indigenous and settler allies are

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6 http://www.afn.ca/uploads/files/education2/community_dialogues_on_first_nations_holistic_lifelong_learning,_2009.pdf

connecting the wisdom of Indigenous knowledge keepers with students, service providers and policy makers. At MWC Indigenous knowledges and languages inform Indigenous philosophy, pedagogy and worldviews through qualitative, participatory research methodologies that include Indigenous communities in a meaningful and effective way. I think academia can be a place where a resurgence of Indigenous languages, knowledges and worldviews can foster and grow, but it would first require some radical transformations to current governance models within mainstream academia.

In my experience as an educator within New Brunswick, I have worked with many non-Indigenous people who aspire and work towards a more holistically inclusive and harmonious community for our future generations. Healing the intergenerational damage of settler colonialism is not just an Indigenous journey; it requires solidarity and a commitment to change from settler peoples as well. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) stated boldly that reconciliation must be met with real social, political, and economic commitment to change. We need to make direct actions now, and make ending the intergenerational trauma of settler colonialism a national priority and intergenerational movement.

This thesis is a chance for me to decolonize my educational lens and pedagogical practices going forward in my own career. To me, decolonizing education at the post-secondary level will require that space is ensured to offer Indigenous knowledge keepers and ceremonial scholars (elders) a meaningful and effective part to play in the academic community, equal to that of current governance structures and academic protocols at the University of New Brunswick. This thesis is my way of confronting a systemic, intergenerational problem that is already affecting my own children; without significant

social transformations, it will continue to impact their children and the future generations of Indigenous peoples across Canada. Between the margins of this long-standing debate stands our next generation of young people; they are watching us as we navigate this conflict and they will learn their role in this conflict based on our actions. I ask: "what will they inherit from you?"

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The literature review has allowed me to continuously explore Indigenous resurgence and decolonizing modes of education, and to expand my knowledge in those areas. Indigenous societies impacted by settler colonialism have seen the holistic flow of their respective traditional ways of living severely disrupted as their physical and spiritual connection with traditional lands and waterways increasingly became detached through land displacement and assimilation policies. This in turn has had a devastating impact on Indigenous knowledge exchange processes, languages, and worldviews.

For this literature review I chose Indigenous writers who acknowledge the damage of settler colonialism via a critical lens but focus their energy on moving forward towards resurgence, rebuilding and healing. To explore Indigenous theories of resurgence and decolonizing education I focused on the work of Marie Battiste (2000, 2013), Leanne Simpson (2008, 2011, 2014), Eve Tuck (2009, 2012[7]), Jeffrey Corntassel (2012), Taiaiake Alfred (2005), George Manuel (1974), Arthur Manuel (2015), Leroy Little Bear (2000, 2016), Bernard Perley (2011), Trudy Sable and Bernie Francis (2012). The literature review begins with Indigenous theories of resurgence and reconciliation, then explores the impact of settler colonialism on mainstream education, and closes with highlighting the critical role of Indigenous knowledges, languages, and worldviews.

[7]Co-authored with K. Wayne Yang

Envisioning the Fourth World: Theories of Indigenous Resurgence

The Fourth World: An Indian Reality (Manuel & Posluns, 1974) was in part a response to the *White Paper* (1968) a policy plan aimed at extinguishing Indigenous treaty rights that protect Indigenous title to their traditional lands and waterways, and right to self-determination (Manuel, A., 2016). The Fourth World defines Indigenous nation as a group of peoples who share a common language, culture, and traditional territory. Indigenous nations in Canada and around the globe resisted European settler colonialism and continue to advocate for their sovereignty and right to self-determination despite the presence of dominant first, second, and third world nation-states who maintain control of Indigenous lands and waterways. The Fourth World is a journey towards re-establishing nation-to-nation treaty relationship between Indigenous and settler society, and a concept of *home rule* for Indigenous nations in Canada: a vision wherein Indigenous nations have rebuilt their traditional knowledge exchange processes within a modern, technological framework and detached from settler control at every level (Manuel & Posluns, 1974). The Fourth World espouses a peaceful militancy in demanding direct actions towards progressive social changes, and made me understand that the resurgence of Indigenous sovereignty and a decolonizing education are more than just concepts to be theorized and discussed at academic conferences.

George Manuel, who envisioned the Fourth World, was a Shuswap leader, a life-long advocate for Indigenous rights in Canada, and a founding member of the National Indian Brotherhood (now known as the Assembly of First Nations). George Manuel and other Indigenous sovereigntists from around the world founded the World Council on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) in 1975 because they felt they needed an organization that

would give Indigenous peoples visibility and voice on the international stage. A voice, he believed, that was often muted by the settler nation-states that colonized Indigenous peoples and continued to illegally occupy those traditional territories. They chose the term *Indigenous* over others like *Indian* and *Aboriginal* that were deemed colonial terms, and define Indigenous Peoples as: "Peoples living in countries which have a population composed of differing ethnic or racial groups who are descendants of the earliest populations living in the area and who do not as a group control the national government of the countries within which they live" (Manuel, A, 2015, p.171). WCIP first order of business was the emancipation of the traditional land rights of Indigenous peoples worldwide that were overpowered by European settler colonialism, peoples who are now forced to accept the colonizer's imposed concepts of *Indigenous Rights*. To address this injustice, the WCIP recommended the following:

1. That the International community recognize Indigenous sovereignty and entitlement to traditional lands;
2. That the United Nations recognize the treaties that Indigenous Nations around the world have signed as binding under International Law;
3. That the International community and the United Nations honour its responsibility to the Indigenous Nations of the world by establishing the necessary mechanisms and instruments to protect their rights to self-determination with their lands and resources

   (Manuel, A., 2015, p.171).

Much of the hard work of the World Council on Indigenous People evolved into the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the *United Nations Declaration on*

the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP 2007). Reconciliation of settler colonialism through a Fourth World lens requires Indigenous control over Indigenous futures within every sector of society. Shifting towards this type of progressive (at the same time spiritual) vision for Canada can only come about when those Indigenous nations again achieve security and control over their own destinies (Manuel & Posluns, 1974). Canada, like many other modern countries, is a land suffering from an outgrowth of 18th century European colonial expansion. Canadian Confederation in 1867 officially marks the date when Canada became a neo-colonial, satellite, nation-state of the English Empire. Indigenous nations resisted (and continue to resist), but over time the imposition of both colonial and today's neo-colonial settler societies' dominant beliefs and ideals took hold, predominantly through the assimilative educational programs which became infused within these Indigenous nations across Canada (Battiste, 2013). The Truth and Reconciliation Commission TRC (2015) offers 94 calls-to-actions aimed at achieving the goal of Indigenous sovereignty outlined in UNDRIP (2007). A part of the TRC's Final Report was *What We Have Learned: Principles of Truth and Reconciliation* (2015):

> The TRC believes that if Canada hopes to flourish in the 21st century and for reconciliation between Indigenous and Settler peoples to be effective it must be based on the following principles:
>
> 1. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is the framework for reconciliation at all levels and across all sectors of Canadian society.

2. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, as the original peoples of this country and as self-determining peoples, have Treaty, constitutional, and human rights that must be recognized and respected.
3. Reconciliation is a process of healing of relationships that requires public truth sharing, apology, and commemoration that acknowledge and redress past harms.
4. Reconciliation requires constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism that have had destructive impacts on Aboriginal peoples' education, cultures and languages, health, child welfare, the administration of justice, and economic opportunities and prosperity.
5. Reconciliation must create a more equitable and inclusive society by closing the gaps in social, health, and economic outcomes that exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.
6. All Canadians, as Treaty peoples, share responsibility for establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships.
7. The perspectives and understandings of Aboriginal Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers of the ethics, concepts, and practices of reconciliation are vital to long-term reconciliation.
8. Supporting Aboriginal peoples' cultural revitalization and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, protocols, and connections to the land into the reconciliation process are essential.
9. Reconciliation requires political will, joint leadership, trust building, accountability, and transparency, as well as a substantial investment of resources.

10. Reconciliation requires sustained public education and dialogue, including youth engagement, about the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal rights, as well as the historical and contemporary contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canadian society.

(TRC 2015, p. 3-4).

Settler Colonialism and Mainstream Education

Settler colonialism is distinct from other forms of imperialist oppression in that settlers come with the intention of making a new home on the land, then assume authority and sovereignty over all things in their new domain, including the Indigenous peoples themselves (Tuck & Yang, 2012; Battiste, 2013). The historical legacy of settler colonialism directly assaulted the critical foundations of Indigenous holistic growth and development through government policy, and the struggle to repair these vital connections is encompassed within the goal of healing and reconciliation, and a responsibility of settler nation-states (RCAP, 1996; UNDRIP, 2007; Anaya, 2014; TRC, 2015). Fourth World perspectives on elevating both a decolonizing education and an Indigenous resurgence is a more effective way of securing Indigenous sovereignty and control over their future growth than meeting provincial or federally defined measures of success (Simpson, 2014; Battiste, 2013; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Settler colonialism's impact on Indigenous peoples is multi-layered and is laced by race-based, gendered, hierarchal ideologies that posit one cultural group as superior to another, a critical reason that Indigenous society, in large part, mistrusts academia and mainstream education (Manuel & Posluns, 1974; Battiste, 2013; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005). Smith (1999)

shares how “Decolonization is a process which engages with imperialism and colonialism at multiple levels,” and posits that “ for researchers, one of those levels is concerned with having a more critical understanding of the underlying assumptions, motivations and values which inform research practices” (p. 21).

In this vein, educators, and the public alike, must begin to grasp the realism of settler colonialism and how it creates unfair social arrangements that benefit settler society. The principal agenda of settler colonialism—to reposition title of Indigenous territories to the newly formed settler society—was a process that occurred throughout Canada during the 18th and 19th centuries. A key impact of settler colonialism on Indigenous people was encroachment onto sovereign Indigenous territory, which in turn induced government policies aimed at extinguishing Indigenous ways of connecting with the land through assimilative education (Simpson, 2014; Battiste, 2013; Alfred & Corntassel, 2005). Importantly, and within this discourse, one recognizes that these policies continue to disconnect Indigenous people from land-based traditional ways of living and healing that have been practiced by Indigenous ancestors since time immemorial. After Confederation, Canada would control Indigenous education through the *Indian Act* (1867). Through this legislation, ‘Indian Act’ attitudes, behaviours, and practices of the colonial enforcers (police, priests, teachers and the Indian agents) would eventually enable the religious and state authorities they supported to steal generations of Indigenous children from their families through an ongoing enforcement and manipulation that served the residential school system, all while Indigenous parents were powerless to stop it. Identifying and addressing intergenerational traumas stemming from this era, and confronting the on-going theft of Indigenous lands and waterways, and the

assimilative nature of state controlled education is a critical part of decolonizing strategies that, for the most part, mainstream settler-controlled education and wellness services do not address (Simpson 2011, 14; Tuck & Yang, 2012).

I first read of the work of Paulo Freire in a Native Studies class during my undergraduate degree, and although he is not Indigenous, his text, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2000), highlighted for me how colonial oppression is a dehumanizing process "which marks not only those whose humanity has been stolen but also (though in a different way) those who have stolen it" wherein both are confined within "an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed" (Freire, 2000, p. 44). The existence of oppression within a society is not random; it is a result of one group imposing its will upon another and transforming the targeted group to conform to the colonizer's way of life, and "to overcome this oppression people must first critically recognize its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation, one which makes possible for the pursuit of a fuller humanity" (Freire, 2000, p. 47). Education within neo-colonial societies use what Freire (2000) termed *banking-methods* wherein students are treated as empty receptacles ready to be filled up, which creates a situation wherein the colonizer can reinforce and regenerate their own attitudes, behaviours, and practices (Freire, 2000, p. 73). In our Canadian history, one of the most damaging examples of this was the residential school system. Education is a process by which societies regenerate their cultural values and ways of living from one generation to the next. For Indigenous people, the residential school system was a critical part of the larger process of settler colonialism aimed at dispossessing Indigenous lands and waterways (Simpson, 2014; Battiste, 2013).

Assimilative education policies aimed to extinguish traditional ways of living on the land, and the traditional processes for passing on cultural knowledge. The goal being that Indigenous people would become civilized Canadians and eventually forget that their ancestors once owned these lands and protected their rights through the treaty process. The residential school system highlights a fundamental process of colonial domination via banking methods of education that act on colonial modes of thinking aimed at meeting the needs of the colonizer, regardless the impact on other members of a society (Battiste, 2013; Freire, 2000).

In thinking about the guiding words of Freire (2000), and his attention to principles of authentic consciousness and action, I point to the work of Alfred & Corntassel (2005) as they insist that

> Purported decolonization and watered-down cultural restoration processes that accept the premises and realities of our colonized existences as their starting point are inherently flawed and doomed to fail. They attempt to reconstitute strong nations on the foundations of enervated, dispirited and decultured people. That is the honest and brutal reality; and that is the fundamental illogic of our contemporary struggle. Indigenous pathways of authentic action and freedom struggle start with people transcending colonialism on an individual basis – a strength that soon reverberates outward from the self to family, clan, community and into all of the broader relationships that form an Indigenous existence. In this way, Indigenousness is reconstructed, reshaped and actively lived as resurgence against the dispossessing and demeaning processes of annihilation that are inherent to colonialism (2005, p. 16).

Deconstructing settler colonialism through critical analysis shines a light on the role of education as a process of cultural dominance. Decolonizing the influence that settler colonialism continues to have on mainstream education must be a multi-layered process that involves much more than simply adding on courses or raising awareness of residential schools. It requires radically transforming mainstream educational institutions and governance structures at every level as a part of an overall process to transform neo-colonial social arrangements (dictated by the *Indian Act*) within neo-colonial settler societies. Simpson (2008) says that, "everything that makes us Indigenous as individuals and as nations resides in our knowledge systems" and "this is where we will find the answers to combat colonialism, to decolonize, and to re-indigenize" (p.75). For me, as an educator in New Brunswick, most of the conversation about reconciliation and education was not aimed at restructuring institutions or balancing power to include Indigenous knowledge and knowledge keepers, or taking any meaningfully effective actions to stop the alarming rate of Indigenous language loss. In many ways, for Wabanaki peoples, the process of instigating and implementing a decolonizing education process is directed by provincial and federal educational agencies, or those under their purview, and is mostly focused on 'best practices' of subtle assimilation into a Westernized social reality. A critical reason for my engagement in graduate studies was to explore Indigenous perspectives on decolonizing education and its connection to a resurgence of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination.

Recovering and Revitalizing Decolonizing Tools of Resurgence

Reconciliation without meaningful reparations for the cultural genocide inflicted on Indigenous people in Canada merely upholds the colonial status-quo, a positionality without any accountability for the ongoing trauma Indigenous peoples experience. In Canadian society, many people benefit from mainstream education, but for Indigenous peoples, success in that world means letting go of cultural knowledges, languages, and traditional ways of procuring and using knowledge (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Battiste, 2000, 2013). Simpson (2011) says that for reconciliation to be meaningful "we need to rebuild our culturally inherent philosophical contexts for governance, education, healthcare, and economy" and " we need to be able to articulate in a clear manner our visions for the future, for living as *Indigenous Peoples* in contemporary times" (p. 17). Tuck & Yang (2012) state that "decolonization should not be viewed in terms of a Western doctrine of liberation" rather, "decolonization specifically requires the repatriation of Indigenous land and life" (p. 21); and "decolonization is accountable to Indigenous sovereignty and futurity" (p. 35). In essence, it must support recovering and revitalizing Indigenous knowledges, languages and worldviews, and the original social structures that existed before contact with Europeans. Indigenous-led research studies at the post-secondary level are providing a space for critical and exploratory discourse on decolonizing settler controlled educational structures and rebuilding Indigenous ones within a peaceful context (Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008). An intent of Indigenous research methodologies is to create spaces for the voices marginalized within settler structures and to envision changes towards re-establishing sovereignty and self-determination for Indigenous society (Tuck & Yang, 2012; Simpson, 2014; Wilson,

2008). One of the research aims of this thesis is to explore whether within Wabanaki territory, academia can become one of these safe places for Indigenous resurgence at a local level.

Simpson's (2014) understanding supports this stance:

> If the academy is concerned about not only protecting and maintaining Indigenous intelligence, but revitalizing it on Indigenous terms as a form of restitution for its historic and contemporary role as a colonizing force, then the academy must make a conscious decision to become a decolonizing force in the intellectual lives of Indigenous peoples by joining us in dismantling settler colonialism and actively protecting the source of our knowledge – Indigenous land. Nishnaabewin did not and does not prepare children for successful career paths in a hyper capitalistic system. It is designed to create self-motivated, self-directed, community-minded, inter-dependent, brilliant, loving citizens, who at their core uphold our ideals around family, community and nationhood by valuing their intelligences, their diversity, their desires and gifts and their lived experiences" (Simpson, 2014, p. 22-23).

As critical Indigenous knowledge exchange processes, many if not all Indigenous languages, are under threat across Canada. We acknowledge there are devastatingly low fluency rates that become increasingly lower with each generation (Battiste, 2013). The reality for most Indigenous peoples and nations means living in marginalized conditions within their own traditional territories, with little to no resources to recover and revitalize their traditional languages and their modes of culture. The current neo-colonial framework in most cases denies Indigenous peoples the institutional control to transform

the educational structures affecting Indigenous language loss and the disassociation from culture and ceremony. Sovereignty and self-determination must begin with creating spaces where Indigenous knowledges, languages and worldviews can be recovered as they are foundational decolonizing tools which are required to further develop Indigenous consciousness on an individual and collective basis (Simpson, 2011). Some theorists go further, and suggest Indigenous languages require official status in Canada; an official status would provide constitutional recognition, and accompanying legislative protection leading to federal and provincial actions to recover and revitalize Indigenous wisdoms and ways of knowing (Battiste, 2000, p. 203). Post-secondary institutions can be strong allies for Indigenous resurgence, especially at a local level, by supporting Indigenous led research and by elevating the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2007) as a guiding foundation for the transformation of educational programming for Indigenous learners, rooted in regenerating Indigenous languages, knowledges, and worldviews.

My first study contained in Chapter 4 focused primarily on Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, two Canadian provinces with vastly different approaches to Indigenous education. Marie Battiste (2013) identifies many levels of collaboration and mutually defined goals within Indigenous, action-based paradigms as key to successfully gaining local control of Indigenous education in her territory. Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey, an Indigenous education authority in Nova Scotia, is a leading example of how empowering Indigenous knowledges, languages and worldviews improves the holistic growth and development of an Indigenous societies by allowing students to flourish at school and home, all within a neo-colonial society (Battiste, 2013, p. 90-91). She claims that

recovering and revitalizing Indigenous languages is most important because they hold within them Indigenous knowledges, and this process is a critical factor in the survival of Indigenous wisdoms and ways of knowing. Battiste (2013) identifies two educational struggles for Indigenous educators in this process. The first is to sensitize mainstream society to the ways neo-colonial attitudes, behaviors, and practices continue to marginalize Indigenous languages because it requires their unlearning as well; the second is to transfer to non-Indigenous society, the awareness that Indigenous knowledges, languages and worldviews are separate from mainstream society but just as viable if given the opportunity to grow. Battiste (2013) adds that "designing inclusive education in Canada must begin by confronting the hidden racism, colonialism, and cultural and linguistic imperialism in the modern curriculum and by addressing the theoretical incoherence with a modern theory of society" (Battiste, 2013, p. 29).

In Bernie Francis & Trudy Sable's (2012) *The Language of this Land, Mi'kma'ki* and Bernard Perley's (2011) *Defying Maliseet Language Death,* both highlight the critical role that Indigenous languages play in developing an Indigenous consciousness from a Wabanaki perspective. Both suggest an intimate connection between speaking a language and developing a cultural identity, and that the languages are lenses through which we view the world, develop values and establish our own identity. Perley (2011) suggests that the loss of Indigenous languages is not merely the extinction of a language but has long-lasting implications for Indigenous culture, identity and self-determination as well. Establishing a culturally appropriate identity and worldview is one way to empower holistic growth and development for a child. The current status-quo in most settler societies where Indigenous wants, needs and desires are systematically

marginalized, does not provide this holistic foundation for Indigenous families, and this includes Wabanaki families. Francis & Sable (2012) identify the nature and structure of Indigenous languages and their implicit meanings as the unique reflection and expression of how an Indigenous culture interacts and perceives the world (p. 26-28). Forcing Indigenous learners to achieve educational goals and meet curriculum outcomes pre-determined by outside agencies is still assimilation and it continues to cause trauma at the individual level, but most importantly, it imposes upon children the reinforcement of values and ways of living which are not established by kinships through ceremonial and traditional ways of knowing (Francis & Sable, 2012).

Teresa McCarty (2003) in her study on recent developments in heritage language immersion in the United States of America (USA) found language immersion to be the pedagogy of choice among Indigenous communities seeking to produce a new generation of fluent Native language speakers (p.149). Her study looks at Hawaiian languages and their progress with immersion. By the mid-20th century, the Indigenous language of Hawaii had only a few hundred speakers; two major events, a 1978 constitutional convention designating Hawaiian language as an official language, followed by direct action by a small group of parents and language educators who began developing their own immersion program inspired by the work of other Indigenous groups worldwide created significant movement and change (McCarty, 2003, p. 153). The Hawaiian *Aha Punana Leo* immersion program began in 1983 and is still going today; the educators and parents credit their success on the focusing of recreating the cultural environment and processes that developed Indigenous languages before settler colonialism arrived. McCarty's study (2003) also looks at the success of immersion programs of the Navajo

and the Keres-speaking Pueblos of Acoma and Cochiti. A few things highlighted in her study have relevance here in Wabanaki territory: 1) these Indigenous languages were close to extinction, however, the peoples still aimed to develop immersion as a medium of education; 2) recovering and revitalizing their language was a priority of the Indigenous community, and ultimately, collaborative efforts were required by Indigenous and settler peoples to bring this to fruition. These highlights have implications for Wabanaki peoples and the settler peoples of their territory—in the spirit of reconciliation and Wabanaki resurgence, Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey language revitalization is a required consciousness and action.

Concluding Thoughts

I hope the literature review will encourage the reader to examine the subtle and unknowing ways educational institutions regenerate outdated modes of thinking inherited from colonial stereotypes, and how they impact every Canadian daily. Critical analysis of settler colonialism through an Indigenous lens reveals that settler colonialism is still encroaching on Indigenous territories and disrupting Indigenous holistic growth and development at home and abroad. In fact, much of our modern ways of living and daily activities in the first-world countries and daily activities empower the oppression of Indigenous people and destruction of their traditional lands and waterways around the world. One must consider the ecological footprint I have left in the wake of my graduate degree—those imprints from airplane trips to conferences, to the pollutants involved in making the laptop I am writing on.

Economic and social policies, both foreign and domestic, within settler societies that reflect the politics of oppression responsible for the cultural genocide of Indigenous peoples in Canada, and the wholesale theft of their traditional lands and waterways, is a reality that requires a setting aside of safe spaces to ensure authentic and frank conversations occur with all those who identify as Canadians, and those who identify as sovereign peoples. Healing the damage of these past hundreds of years requires looking back unabashedly on the historical truths that led to this period of emerging reconciliation, resurgence, and decolonization. Indigenous nations in Canada, displaced from their original territories and ways of living, are at a critical point of resurgence. Indigenous languages, knowledges and worldviews are critical knowledge exchange processes on which Indigenous wellbeing and holism is produced, and their recovery and their nations' revitalizations are key to resurgence.

There are much larger issues affecting overall global health and sustainable human growth and development that can benefit from a revitalized Indigenous knowledge system. Indigenous knowledge systems maintained sustainable ways of living in symbiotic relationship with the earth, and those knowledges survive despite many attempts to extinguish them. Indigenous wisdoms and ways of knowing have much to offer Canadians and Canada, as we are increasingly confronted with major issues like climate change, food security, and making sure that our future generations inherit a society that empowers holistic growth and development for all cultures and groups of people that exist within our society. That cannot happen until settler peoples from all walks of life reject the current status-quo that evolved out of the politics of oppression, and fully embrace the humanity of decolonizing efforts while they too demand structural

and institutional change reflecting egalitarian, holistic and treaty principles of a nation-to-nation state.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

My thesis is an Indigenous research design that critically examines the systemic and intergenerational oppression inflicted upon Indigenous people through the process of European settler colonialism from its origins in North America to its current impact. Indigenous research designs which incorporate Indigenous methodologies and methods are informed by tribal epistemologies and do not adhere to any one western theoretical approach in academic research; rather they follow decolonizing aims and are influenced by a variety of approaches in exploring, gathering and analyzing data (Smith, 1999; Kovach, 2009). My thesis uses critical, qualitative, collaborative, and introspective research methods to explore the modern implications of settler colonialism experienced by Indigenous peoples. My research is informed by Fourth World theory and theories developed by other Indigenous theorists, critical pedagogy, and phenomenology (Manuel & Posluns, 1974; Battiste, 2013; Smith, 1999; Freire, 2000; Kovach, 2009; Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008; Wilson, 2008; Chilisa, 2012). My thesis explores Indigenous peoples' historical and contemporary relationships with settler colonialism worldwide by critically examining the impact of colonial attitudes, behaviours, and practices and the influences they have had on traditional forms of Indigenous knowledge exchange in the disruption of Indigenous holistic growth and development within Canada. My research lens also focuses on how settler colonialism created and maintains a framework of neo-colonial social arrangements which continue to inflict trauma at an individual and communal levels thereby disrupting Indigenous holistic growth and development. Settler

control of Indigenous lands and Indigenous education are two social arrangements maintained mostly by *Indian Act* (1876) attitudes, behaviours, and practices; these practices which have historically worked in tandem to disconnect and diminish traditional Indigenous knowledge exchange processes by removing a land-based peoples from their symbiotic connection and relationships with their traditional lands and waterways, a critical foundation of Indigenous knowledge exchange and regeneration (Battiste, 2013; Simpson, 2014; Manuel, 2015). My thesis will advocate for radically transforming these two neo-colonial social arrangements as a part of a multi-layered process of decolonizing education—one that aims for Indigenous sovereignty and the rights to self-determination. This thesis will ultimately argue that conceptual frameworks and processes of decolonizing education must be Indigenous controlled and aimed at ending the intergenerational trauma of settler colonialism by critically analyzing and transforming settler occupation and control of Indigenous lands and waterways, and the means in which it disrupts traditional ways of living that continually regenerate and support the evolution of Indigenous languages, ceremonial knowledge, cultural worldviews, and traditional ways of living (Battiste, 2013; Tuck & Yang, 2012; Simpson, 2014; Corntassel & Alfred, 2005).

This chapter will begin with a discussion on Indigenous ethics within research, outline and explain Indigenous research designs, highlight storytelling as a form of resistance within academia, and define auto-ethnography, phenomenology, and critical pedagogy; the key methodologies and methods that informed my thesis and enabled me to explore my research questions. My Indigenous research design is informed by several Indigenous researchers and scholars including Margaret Kovach (2009, 2014), Shawn

Wilson (2008), Jo-Ann Archibald (2008), Linda Smith (1999), and Bagele Chilisa (2012). My thesis is also informed by critical pedagogy, phenomenology, my lived experiences, and used within a framework supporting decolonizing and Indigenous research methodologies. I was informed by resources including *Research as Resistance: Critical, Indigenous, & Anti-Oppressive Approaches* (Brown & Strega, 2005), *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies* (Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008), *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 2000), *Place in Research: Theory, Methodology, and Methods* (Tuck & McKenzie, 2016), *Developing Grounded Theory: The 2nd Generation* (Morse et al., 2009), *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (Saldana, 2009), and *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (Smith, 1999). During my studies, I began to explore community, action-based and participatory research methods within *The Sage Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice 2nd Edition* (Reason & Bradbury, 2008) and *Introduction to Action Research: Social Research for Social Change 2nd Edition* (Greenwood & Levin, 2007).

Indigenous Research Designs

In the colonization of Indigenous people, academic research enabled and empowered racialized, colonial ideologies aimed at subjugating Indigenous people and dispossessing them of their land, language, and cultural identities (Smith, 1999; Battiste, 2013; Kovach, 2009; Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008). Qualitative research offers space for Indigenous researchers to explore methodological approaches to research that respect Indigenous epistemologies and their own cultural ways of knowing that are seen as distinct from other forms of qualitative inquiry (Kovach, 2009; Denzin, Lincoln, &

Smith, 2008). Indigenous research designs apply "a critical qualitative lens that embodies the emancipatory, empowering values of critical pedagogy" and "represents inquiry done for explicit political, utopian purposes, a politics of liberation" and use "critical personal experience narratives and life stories" to "bring researchers and their research participants into a shared, critical space, a space where the work of resistance, critique, and empowerment can occur." (Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008, p. 5).

Indigenous research designs are founded on reciprocal values of giving back to the community and by being responsible to the needs of our broader Indigenous community (Kovach, 2009). Indigenous research designs incorporate Indigenous methodologies and Indigenous methods framed within a tribal epistemological framework similar to other relational qualitative research designs that value both process and content and provides a "common ground for Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers to understand each other (Kovach 2009, p. 25). Only recently have Indigenous methodologies that incorporate Indigenous methods of inquiry begun to emerge in academia, empowering community-based goals of self-determination and sovereignty (Kovach, 2005). Indigenous research designs as a decolonizing tool provide Indigenous societies with a process of remembering, visioning and creating a just reality wherein Indigenous people can explore collaboratively a way out of the trap of cognitive imperialism (Battiste, 2000, 2013) and settler control in collaboration with other critical qualitative researchers (Smith, 1999; Chilisa, 2012; Simpson, 2011).

Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith (2008) argue that:

"[decolonizing the academy] encourages and empowers Indigenous peoples to make colonizers confront and be accountable for the traumas of colonization. In

> rethinking and radically transforming the colonizing encounter, this pedagogy imagines a postcolonial society and academy that honor difference and promote healing. A decolonized academy is interdisciplinary and politically proactive. It respects Indigenous epistemologies and encourages interpretive, first-person methodologies. It honors different versions of science and empirical activity, as well as values cultural criticism in the name of social justice." (p. 12).

Indigenous Ethics: Tri-council, OCAP and researcher actions

Indigenous research designs include their own set of "Indigenous-based, ethics, standards and criteria for defining and evaluating the validity or credibility of data collection, analysis, and interpretations of research findings" (Chilisa 2012, p.174). For the most part these requirements center around the researcher's ability to establish a respectful, reciprocal relationship with the Indigenous community; being accountable to the wants, needs, and desires of the Indigenous community; and including fair and respectful representation of the Indigenous community (Chilisa, 2012; Kovach, 2009). The First Nations Information Governance Committee (FNIGC) developed Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP) as a set of principles aimed at ethical research with Indigenous peoples and has become the *de facto* standard for conducting research regarding Indigenous society that asserts local Indigenous control over the research process when it involves them (FNIGC, 2014). The interpretation and application of OCAP is not standard nor follows a prescribed doctrine; it is meant to be locally defined and incorporate local Indigenous protocols. The 2nd edition of the *Tri-Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (*2014*)* specifically *Chapter 9: Research*

Involving the First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Peoples of Canada (2014) acknowledges the tainted history of research involving Indigenous peoples carried out primarily by non-Indigenous researchers has not reflected Indigenous worldviews nor has that research been of much benefit to the Indigenous community. The agencies: the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) have developed a framework for ethical research between the Indigenous community and the academy that is premised on respectful relationships, collaboration, and reciprocal engagement by adhering to fundamental principles that research should improve the capacity to maintain cultural knowledges, worldviews and languages. As a research assistant with the Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Center, I could connect with local Elders and knowledge keepers who helped in aligning my research goals with locally defined goals for the production of a decolonizing education and an Indigenous resurgence. Throughout the entire research process my research was guided by the advice and wisdom of these Wabanaki elders.

Critical Theory and Critical Pedagogy

Chilisa (2012) writes;

> An anticolonial critique framework, using critical theory, postcolonial discourses, and critical race-based theories, is challenging every discipline to assess how knowledge production and theories of the past and the present have been shaped by ideas and power relations of imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism, globalization, and racism. (p. 46)

Critical theory is a Western tradition of research that Indigenous researchers have embraced to deconstruct cultural imperialism within mainstream education however "critical theory must be localized, grounded in the specific meanings, traditions, customs, and community relations that operate in each Indigenous setting" (Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008, p. 6). Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, (2008) see critical pedagogy "as a small set of principles involving cultural politics, political economy, and critical theory" that "embraces a dialectical, relational view of knowledge" that "conceives of the human agent in active terms" (p. 8).

The challenge for me in understanding what my role as an educator and a researcher is in this process was clarified by Giroux & Giroux (2008):

> The democratic character of critical pedagogy is defined largely through a set of basic assumptions, which holds that knowledge, power, values, and institutions must be made available to critical scrutiny, be understood as a product of human labor (as opposed to God-given), and evaluated in terms of how they might open up or close down democratic practices and experiences…It is also about linking learning to social change, education to democracy, and knowledge to acts of intervention in public life…Part of the challenge of any critical pedagogy is making schools and other sites of pedagogy safe from the baneful influence of corporate power…"
>
> (Giroux & Giroux, 2008, p. 186).

Indigenous research designs apply a critical research lens that involves "a constant reworking of our understandings of the impact of imperialism and colonialism" on Indigenous sovereignty, and "demands that we have an analysis of how we were

colonized, of what that has meant in terms of our immediate past and what it means for our present and future" (Smith, 1999, p. 25). Indigenous research designs use critical analysis as a decolonizing means to question the acceptable research practices within mainstream academia and its role in the colonial agenda through the eyes of the colonized; and examines the role of imperialism and colonization in the production of knowledge and it takes a post-structural view aimed at deconstructing truths, beliefs, values and norms that are generally accepted within society as politically and socially constructed (Smith 1999; Chilisa 2012; Tuck & McKenzie 2015). Any systematic process or program aimed at decolonizing education must include critically examining how education became colonized in the first place. This will show how settler colonialism totally impacts every facet of Indigenous life, and how mainstream education espouses and regenerates colonial values and assimilative processes. Viewing the concept of decolonizing education through a critical lens enables the researcher to have a more critical understanding of the underlying assumptions, motivations, and values within society which then inform mainstream research practices (Smith 1999; Battiste 2013; Chilisa 2012).

Storytelling as a Method of Resistance

Methodologies that incorporate storytelling provide Indigenous peoples with a safe space to resist the trauma of intergenerational settler colonialism and reconnecting with traditional Indigenous knowledge exchange processes and protocols (Smith, 1999; Battiste, 2013). Each Indigenous society in their own way developed knowledge exchange processes that passed on cultural values and knowledge, and the oral tradition is

one of those (Archibald, 2008; Battiste, 2013). Indigenous peoples worldwide living within settler societies share many things in common; one of them is being born into a marginalized reality and having to come to grips with the limitations settler structures impose on your freedoms to live your life in a way that honors your ancestor's language, culture, and ceremonial traditions. A key assumption of storytelling methodologies is that the lived experience is a critical part of knowing. Our collective stories help build all levels of awareness, of each other, of our lived experiences, and how we are all faring within the same society (Kovach, 2005).

Smith (1999) has this to say about Indigenous representation, and the reclaiming of Indigenous stories and ways:

> A critical aspect of the struggle for self-determination has involved questions relating to our history as Indigenous peoples and a critique of how we, as the *Other*, have been represented or excluded from various accounts. Every issue has been approached by Indigenous peoples with a view to rewriting 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, 1999, p.29).

Storytelling is an interpersonal communication tool that allows marginalized people to share their lived experiences and become familiar on a personal level with each other's marginalized realities; it gives space for all to understand how they came to be and to envision pathways towards liberation (Archibald 2008; Battiste 2013; Smith 1999; Wilson 2008). Throughout the course of this research I am continuously confronted by non-Indigenous academics unaware of how Indigenous sovereignty in North America was usurped and is denied in systematic ways today. This led me to explore a historical

analysis of settler colonialism in Chapter 5. Senehi (2002) defines constructive storytelling as "inclusive and fosters collaborative power and mutual recognition; creates opportunities for openness, dialogue, and insight; a means to bring issues to consciousness; and a means of resistance" and as such constructive storytelling "builds understanding and awareness, and fosters voice" (p. 45). Constructive storytelling becomes critical within neo-colonial settler societies that have systematically controlled historical narratives and omitted Indigenous peoples from telling their own histories. Senehi (2002) identifies transcultural storytellers "who enters into an environment where she or he is largely an outsider and tells stories of her or his community of origin" as critical decolonizing tools of intervention within conflicted areas of cultural and historical representation (p. 56).

Participatory Action Research & Action-Based Research

One pathway toward advancing Indigenous research designs is through community based action research that is locally led and aims to meet the needs of the local Indigenous community (Smith, 1999; Chilisa, 2012). During my research period I worked on a project directed by First Nation Innovations (FNI) and their community partner, Mi'gmaw Kina'matnewey and learned to understand community perspectives of language, culture and technology. This knowledge was deepened during my work on a SSHRC funded knowledge synthesis grant on Indigenous language and technology. Gaining control of the research is a critical part of Indigenous decolonizing research designs, the critical, collective, and participatory principles of participatory research empowers many Indigenous projects in Canada; the language of participation and

community benefit show evidence of shared goals, and that research should be respectful and honor its privileged relationships with Indigenous people in addition to research outcomes (Kovach, 2005, p. 23-24). Moving forward into doctoral studies, my goal is to design a study using participatory action research methods. My research journey exploring concepts and processes of decolonizing education as a pathway toward a resurgence of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination was aided in large part to my research internships that provided me with access to qualitative, grassroots, action-based researchers who demonstrated for me how participatory, action-based research can improve individual and communal wellbeing for Indigenous people.

Key Methodologies That I Used for My Two Studies

For the first study of this thesis I used a research design informed by auto-ethnography (AE) that involved an 8-week study of the efficacy of on-line technologies as a means for recovering and revitalizing Indigenous languages. Each week I spent an hour using online language learning tools and another hour per week in conversation with a fluent Mi'kmaq speaker. I was informed primarily by *Auto-Ethnography: An Overview* (2010) by Carolyn Ellis, Tony Adams, and Arthur Bochner which provides a historical background of AE along with sections on process, methods, and analysis of data. All three of the article's authors have published their broader work with AE in various ways which I accessed throughout the course of the study. This study was also informed by an article entitled *Indigenous Auto-Ethnography: Exploring, Engaging, and Experiencing "Self" as a Native Method of Inquiry* (Whitinui, 2013) which sought to re-position AE from an Indigenous perspective. I also consulted *Auto-Ethnography as Method* (Chang,

2008). Overall, auto-ethnography provided me with a means to include my own lived experience and to engage reflexively with my research in a way that resonates with Indigenous wisdoms and the ways of knowing I have come to know in my lifetime. It allows the researcher to explore his own biases and preconceptions throughout the entire research process, which is a critical and ethical part of conducting research with an Indigenous society. Exploring the structural limitations within neo-colonial settler societies to recover and revitalize Indigenous language led me to explore the history of settler control of Indigenous education.

The second study of this thesis contained in Chapter 5 is an Indigenous research design that uses storytelling methods supported by phenomenological inquiry and critical pedagogy. Phenomenology is an interpretive discipline that focuses on how people or groups of people experience a common phenomenon suggesting that reality and knowledge are concepts defined within a certain context (Chilisa, 2012; Tuck & McKenzie, 2015). For Indigenous peoples historically marginalized within a neo-colonial society, their concepts of place, reality and knowledge are defined by the colonizer, and have been left-out of the academic construction of knowledge (Smith, 1999; Chilisa, 2012; Battiste, 2013). Phenomenology uses interpretive thought, perception, and even spirituality to describe and understand the human experience and reveals that there are multiple realities that exist within society (Chilisa, 2012; Tuck & McKenzie, 2015). For the most part, historical interpretations of settler colonialism are colonial narratives that glorify the legacy of European settler colonialism in Canada and make no mention of the cultural genocide and land-theft it inflicted upon Indigenous peoples. This study explores Indigenous peoples' experiences with settler colonialism and how it shapes their

relationships with land, culture, ceremony, language, and traditional methods for regenerating them. The focus of phenomenological inquiry looks at multiple perspectives of a similar phenomenon, and the literature review itself allowed me to explore multiple Indigenous perspectives examining the impact of settler colonialism in contemporary times, on an on-going basis.

This study ultimately focuses on the Wabanaki experience with settler colonialism. To explore this phenomenon of the Wabanaki experience to a greater extent, I relied on secondary sources, as well as my own lived experience. A phenomenological inquiry enables the researcher to examine historical events not as static events but with multiple perspectives and lived-experiences surrounding historical events. So much of Wabanaki history is informed by colonial interpretations of history which omit the true lived experiences of Indigenous peoples in Canada. So much of the colonial narrative is focused on military campaigns, economics, and wealth and land accumulation. For the most part, colonial narratives do not talk about the trauma that war and military violence inflicts on the holistic growth and development of Indigenous peoples within these lands. Adding a critical lens to my analysis of the colonial narrative, my research focuses on the impact of history on non-combatants, especially the family unit. The familiarity with my own Indigenous culture and ceremonial traditions helped me 'read between the lines' of the colonial narrative and gain some insight on the impact that war and colonial violence had on traditional lifestyles. This study opened my eyes to the fact that everything regarding Indigenous people in Canada, including the process of decolonizing education, is a part of that unfolding historical narrative of Indigenous-Settler relations, and we are all playing a role in this narrative, whether we know it or not.

How I Used these Methodologies to Answer My Research Questions

When I first considered graduate school I was still working at St. Thomas University which provided me with access to research academics with whom I was able to discuss graduate school. At that time I was dealing with the fact that I had a vision for Indigenous education that was continuously being met with the limitations of settler control, and the unwillingness of mainstream educators to acknowledge that the current social arrangements in regards to Indigenous education in New Brunswick on every level had to radically transform. In my research study, I developed three questions to help me examine the colonial and neo-colonial framework of the settler society and how the systemic privileging of this framework reinforces a colonial-settler narrative as "the narrative" of choice. In the second part of this examination, these questions prepared me to move into a critical and decolonizing stance to share a Wabanaki lens of hope.

The questions of this research include:

Question 1: How has the experience of settler colonialism impacted Indigenous peoples around the world?

Much of the insight I gained exploring this question came from networking with researchers and an on-going literature review; both allowed me to relate my lived experiences with settler colonialism to other Indigenous peoples experiences. Through conversation with other like-minded individuals at academic conferences, and the group of researchers I connected with through my research apprenticeship at the Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Center at the University of New Brunswick I was able to learn how other Indigenous peoples are navigating the impact of settler colonialism and healing the damage in their respective ways. A difficult part of this research for me is realizing daily

that the long-term impact of settler colonialism is not just a field of study, it impacts me personally and affects the people I love. Exploring this question has enabled me to see the critical need for healing the damage because it is impacting people in real ways, on a daily basis. The literature review allows me to continuously ground myself within theories of Indigenous resurgence through decolonizing education; found within Indigenous perspectives worldwide, these decolonizing theorists confront the intergenerational trauma settler colonialism has reproduced in the respective territories of Indigenous peoples. My literature review reveals three concepts I feel are critical for Indigenous resurgence that most Indigenous peoples hope to achieve through reconciling settler colonialism on a local-community level: 1) a restorative approach to reconciliation; 2) re-establishing Indigenous consciousness and ways of living within a holistic, modern context; and 3) the recovery and revitalization of Indigenous languages, knowledges, and worldviews as decolonizing tools of resurgence. These concepts derived from a coding process I used during the first study. Coding within qualitative inquiries is a way for researchers to "summarize" relevant data at the outset of research studies (Saldana, 2009, p. 4). The coding process I used to collect and analyze research literature was informed by *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (Saldana, 2009). At the outset of this thesis coding was a way for me to categorize the breadth of literature relevant to Indigenous resurgence, decolonization and reconciling settler colonialism. My initial literature review for the first study of this thesis provided me with three concepts that guided my search for relevant literature moving forward from that first study and throughout the entirety of this thesis.

Question 2: What are the long-term impacts of settler colonialism on Indigenous society and how do they manifest in modern society?

In order to explore this question I felt I could draw upon my four years working at St. Thomas University where my job was directly aimed understanding this concept and creating student services to bridge educational gaps at the post-secondary level. A big part of my success at St. Thomas was in reflecting on my time as an undergraduate and remembering the cultural knowledge I was given outside of the classroom and how that empowered much of my success in both school and life. Working within education you are always in touch with younger generations just coming to know their own realities and returning to student life allowed me to see first-hand much of the impact of settler colonialism on education. Working as a research assistant with First Nations Innovations [http://fn-innovation-pn.com/default.aspx] and the Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Center at UNB is also a way that allowed me to explore first-hand ethical, community, participatory, action-based research with Indigenous people. My research apprenticeships enabled me to continuously ground the scope of my research lens within local Indigenous protocols by connecting me with ceremonial Elders and knowledge keepers, and their sharing of experiences with settler colonialism enhanced this lens. My career in education began as a high school teacher, and for ten years I became familiar with the process of mainstream education and how it is experienced at the classroom level. Being an educator within mainstream education and a member of an Indigenous community I travelled between two diverse worldviews, and this overall experience gave me insight on mainstream education within Wabanaki territory operates at a governance and philosophical level. Drawing on these experiences, and connecting with former colleagues in mainstream

education throughout my research journey enables me to connect theoretical concepts of Indigenous resurgence through decolonizing education with mainstream educators who see the impact of settler colonialism at the classroom level on a daily basis.

Question 3: How does decolonizing education empower and enable Indigenous resurgence at a local level in Canada?

I entered graduate school because I felt my success at St. Thomas University was due in large part to the critical role of Elders and the significance of their ceremonial teachings. Much of my success as a post-secondary student, parent, and teacher is a result of applying cultural teachings into my daily life. My goal at STU was to increase the enrolment, retention, and graduation rates of Indigenous learners, and I felt the best way to do that was begin with therapeutic methods of stress-reduction, and for me that meant making the Wabanaki Resource Center a *home away from home* within academia. Elder-in-Residence, Miigam'agan, became a critical part of empowering student well-being and academic success, and continues to do so. For the last two years at STU, Miigam'agan and I had deep conversations about what a modern Wabanaki education program would include, and how the current social arrangements regarding Wabanaki education limit that vision. One of the key responsibilities I was tasked with at STU was to identify the obstacles restricting Indigenous student educational success at the post-secondary level and create a strategic plan for overcoming those obstacles. As I read reports that identified best-practices for Indigenous post-secondary learners I soon realized those obstacles are structural, and to effectively overcome them means transforming the structure which for the most part mainstream education does not aim to do. Settler control of Indigenous education ultimately dictates the scope of decolonization processes within

mainstream education thus have a determining role in the efficacy of a decolonizing education to empower and enable a resurgence of Indigenous sovereignty. The impact of settler control over Indigenous education is defined differently on a local-community level throughout Canada. Wabanaki education for the most part falls under the purview of provincial agencies who limit decolonization to Indigenizing mainstream education. My research apprenticeships and literature reviews have been an effective means for me to keep abreast of Indigenous resurgence at local-community levels throughout Canada where settler control is not so much a factor.

The first study of this thesis was designed to explore the impact of settler colonialism on Indigenous languages and cultural worldviews. My research internship at the First Nations Innovation project (FNI) based at UNB introduced me to how information and communication technologies (ICT) are harnessed by Indigenous groups and used to recover and revitalize Indigenous languages. I used a literature review to explore the impact of settler colonialism on Indigenous languages and worldviews. I used two on-line language learning sites aimed at teaching the Mi'kmaq language and included a weekly dialogue session with Miigam'agan, a fluent speaker of Mi'kmaq. I used journaling and memos to capture my weekly reflections, and used coding analysis methods (Saldana, 2009) that I was able to develop key concepts that were developed into a concept paper published by FNI (George, 2015). I presented my findings at the 2015 Canadian Sociological Association annual conference held at the 2015 Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences in Ottawa, Ontario. I also presented my findings at the 2015 Peace and Friendship Treaty Conference hosted by MWC at the University of New Brunswick, and the 2015 Atlantic Native Teacher's Education Conference.

At the close of this study my research internship moved to the Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Center which enabled me to explore participatory, action-based methodologies on a practical level through hands-on training. My RA supervisor included me in monthly meetings of the MWC Elders Council, and invited me to be a co-researcher on a SSHRC Knowledge Synthesis Grant (Perley et al., 2016). This experience allowed me to take the knowledge I gathered during the first study and focus it directly on practical applications at a local-community level. Being a part of the MWC community introduced me to the broader community of researchers at UNB and exposed me to a network of settler allies who also strive to transform mainstream education. Networking with other researchers and sharing the knowledge I acquired during the first study made me realize how little was written about the Wabanaki lived experience with settler colonialism.

My second study developed out of knowing that settler control of Indigenous education within neo-colonial settler societies limits the effectiveness of decolonization processes, thus settler peoples play a determining role within Indigenous resurgence at a local-community level in Canada. This second study was designed to critically examine how Canadians are informed about the historical Indigenous experience with settler colonialism. The second study of this thesis explores the evolution of settler colonialism in North America, with specific focus on Wabanaki territories. My aim was to examine the evolution of colonial attitudes, behaviours, and practices and how they manifest within modern society to impact Indigenous holistic growth and development. I used journaling and voice memos to capture my insights and from them was able to identify

key stages in the evolution of settler colonialism that effectively dispossessed Indigenous peoples of their traditional lands and waterways that I present in Chapter 5.

During the process of designing the second study of this thesis I realized I wanted to pursue doctoral studies, and a critical factor in designing this study was to learn more about Indigenous research designs, and critical-decolonizing Indigenous methodologies and methods. In Chapter 6 I connect my two studies and share my insights on moving forward with what I have learned throughout this research journey. All three of my research questions are connected by a common thread, re-establishing intergenerational, holistic growth and development for Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Chapter 4: First Study - Decolonizing Indigenous Knowledge Exchange Processes

Background

Kovach (2005) suggests that at the outset of any Indigenous research design, the Indigenous researcher should look inwards and decolonize his or her own worldview and research lens, and this eight-week auto-ethnography was my attempt to do that that. This study allowed me to become familiar with qualitative research using storytelling methods that included semi-structured open ended dialogue sessions and journaling methods. This study allowed me to explore the diverse options Information Communication Technologies (ICT) provide for cultural resurgence and language development outside dominant settler structures. Engaging with a ceremonial elder, fluent in the language of her ancestors, allowed me to understand the critical importance of recovering and revitalizing Indigenous languages as decolonizing tools of resurgence.

Included in this chapter following the background section is the full manuscript of a conference research paper written about my first study for my thesis: my 8-week Indigenized auto-ethnography. My aim was to test the efficacy of on-line language tools in recovering and revitalizing Indigenous languages. Although the on-line tools were helpful, reflecting on this experience I learned more about the critical role that languages, ceremony and cultural traditions play in developing an Indigenous consciousness. On-line tools are meant to be self-guided, and I felt the interaction with a fluent speaker steeped in local cultural knowledge was more of an effective way of learning not only the

language but also the cultural ways of knowing that have been shaped over time through the language.

I was a research assistant for First Nations Innovation (FNI), a SSHRC funded research project that explores the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a decolonizing tool for Indigenous resurgence. This RA apprenticeship grounded me within the field of Indigenous resurgence, and the relationships I built during its course continue to shape me as a researcher, as well as the general scope of this thesis. This research experience ultimately resulted in a peer-reviewed paper which was presented at the 2015 Canadian Sociological Association conference at the Congress of Humanities and Social Sciences in Ottawa. At the same time as Congress 2015 in Ottawa, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was releasing its findings and I attended public lectures from key individuals involved. I was also able to network with other Indigenous researchers and hear from them their attempts to reconcile settler colonialism in their territories, and empower Indigenous resurgence.

Research Paper

Reference: George, C. (2015) Nikma'jtut Apoqnmatultinej: Reclaiming Indigeneity via ancestral wisdom and new ways of thinking. Canadian Sociological Association, University of Ottawa, June.

Introduction

Settler colonialism continues to marginalize and threaten Indigenous epistemology, languages and ways of knowing. This eight-week auto-ethnographic study details my use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to deconstruct the

epistemological and ontological perspectives I have acquired during my lived experience immersed in settler society. My hope is to gain better insight into Mi'gmaw worldview through an introspective journey to learn my mother's language thus my own cultural identity. Auto-ethnography requires that the researcher provide intimate insight to a cultural narrative and at the same time have the ability to analyze and extract the strands of knowledge from their lived experience (Adams, Bochner & Ellis 2010). Indigenous Auto-Ethnography seeks to resist the more dominant ideologies by deconstructing and reconstructing various historical accounts (Whitinui 2013). The conversation I present in this paper focuses on healing and revitalizing the sparks of Indigenous wisdom and knowledge our ancestors left behind. In order to blaze a path forward toward growth and prosperity for marginalized and oppressed groups, deconstructing the road taken can be an enlightening experience.

A View from the Shore[8]: A deconstructive narrative of the colonial experience

The historical narrative of Indigenous groups in the territory more commonly known as Canada has been a drastically different experience than the history espoused by settler society. The negative impact of the power and domination of the colonial state towards Indigenous nations has been identified at home and abroad (Anaya, 2014; United Nations, 2007). The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP, 1996) describes settler colonialism as an egregious assault on the well-being of Indigenous individuals,

[8] Gkisedtanamoogk is a Wampanoag elder and ceremonial leader. He says there are two ways of looking at the history of our peoples: a view from the boat and view from the shore.

families and nations alike that has spanned across five centuries and which is still maintained through the use of federal and provincial laws and policy (RCAP, 1996).

Before European contact, Indigenous nations were self-determining societies that existed and thrived for approximately 525 generations (Blackstock & Trocme, 2005). Assimilation and the colonial experience have deconstructed this balance (RCAP 1996) which has resulted in devastating outcomes for First Nations. Education policy in present day Canada espouses the values of settler colonialism which continues to negatively impact the overall way of life for Indigenous communities (AFN, 2010; Battiste 2013).

Much of the low educational attainment and graduation rates for Aboriginal students attending public education models developed by settler colonial governments are attributed to racism and culturally inappropriate curriculum (Donovan 2007). Battiste (2103) suggests that a phenomenon she calls cognitive imperialism is created when generations of Indigenous knowledge is marginalized or outright excluded in lieu of western values and ontology. Historically, this has been meted out in Canada via assimilative education policy and administered historically by residential schools. The result is an intergenerational trauma for Indigenous peoples that stifles growth and prosperity throughout successive generations (Bombay, Matheson & Anisman 2014).

Through the development of educational resources, Indigenous groups who replaced western epistemology and ontology with their own have seen a reverse trend of the assimilation policies and an increase in Indigenous consciousness (Battiste 2000; Battiste 2013). Advancing the struggle for self-determination for Indigenous people, the use of ICT has enabled Indigenous groups to create, facilitate and control the social

structures that determine their futures (McMahon, Gurstein, Beaton, O'Donnell, & Whiteduck 2014).

Indigenous people in Canada are harnessing ICT to deliver Indigenous language curriculum as a means of cultural resilience and language revitalization. The Tagish nation whose language is considered the most endangered language in the Yukon have used ICT to their advantage to undo the loss of language and cultural created by the residential school era (Hennessy & Moore 2007). Through the use of ICT, the Mi'gmaw nation has been able to produce culturally-appropriate curriculum via the internet to deliver educational materials to Mi'gmaw communities and households which has shown unprecedented improvements in educational success for Mi'gmaw students living in Nova Scotia (Lewington, 2010).

ICT has enabled Indigenous nations to share traditional knowledge and ancient wisdom with greater ease and scope with their people in remote areas which are isolated from accessing education institutions (Neal, Barr & Barrett 2007). In Kitigan Zibi, an Algonquin First Nation in Quebec north of Ottawa, ICT has enabled the community to incorporate a variety of multi-media tools to enhance the delivery of their own education models (Lockhart, Tenasco, Whiteduck & O'Donnell, 2014). The use of ICT, in particular social media and networking sites, has shown to improve communication and relationship building within the same community as well as bridging the distant relations between communities in vast northern territories (Molyneaux, O'Donnell, Kakekaspan, Walmark, Budka & Gibson 2014). ICT and social networking sites have the potential to enhance and reconstruct cultural identities that can help the ultimate goal of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination (Beaton & Campbell 2014). Online educational

resources are becoming much better at delivering curriculum. ICT allow a learner to enjoy life-long self-guided learning.

Worldwide, Indigenous people are calling for more authority in relation to the development of policy and programs to suit the educational needs of Indigenous learners in a culturally appropriate way (Donovan 2007). Internationally, experts in Indigenous knowledge and learning styles along with experts in e-learning are collaborating with Indigenous groups to develop culturally appropriate education models for Indigenous learners (Neal, Barr & Barrett 2007). There is a positive sense that together this collective wisdom and collaborative effort will have a greater effect on the overall well-being between settler and Indigenous societies.

Yet the question remains, how can marginalized and oppressed groups reclaim the determining factors affecting their cultural identity, future growth and prosperity amidst the enormous influence, impact and authority of a settler society? And how can ICT support these efforts?

Methodology

This paper presents an analysis of an eight-week self-discovery research project through an auto-ethnographic lens. Each week I engaged in learning Mi'gmaw via online sites dedicated to teaching that language. In addition, each week I spent time with a fluent Mi'gmaw speaker and ceremonial elder. I collected my experiences through weekly journals that detail my insight regarding three conceptual ideas: ICT and decolonization, Indigeneity revitalization, and interdependence. This paper focuses on one of those concepts, ICT and decolonization.

Auto-ethnography requires that the researcher provide intimate insight to a cultural narrative and at the same time have the ability to analyze and extract the strands of knowledge from their lived experience (Adams, Bochner & Ellis 2010). Auto-ethnography is an ideal lens for this paper because it allows me to share a narrative that is both ethically sound and culturally appropriate with Indigenous ways of knowing and learning. Life consists of overlapping stories and if we do not open up and listen to other people's stories we stifle those authentic voices and run the risk of understanding life from only our personal experience (Whitinui 2013).

Battiste (2013) suggests that Indigenous people are moving away from critical analysis in order to focus on healing the wounds of a collective experience of such trauma via self-reflection of their own narratives in order to discover their inner strengths. Indigenous auto-ethnography by its very definition asks us to consider epistemological perspectives equally and to draw together self (auto), ethno (nation), and graphy (writing). It also asks researchers interested in this method to consider their own level of connectedness to space, place, time, and culture as a way of (re)claiming, (re)storing, (re)writing, and (re)patriating our own lived realities as indigenous peoples. In many instances, merely telling our stories is not sufficient; we must also be prepared to show how stories are lived in authentically as well as meaningfully ways (Whitinui 2013).

At the same time, the research methodology of auto-ethnography allows me to reflect objectively on my lived experience lens providing my research scholarly merit (Ellis 2004; Chang 2008). This mixed-methods approach allows me to explore introspectively how my life and worldview has been touched by settler colonialism.

All my life I have been immersed in the social structures of settler society while being raised with Indigenous values which has resulted in an overlapping and distorted worldview (Littler Bear 2000). As an emerging Indigenous researcher working for change I chose to take up this research in order to analyze my jagged worldview and gain a clearer view through a Mi'gmaw lens. I entered graduate school because I wanted to better understand the world that shaped my reality. The methods I have chosen introduced me to social movements and critical thought focused on deconstructing our collective social reality. In this process, I find myself wondering more and more what future society is waiting for my grandchildren's grandchildren. I believe research efforts today can effectively improve our society by giving voice to marginalized and oppressed people and groups.

Introspective thoughts from my eight-week exploration of ICT through auto-ethnography

For this project, I used two self-guided language learning websites. The Aboriginal Language Initiative (http://firstnationhelp.com/ali/) is a website hosted by Atlantic Canada's First Nation Help Desk based in Membertou, Nova Scotia, and provides basic sentences, vocabulary lessons, language posters, and an online dictionary intended to provide the learner with the ability to guide their own learning of the Mi'gmaw language. The other site I used, Migmaq Online (http://www.mikmaqonline.org/) describes itself as a talking dictionary project which is based in Listuguj, Quebec. They provide over 3,500 Mi'gmaw words that have can be accessed orally by fluent speakers. In addition to these online resources, I also met

weekly with Miigam'agan a fluent speaker of Mi'gmaw, the Elder-in-Residence at St. Thomas University.

After a short while on these sites I found them both to mimic the teaching methods you would find in a mainstream provincial classroom. A one-way, top-down form of communication which does not allow for much interplay between the learner and the teaching method, fundamentally different from Indigenous ways of learning and knowing that I have come to know. Indigenous learning methods involve communal learning, collaborative efforts and reciprocity between the learner and the learning method. At the end of eight weeks I felt I learned more from my weekly meetings with Miigam'agan because of the free exchange of ideas.

I had so many questions regarding the structural use of the language and neither site offered an opportunity for interaction with a Mi'gmaw language specialist. The two sites that I used did offer some help regarding phonetics but questions about sentence structure and tenses were left unanswered. My weekly meetings with Miigam'agan who grew up speaking and living her language provided me with answers. Having a fluent and bilingual speaker to ask questions and share ideas with was very helpful for someone like me who grew up influenced by two worldviews. For our weekly conversations, I would join Miigam'agan at work in the Wabanaki Resource Center at St. Thomas University. Every time we met we were joined by Indigenous undergraduate students who then formed their own Mi'gmaw language group. Evidence of the communal spirit Indigenous ways of knowing and learning hold.

ICT allows the opportunity to make learning more interactive and to incorporate alternative ways of learning. Learning a language can be done in many ways. I would

hope that in the future the online learning sites I used would harness advances in ICT and provide a more communal lesson plan for their sites.

During this project, I discovered the contributions to language recovery and resurgences of Savannah Simon, a Mi'gmaw language advocate (https://www.youtube.com/user/MsNativeWarrior). Through Savannah's videos I was able to hear the language being used in real life situations and can see the emotion and facial features that are involved in the phonetics. I can see and hear the joy that the participants in the videos radiate with when they are speaking their mother tongue. Her work shows how the next generation of Indigenous educators are blending Indigenous knowledge and advances in technology. After viewing Savannah Simon's videos and seeing her enthusiasm I see a future where online learning sites will become more interactive as technology and society advance and Mi'gmaw society gains more authority over the social structures that govern their growth and prosperity.

In my broader graduate research, I am investigating how Indigenous groups worldwide are overcoming the obstacles settler colonialism represents. Some have shown great strides in harnessing the technology of ICT and adapting it to recover and revitalize their endangered languages. The Maori for example have made great strides in halting the extinction of their language via ICT (http://www.tewhanake.maori.nz/). Their online presence is showing how other Indigenous groups whose languages are on the brink of extinction can recover them. The ease and relatively low cost of ICT compared to traditional educational resources make it a viable option for language resurgence.

It can be argued that online resources by themselves are not congruent with an Indigenous worldview if they promote individual learning. Since time immemorial

humans have grouped together for safety and survival. The communal spirit in my territory is represented in the longhouse tradition. I was told once that our lives are succession of circles, like a Russian nesting doll. Our inner circle is our mind, body, and spirit and as we move outward from that inner circle we invite others in to our world. Our circles overlap with theirs and together we grow and prosper. ICT is showing that it can be adapted to meet those cultural protocols. Any Indigenous group can design, facilitate and determine the recovery and resurgence of their language in their own way.

My story and conclusions

During my preparations for this project I searched the internet for sites dedicated to the Mi'gmaw language. In my research, I also found online collections of Mi'gmaw stories and legends. I love reading these old stories and reading them again reminded me of how awesome it was to discover them as an undergraduate student. I was new to Canada then and just starting to understand my own understanding of being Mi'gmaw and these stories were a treasure trove of knowledge for me. I went so far as to use these stories as parenting aids with my own kids and a teaching aide as a classroom educator.

Having worked in the education field for most of my career I am well aware of the limited amount of resources available for culturally appropriate educational materials when you consider budgets and cost factors. I didn't realize how cost effective and readily available ICT has become until undertaking this project. Building an online learning site or even updating and reformatting the two I have used thus far is quite attainable. It is a perfect way to introduce methods of learning that incorporate the whole family in the learning process as well.

Adapting such an online site to include the ever expanding field of mobile sites and “apps” for newer forms of technology can be done with simple technology. This would reach out to a broader and more inclusive demographic as more and more people are making use of personal communication devices on a daily basis. Instead of “crushing candy” we could enable our youth to have access to ancestral language, knowledge and wisdom. With further research in this area the recovery of endangered languages could be become another tool of resistance against the linguicide it has experienced thus far.

In a positive light the overall lesson of settler colonialism can be that Indigenous societies have been made to become resilient. Indigenous languages and cultures have persevered through centuries of assault. In the Mi’gmaw creation story, the prophetic figure Glooscap after his creation embarked on a journey to explore and learn about his territory. When he finished his journey, he returned home where he met his family, who taught him how to live, grow and prosper. There he also found sparks left over from his own creation and from them he built a sacred fire from which emanated sparks that formed into our first ancestors. One day our journey through settler colonialism will end and out of that will spark a flame of resurgence.

There is a disconnect for many Indigenous students at the post-secondary level; homesickness and the isolation of pursuing higher education creates further stressors in the lives of post-secondary students. As Director of Aboriginal Student Services at St. Thomas University, my first goal was to find an Elder-in-Residence and that is how I became close to Miigam’agan. The role of the grandmother and family is so prominent in my culture and I knew I needed someone like her to help me build a home away from home for those students. Most of the Indigenous students I met during that time hoped to

move back to their home after their studies but were concerned about jobs. They contain within in them those embers, and when they return home they may very well harness the gifts ICT has to offer and make the fire of resurgence grow even brighter.

ICT could serve as grandmother so to speak. Nogami, Glooscap's grandmother was the first to come to him, and she taught him how to survive. There is a close connection between grandparents and their grandchildren. In my own life three of my four grandparents died before I was born and my mom's mom passed away before I was a teenager and I never built a relationship with her. However, along my journey I met many grandparents who shared their wisdom with me. Much of my own parenting style was influenced by that wisdom. In our ways we keep those ancient long house traditions going and using ICT can provide a medium for us to enhance and advance those traditions.

During my undergraduate years at university, If I had had ICT tools to access cultural wisdom when I was feeling down and blue it could have helped me avoid much struggle and strife. I fortunately reached out to elders and the spiritual community and found much guidance from them. Maslow's hierarchy of needs tells us that if a person is nurtured in a culturally appropriate and loving way their chances of healthy growth and prosperity is high. Using ICT to connect with cultural resources can become a monumental part of healthy growth and prosperity for Indigenous people.

I became a parent twice before turning 21 and I really had no clue about the reality this world has to offer if you're a member of a marginalized and oppressed group. During this time, I was majoring in Native Studies and learning how the Canadian structure has fundamentally impacted the Indigenous way of life. It was very important

for me then to navigate this world in such a way that I could effectively show my children how to stand up in a society that had forced their ancestors to kneel and grovel. I feel doing this for my own children evolved into a desire to nurture growth and prosperity for other people hoping to take control of the factors guiding their lives.

An ICT hub would allow for Mi'gmaw people to learn language, cultural values and traditions. As I wade my way through graduate studies I am strongly aware that for Indigenous society, nation building is more than just a concept, it is our reality. We have every right to establish our own education structures that are locally governed and administered at the community level and ICT provides us with a framework and the tools to deliver it. We have every legal and human right to do so but we continue to reproduce models of education that mimic Eurocentric values and ways of knowing but with a little bit of Indigenous language and culture. Indigenous nations can effectively use ICT to save endangered languages and revitalize Indigenous ways of knowing, all at the community level.

This project allowed me to reconnect with the spirit of the grassroots movement. During my undergraduate degree at St. Thomas I became quite involved in grassroots movements to recognize Indigenous and treaty rights. Since then life took me in other directions and having worked in a non-Indigenous environment I feel I lost touch with that spirit of resistance against oppression. I wanted to reconnect with those cultural teachings I learned during my first long term residence in Wolastoqey territory.

Through this project I have come to understand the Mi'gmaw creation story in a much deeper way. I have also come to understand the fundamental differences between Indigenous and European languages. This project allowed me to witness and learn from

my own lived experience. I feel that the introspectiveness and discipline that formal research demands of the researcher have allowed me to learn from my own “creation stories”. I feel that I am much more culturally prepared to begin my Master’s thesis.

This project revealed to me that one-on-one, individual learning is not the most culturally appropriate way to move forward for Indigenous groups. My own research has allowed me to see that a single tree does not a forest make. The most natural way of learning and living in this world is to be congruent with the natural order, the original instructions. The original instructions tell us that we thrive better if we do so together.

Saving our languages is the most important task going forward. Although this study was small in scope with limited resources, it highlights that ICT can be a medium for Indigenous groups to make their own language resources. With further research ICT can become a way wherein we can save our languages while also healing the wounds that the residential school era created, the loss of cultural identity. Revitalizing well-being and creating a holistic and positive environment for growth can also be a part of saving endangered languages.

The lived experience of marginalized and oppressed groups is not always captured in the dominant historical narratives we find in school textbooks. The greater goal of self-determination for Indigenous society begins with first understanding how we arrived to this moment in history. The conversation I present in this paper I hope will lead to more research into historical narratives that have been obfuscated and lost in the margins of history.

One of the most common responses I get from people when I discuss Indigenous issues is that happened a long time ago and it is time to move on so get over it. I was

most shocked when I heard sentiments like that from my colleagues when I myself was a classroom teacher at a high school very near to my home community. It is so hard to break through those attitudes and preconceived ideas. Auto-ethnography is a means through which we can learn directly from those who are oppressed.

During my undergraduate degree a friend had asked me to help her with a class presentation. She wanted me to conduct a smudging ceremony while she shared her experience at a residential school as a child. Up to that point residential schools were something I read about and now I was listening to a survivor in person. The raw emotion that my friend shared touched me deeply and I saw in that class that was predominantly non-Indigenous that I was not the only one. When the lived experience comes off the page and you are able to experience it in person you cannot help but become changed in some way by such a profound moment.

My broader research explores conflict theory and how Indigenous and non-Indigenous society can move forward from settler colonialism with reciprocity, dignity and a mutual opportunity for growth and prosperity. The first step in that process is for the dominant side of the conflict to openly and honestly listen to the narratives of the other side of the conflict, very similar to a talking circle. This eight-week study shows that auto-ethnography is a proper way to share those lived experiences that have been lost in the margins of history.

In the development of this paper I have developed a relationship with the Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Center (MWC) at the University of New Brunswick. David Perley, the Director of the MWC and co-investigator in First Nations Innovation, the research project that funded my study have made it possible for me to become involved in further

research in this field. In the coming year I will be a part of a research project using ICT to assist the recovery and revitalization of Wabanaki languages.

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I would like to express my gratitude first and foremost to my children, the roots of my life. Much gratitude goes out to the Wolastoqey nation in whose territory I am conducting my research. My research takes place not only in the traditional university forums but on the river, in the woods and on the trails of this territory that have been inhabited by your ancestors since time immemorial.

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Welaliog Miigam'agan, someday I will be able to express my full gratitude for your guidance and friendship in our mother tongue!

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Chapter 5: Deconstructing colonial interpretations of the lived experiences in Wabanaki'k and highlighting Wabanaki resistance against settler colonialism

Preface

Centered on Indigenous land rights, the Kanahsatake resistance, or known by settler Canadians as the Oka crisis, was a conflict involving Indigenous peoples, the province of Quebec, and the Canadian state in the summer of 1990. That summer my mother sent me to live in her home community Ugpi'ganjig (Eel River Bar) to get a feel for the place because we would be moving there from where I was born in Massachusetts the following summer. Oka was experienced much differently in Ugpi'ganjig than it was in town, and although I was only a teenager then, I was aware that there were two different social realities at play in Canada. Very shortly after moving to Canada in 1991, I enrolled at St. Thomas University (in 1994) and within the few years following my two children were born. I spent most of my time at St. Thomas exploring Indigenous peoples' historical and contemporary struggle against settler colonialism through the Native Studies program, while also exploring Wabanaki cultural traditions and ceremony outside of the classroom. I felt both would enable me to do my part as a parent to raise my children within a healthy, holistic and cultural growing environment. During the writing of this chapter I re-watched Alanis Obomsawin's documentary Kanehsatake: 270 Years

of Resistance[9]. Doing so brought me back to that moment in time; and I remembered how I felt watching the scenes of non-Indigenous people demonstrating their anger against Indigenous people in so many violent ways because their daily lives were obstructed by roadblocks. Much of that violence was random and targeted at any person who appeared to be Indigenous. During my undergraduate studies, I remember seeing and hearing the same racist acrimony directed at Indigenous people during the Burnt Church crisis[10]. All of this made me concerned as a parent of Indigenous children with brown skin and brown eyes as to what kind of world they would experience, surely not the same as their white-skinned, blue-eyed father.

This chapter aims to highlight Wabanaki resistance against European encroachment onto their coastal lands and waterways. Much of that *resistance* is simply not taking part in the colonial system. St. Thomas University (STU) Elder-in-Residence Miigam'agan and her partner Gkisedtanamoogk have been a strong influence on me; themselves having lived most of their lives according to their traditional teachings, continue to inform me on cultural, ceremonial, and linguistic knowledge. I owe them a huge debt of gratitude. Conversations with them over the years have helped me better understand the importance of Indigenous languages, culture, and ceremony in holistic growth and development. Indigenous knowledge keepers and ceremonial elders are so critical to decolonizing education and Indigenous resurgence but their wisdom and knowledge is not a meaningful and effective part of mainstream education and is slowly

[9] https://www.nfb.ca/film/kanehsatake_270_years_of_resistance/

[10] https://www.nfb.ca/film/is_the_crown_at_war_with_us/

fading away. Most decolonizing efforts in mainstream education focus on raising awareness of residential schools and equally representing Indigenous people within the colonial historical narrative rather than recovering and revitalizing traditional Indigenous knowledge exchange processes and using them as a framework for regenerating Indigenous knowledge. This is where I felt compelled to explore decolonizing education because my experience working within mainstream education taught me that to effectively recover and revitalize Indigenous knowledge exchange processes, settler control of Indigenous education had to be confronted. Settler control over education happens at every level even in Indigenous community-based schools where teachers are expected to follow provincial curricula and guidelines, and parents and children fall into line with a settler narrative. That is where the motivation for this chapter, in a way, begins. I want to know how Indigenous peoples, their traditional lands and waterways, and overall future growth and development came under settler control.

Introduction

Understanding how settler colonialism evolved in Wabanaki territories to dispossess the peoples of the Wabanaki nations of their traditional territories and their overall sovereignty is a critical part of decolonizing mainstream education for Wabanaki peoples today. Education, like every other facet of Wabanaki life, was consumed by the evolution of settler colonialism. The first step to decolonize education is to ask the question of how Indigenous education came to be under the control of a foreign power, and for whom does this social arrangement benefit? This chapter aims to show how England and France at the outset of the 18th century targeted Wabanaki territories and

waterways for resource extraction and implemented an intergenerational, systematic plan to undermine Wabanaki sovereignty, to usurp title to their traditional lands and waterways. Considering the scope of my thesis is not primarily historical, I chose to consult the following secondary sources: *The Far Reaches of Empire: War in Nova Scotia, 1710 – 1760* (Grenier 2008); *An Overview of the 18th Century Treaties Signed Between the Mi'kmaq and Wulastukwiuk Peoples and the English Crown 1693 – 1928* (Wicken & Reid 1996); *Mi'kmaq Treaties on Trial: History, Land and Donald Marshall Junior* (Wicken 2001); *We Were Not the Savages* 3rd Edition (Paul 2006); and *The Conquest of Acadia, 1710: Imperial, Colonial, and Aboriginal Constructions* (Reid et al. 2003).

The scope of my research focused primarily on the impact of British and French hostilities that would lead to outbreaks of war in Wabanaki territories, specifically their roles in: King Phillips War (1675-1678) and King William's War (1688 – 1697), the first major conflicts between New England colonists and Indigenous peoples that did not directly involve the Mi'kmaq or Wolastoqey but they did lend support to their Abenaki, Penobscot, and Passamaquoddy allies (Wicken & Reid 1996); Queen Anne's War (1702-1713) the North American theater of the War of Spanish Succession (1702-1715) which led to open hostilities between English and French colonies and ended with the formal signing of two treaties, *Treaty of Utrecht* (1713) which ceased hostilities in the broader war between France and England (that did not include Indigenous representation) and the *Treaty of Portsmouth* (1713) which specifically negotiated a peace for the hostilities that played out in Wabanaki territories (Wicken & Reid 1996); Father Rale's (1722 -1726) which ended with the *Treaty of Boston* (1725) also known as *Mascarene's Treaty* (1726);

King George's War (1744-1748), the North American theater of the War of Austrian Succession (1740-1748); Father Le Loutre's War (1749-1755); and the Seven Years War (1756-1763). The Treaty of Paris (1763) ended the Seven Years War and resulted in the Royal Proclamation of 1763 that has become a critical part of Indigenous land claims in Canada. My research focuses on the socio-economic and geo-political transformations that over half a century of warfare had on Wabanaki holistic growth and development. With each outbreak of war, Indigenous society was ravaged in every way; the peoples' traditional ways of living were severely disrupted, and the outcome of these wars and the prevailing reality of militarization would further divide Indigenous and settler people along imposed borders of racial, cultural, and class lines.

Tracing the Origins of Indigenous Resistance

My exploration into decolonizing education enabled me to better understand the impact of settler colonialism on Indigenous holistic growth and development. It also revealed that Indigenous people resisted settler colonialism in so many ways, and continue to resist the illegal encroachment and occupation of their traditional lands and waterways. A major influence for conducting this study has been critical analysis of the Doctrine of Discovery, a papal bull issued in 1493, which designation allowed colonial nations to claim title to foreign sovereign lands they felt were unoccupied (Manuel, A., 2016). At the *11th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum,* Arthur Manuel read aloud a statement on behalf of the Global Indigenous Caucus regarding the Doctrine of Discovery (2012):

The Permanent Forum acknowledge that the doctrine of discovery, both in theory

> and in on-going practice constitutes the subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation. It is the denial of fundamental inherent human rights, is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world-peace and cooperation. The doctrine of discovery is an expression of racism, xenophobia and discrimination and "represents a regime of systematic oppression and domination and is committed to maintaining that regime" and "The doctrine of discovery should be recognized as a crime against humanity and should be condemned as such. Indigenous legal and judicial systems exist today. Indigenous knowledge systems exist today. Indigenous languages continue to be spoken. We have not been overcome by the doctrine of discovery, in spite of the continued application of this doctrine, in all regions of the world. We will continue to exercise and assert our rights as described in the UN Declaration and in our own Indigenous laws."
>
> (http://www.ienearth.org/unpfii-discussion-doctrine-of-discovery/)

Grounding myself in the history of settler colonialism, I was able to find many examples of Wabanaki nations meeting Europeans wherever and whenever they visited Wabanaki territories. The Idle No More movement re-ignited a spark or resistance within me that I first developed during my undergraduate degree. As I conducted my archival research it occurred to me how little Europeans knew of Indigenous society and their traditional trade networks. Using these chains of communication enabled Indigenous people to pass along their dealings with the newcomers and each new encounter would adequately explain why with each European expedition they were met with much more resistance and hostility from Indigenous peoples. Smith (1999) says, "transforming our

colonized views of our own history, reclaiming the past, giving testimony to the injustices of the past are all strategies which are commonly employed by indigenous peoples struggling for justice…the need to tell our stories remains the powerful imperative of a powerful form of resistance." (p.36).

French & English Settler Colonialism

In the early 17th century, France & England had neither the financial nor the institutional resources to adequately pursue empire building, instead delegated colonization and governance to companies or proprietors (Reid, J., Basque, M., Mancke, E., Moody, B., Plank, G., & Wicken, W., 2003). The main motivation of European settler colonialism was profit (and still is!), the accumulation of wealth through resource extraction was paramount. England and France would pursue that wealth using peaceful negotiations and trade and when those were not effective resorted to taking hostages, military violence, campaigns of terror, ethnic cleansing, and germ warfare to extract that wealth. Wabanaki territories extend from the east coast of present day Atlantic Canada and New England all the way in to present day Vermont and upstate New York and into parts of Quebec. With New France settled in present day Quebec and New England colonies to the south, the Wabanaki nations would eventually be drawn into global wars that pit England and France against each other. France was just as hostile to perceived threats and enemies as were the English, and just as supportive an ally to those they deemed a strategic alliance to gain a stronger foothold in North America. Early on, France became the ally of Wabanaki peoples because they were the first to establish permanent settlements in Port Royal, Minas, Chignecto and Cobequit in the early part of

the 17th century (Wicken & Reid, 1999; Grenier, 2008). Acadian settlers occupied these settlements and for nearly a century forged a living peace with Wabanaki peoples through trade that in many ways still exists today. France surrendered their claim to Wabanaki lands and waterways to England through the *Treaty of Utrecht* (1713), a negotiation that did not include Wabanaki representation. Instead, France focused more on their settlements in Lower Canada (modern day Quebec). After claiming Nova Scotia in 1713, the British needed Acadians for provisions and supplies more than the Acadians needed the British for anything (Grenier, 2008; Reid et al., 2003). England's initial colonial agenda was to get control of Wabanaki lands and waterways but first had to navigate the reality that their newly acquired territories had been under French influence for nearly a century and hardly acknowledged England's claims (Grenier, 2008; Reid et al., 2003; Wicken & Reid, 1996).

Even though England laid claim to Wabanaki lands and waterways through the *Treaty of Utrecht* (1713), France and its colonial agency, New France in Quebec and the Acadian allies on the east coast, had great influence with their allied Wabanaki nations and worked in tandem to effectively resist England's claim over Wabanaki territories for the first decade of British rule (Grenier, 2008; Wicken & Reid, 1999). This unique position empowered Acadian resistance against British settler colonialism and would end up dividing Acadians for the most part into two groups: those who willingly supported the British and built their settlements close to British forts, and those who were not so apt to pledge complete obedience to British rule and wanted to respect their alliances with Wabanaki peoples (Reid et al., 2003; Grenier, 2008). During this time, British colonial agents began devising plans to first remove the Acadian resistance, with force if needed

(which ended up happening in 1755 with the expulsion), and once that resistance was subdued, Wabanaki resistance could be targeted next (Grenier, 2008).

Also of critical importance is to understand the historical conflict between the mostly English-Protestant and French-Catholic colonists that also had a huge impact on the lived experiences throughout the history of Indigenous and settler relations. French colonial agencies used Catholic priests who had learned local Indigenous languages to negotiate trade with Indigenous nations and would help to build an allied resistance against British settler colonialism. One of the more difficult and I feel critical things to figure out while researching was whether Catholic priests were more loyal to France, the Catholic church, or the Indigenous peoples they claimed to represent. Catholic priests were very actively involved in recruiting Wabanaki peoples into open war against England which eventually have devastating impact on Indigenous sovereignty, title to traditional lands and waterways, and overall holistic growth and development (Grenier, 2008; Wicken & Reid, 1996). France ultimately surrendered all their colonial interests beyond Quebec to England by the end of the Seven Years War (1756-1763) and would no longer support Acadian or Wabanaki resistance against English rule. From this time on Wabanaki nations were left to negotiate with a hostile occupying British force that they openly resisted for over 50 years. During this period, it is evident that Wabanaki peoples' relationship with settler society would drastically shift from nation-to-nation to be subject to the crown, and ultimately become what we have today, a nation-state and a ward of the state.

By the mid-18th century Wabanaki territory would become a much more violent, hegemonic, and pro-British territory, whose ruling elites would not hesitate to use any

means necessary to quell any resistance against English rule in Wabanaki territory. The intergenerational trauma of settler colonialism that I speak of throughout this thesis has its roots in this time-period. Until researching this time-period I was not fully aware of New England's role in the colonization of Wabanaki lands and waterways, and I feel it is not fully understood from a modern Canadian perspective because most history books view history through neo-colonial borders and timelines, and the authors sometimes fail to mention that Wabanaki territories extend across state, provincial, and federal boundaries. It is critical that the reader understand that the machinations of both the French and British Empires in Wabanaki territory were part of a much larger geo-political process of European imperialism that extended around the globe; this which would impact the holistic growth and development of Indigenous people everywhere. A process that is still systematically operating around the world, as is the broader healing movement of decolonizing Indigenous education and Indigenous resurgence.

Nova Scotia Colony

Nova Scotia colony was the first French territory seized and held by the British empire in the New World, and would become a testing ground for European imperialism in North America whose policies and tactics for dispossessing Indigenous peoples of their lands using violent force, and acts of terror would be applied as settler colonialism travelled west (Grenier, 2008). Key to understanding the history of British settler colonialism in Wabanaki territories is that English colonists all throughout the New England colonies were reluctant to build military alliances with Indigenous peoples. This made the first decade of British rule in Nova Scotia colony seemingly non-existent as

Acadians, New France (Quebec), and Wabanaki peoples went about their business mostly unaffected by the changes the *Treaty of Utrecht* (1713) brought (Wicken & Reid, 1996; Grenier, 2008).

The English colonial agenda for Nova Scotia and New England colonies was directed mainly by the king of England and the English Board of Trade but acted out by colonial agents and soldiers on the ground. Shortly after England claimed Nova Scotia colony in 1713 it became somewhat of a "garrison government" in which military officers in the colonies made decisions with little supervision from London (Grenier, 2008, p.33). Over time there would be a growing disconnect between the directives that came from England and the capacity of the military on the ground where they were surrounded by Indigenous nations. The governing authorities in Nova Scotia colony had begun to feel that the Board of Trade in London could not fully appreciate the desperation of their situation from afar and sought to gain more local control. As England's military presence grew in the New England colonies they would lend military support to Nova Scotia colonial agents to enforce their local control on the ground (Wicken & Reid, 1999; Grenier, 2008).

Lt. Governor Vetch, the first to govern Nova Scotia colony after the *Treaty of Utrecht* (1713), was charged with navigating the economic and political demands of the empire within the social reality that existed on the ground in Wabanaki territory, wherein British troops were greatly outnumbered and ill-supplied. His efforts to get Acadian settlers and Wabanaki peoples to take an oath of allegiance to their new sovereign was met with much ambiguity and unwillingness. In 1708, Lt. Governor Vetch would suggest to the Board of Trade in London that expelling the neutral, Catholic, Acadian settlers

and/or overwhelming them with loyal, Protestant, settlers would be the only way to secure allegiance to the crown in Nova Scotia, a plan that ultimately British authorities would enact once they became a stronger presence in the area (Grenier, 2008). In an act of nepotism amongst British elite society that would also have a huge impact on dispossessing Wabanaki lands and waterways, Vetch's brother-in-law, Major Livingstone, and his Massachusetts Rangers which included Mohawk warriors were dispatched to Nova Scotia to roam the colony to take oaths of allegiance from Acadian and Wabanaki people (Grenier, 2008). Apart from the outbreak of war, British occupation of Wabanaki territories had minimal effect on the daily lives of Wabanaki peoples for most of the first half of the 18th century. The second half saw the British Empire use its military power in Nova Scotia colony in conjunction with the New England colonies to subdue Indigenous peoples into submission and force them into becoming subjects of the crown while at the same time dispossessing Wabanaki nations of their traditional lands, and waterways.

New England Colonies

English and Anglo-American settler colonialism involved the New England colonies: Massachusetts Bay Colony, Connecticut Colony, Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, and Province of New Hampshire. New England colonists first settled Plymouth Plantation in 1693 and immediately encroached onto Indigenous lands which made their initial settlement difficult. Without forging peaceful coexistence with local Indigenous groups, they would not have survived. Having built a thriving settlement, their population grew and resulted in more colonial expansion which again

brought Indigenous resistance. Expansion of the New England colonies would eventually lead to King Williams War (1689-1697), the first of six colonial wars fought between the French and English, that drew Wabanaki nations into the fray. For the most part this war was about the expansion of New England colonies into Abenaki and Penobscot territories but also drew the attention and support of Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey nations. Especially after New England militia lead by William Phillips spent 12 days in the Fundy area sacking local settlements (Grenier, 2008). Since the mid-17th century both England and the New England colonies viewed Acadia and the Nova Scotia colony as a strategic location and were fearful the French settlements there provided a launching point to attack English settlements and trading routes in the New England area. New England colonists had long hoped to colonize and establish settlements in the Nova Scotia area. These locations provisioned Canada (Quebec) and were considered untapped, with untold wealth in timber, fish, furs, and minerals (Grenier, 2008, p11).

The second colonial war between France and England was known as Queen Anne's War (1702-1713) which ended with the *Treaty of Utrecht* (1713) and did not include any Indigenous or Wabanaki representation. A critical point of historical debate because France under the terms of Utrecht *gave* a large portion of Wabanaki territory (Acadia and Nova Scotia) to England. After hearing of the transfer of Wabanaki lands Wabanaki leadership responded by saying that the French never said anything to them about it and wondered how they could give it away without asking us, suggesting that the creator had placed them there and France does not have the right to give it away (Wicken & Reid, 1999, p133-134). To end the hostilities of Queen Anne's War in North America, Abenaki officials called for a treaty conference with New England colonial officials

which resulted in the *Treaty of Portsmouth* (1713). For the Wabanaki, ending hostilities and establishing peace was critical for ending the economic disruptions of war, and the re-establishment of trade on a firm footing was an important matter settled at Portsmouth (Wicken & Reid, 1999).

Resistance to both treaties of 1713 was quick to happen by Wabanaki nations when the Massachusetts House of Representatives in direct violation of the *Treaty of Portsmouth* deregulated the fur trade. This resulted in chaotic prices, allegations of unfair trading practices, and an upsurge in liquor trading, which Wabanaki representatives complained in vain at conferences in January and July 1714 (Wicken & Reid, 1999, p135). Wabanaki resistance against the wholesale theft and transfer of their lands, and the unfair and brutish trade practices of the New England colonies would build tension and lead to open conflicts as most of Wabanaki territories were now regarded by the British as an unbroken stretch of British land running from peninsular Nova Scotia to northern New England.

Dispute over the terms of the *Treaty of Portsmouth* (1713) especially on the transfer of Wabanaki land to England would again lead to open hostilities between Wabanaki nations and the British Empire. France used this conflict to garner support for their colonial agenda by suggesting to the Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey during outbreaks of hostilities that if England were gone from the scene, France would not lay claim to lands transferred in the *Treaty of Utrecht*, the territory that would eventually become New Brunswick (Grenier, 2008, p53). Think of the long-term implications if that happened, New Brunswick could have become a Wabanaki nation-state. These hostilities would lead to an alliance of Wolastoqey and Mi'kmaq against England also known as Father

Rale's War[11], the fourth colonial war between Anglo-Americans and Wabanaki nations (1722-1726).

Wabanaki Resistance and Mascarene's Treaty

Dispute over the interpretations of the Treaty of Portsmouth and the Treaty of Utrecht would eventually lead to another series of conflicts. Wolastoqey and Mi'kmaq resistance against English hostility from was supported by some Acadians, and were supplied by New France and became part of a broader Indigenous resistance known as Father Rale's War (1722-1726). The war had such an impact on trading in the area that the Board of Trade recommended a peaceful settlement be made and England ultimately was forced to acknowledge Indigenous sovereignty and rights to their traditional lands and waterways (Grenier, 2008; Wicken & Reid, 1996). By1726 England and France grew weary of fighting and as Wabanaki peoples realized how important European supplies and arms had become to their survival, both parties sought a peaceful resolution rather than extending hostilities. This, however, was against the inclinations of local colonial officials who lived near Wabanaki nations and viewed them as their cultural inferiors (Wicken & Reid, 1996, p171). Thus, negotiations between Wabanaki and English were convoluted affairs, made even more difficult due to translation issues, seasonal patterns of Wabanaki society, and more importantly the traditional protocols of negotiation employed by Wabanaki political processes. Wabanaki leaders did not hold absolute

[11] It is typical in British history to use the name of the group(s) opposing England, this war is also known as the Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey war.

authority to make decisions for the community and depended upon consensus from the communities they represented which meant travelling great distances.

The *Treaty of Boston* (1725) officially ended hostilities, Captain Paul Mascarene negotiated on behalf of Nova Scotia, this treaty is also known as Mascarene's Treaty (Grenier, 2008). Wolastoqey and Mi'kmaq signed the treaty and noted that in doing so they were seeking peace willingly and not because they had been defeated (Grenier, 2008, p70). This is an important issue to point out, as English colonies grew stronger they would eventually renegotiate these treaties from a much stronger footing. Per English translations of this treaty, the Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey seemingly recognize English jurisdiction over them and their lands and waterways in the Province of Nova Scotia and Acadia (Wicken & Reid, 1996). Any further encroachment onto Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey lands following the ratification of *Mascarene's Treaty* (1726) was confronted by Wabanaki peoples, a logical conclusion would suggest that during the negotiations, the precise content of the treaty was not correctly communicated to Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey delegates (Wicken and Reid, 1996, p174). Bear-Nicholas (1994) highlights that *Mascarene's Treaty* includes subsequent revisions that included English terms alluding to the surrender of land by the Wabanaki, and she concludes this raises the possibility that Mascarene's interpretation may be fraudulent (p. 8). Bear-Nicholas (1994) also highlights other oddities about *Mascarene's Treaty*, such as that it only contains Wabanaki obligations and lacks any treaty obligations of Anglo-Americans (p. 8-9).

Although debates continue over the interpretation of *Mascarene's Treaty*, for the most part it made peace, not conflict, their normative state of relations and was the last

time there was legitimate unforced peace and friendship and should be the starting point for reconciliation (Grenier 2008, p72). Treaties signed in later years were signed after the French had lost Louisburg in 1758, Quebec in 1759, and Montreal in 1760 (Wicken & Reid, 1996, p70). To understand Wabanaki resistance against British settler colonialism, you must understand the larger geo-political war of empire building England and France were engaged in globally (p. 124). With no French support in the area, and their Acadian allies either forcibly removed or in hiding, the Mi'kmaq had few choices but to discuss terms of surrender with their erstwhile English enemies (Wicken & Reid 1996, p74). English military power and roaming bands of New England rangers forced subjugation to English terms of peace or else face extermination. This is the story on which New Brunswick was founded: forced subjugation and land-theft. These are the uncomfortable conversations that are not happening in contemporary times and makes re-establishing traditional Indigenous knowledge exchange process nearly impossible without addressing the dispossession of Indigenous lands and sovereignty. The issue of the illegal theft of the never ceded Wabanaki traditional lands and waterways is already making news today[12]. These are the topics we need to be talking about especially within academia considering the very privileged places settler colonialism allows us to occupy within a neo-colonial settler society that prospered on the destruction of traditional Indigenous societies.

[12] http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/elsipogtog-land-claim-1.3844200

The Loyalist Agenda & New Brunswick colony

Settler encroachment and dispossession of their lands disrupted Wabanaki traditional ways of living and has been a focus of Wabanaki resistance dating back to 1534. It became even more of a problem as England increased its settler population in Nova Scotia and the New England Colonies throughout the 18th century. Wabanaki resistance took many forms at the local level, as each of the Wabanaki nations would be forced to navigate the wholesale dispossession and theft of their traditional lands and waterways for the next one hundred years (Bear-Nicholas, 2016). British settler colonialism would ultimately enable the birth of a new class of landed-gentry in these colonies, including the Nova Scotia colony that would eventually set its sights on further expansion into Wabanaki territory, eventually completely dispossessing Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqey, and Passamaquoddy of their traditional lands and waterways (Bear-Nicholas, 2016). Following the American War of Independence (1776-1783), Loyalists were forced to leave American colonies but plans for a new Loyalist colony had been in place for twenty years (Grenier, 2008; Wicken & Reid, 1996). Bear-Nicholas (2015) suggests that the expropriation of the New Brunswick colony would be rationalized by using the concept of *terra nullius*, a notion that Indigenous lands were *empty* thus colonial officials were under no obligation to abide by the provisions relating to Indigenous land claims in any of the treaties, including the *Royal Proclamation of 1763* (p. 30).

During the Seven Years War (1756-1763) Wabanaki territory located in modern day New Brunswick was considered a strategic military location by the British Empire, a supply line to the main theater of war in Upper and Lower Canada. They used elite

military forces mostly from the New England colonies to suppress any resistance against British occupation. During the American Revolutionary War (1776-1783) British and New England military forces again used force in this territory to dissuade local rebellion of any form in Wabanaki territories. So, I find it ironic that it was New England ruling elites that petitioned the crown to annex a portion of Nova Scotia, modern day New Brunswick. Was this payment for services rendered? In 1783 thousands of Loyalists would begin to arrive in Wabanaki territories for resettlement. This lot consisted predominantly of ex-British soldiers who fought in the American Revolutionary War and could be called upon if a local militia were needed, and acted as visual reminder of violent, inhumane, British tactics to put-down Indigenous resistance (Bear-Nicholas 2015). From then on a military presence ruled New Brunswick, implemented a rigid neo-colonial social framework that was meant to empower and enable Loyalist peoples and their ways of living, and was never intended to include Acadian or Wabanaki peoples. Reading this history takes me right back to the conversations I had at the Wabanaki Resource Center at St. Thomas University in 2014, during a time when over 700 RCMP and private security personnel marched on non-violent anti-shale gas demonstrators in Rexton, New Brunswick (Howe, 2014). Every time Indigenous people in Canada, and around the globe, stand up for their sovereignty and their land rights they are confronted with violent oppression from state authorities. I see Rexton, the Lobster War in Esgenoopetitj (2000) and the incident in Listuguj (1981) that Alanis Obomsawin details in her documentaries as battles in an on-going 500 Year War of Wabanaki Resistance.

Smith (1999):

"[History] is the story of the powerful and how they became powerful, and then

> how they use their power to keep them in positions in which they can continue to dominate others. It is because of this relationship with power that we have been excluded, marginalized, and 'Othered'. In this sense history is not important for indigenous peoples because a thousand accounts of the 'truth' will not alter the 'fact' that indigenous peoples are still marginal and do not possess the power to transform history into justice". (p. 35)

Thoughts on Decolonizing Education & Rebuilding the Longhouse

The question that confronts me after this essay is whether the neo-colonial post-secondary governance structure can be transformed to meet the needs for decolonizing education for Indigenous resurgence within academia. Anything short of Indigenous control of Indigenous education outside the purview of settler society is not an effective enough measure to recover and revitalize traditional Indigenous knowledge exchange processes. These are critical to regenerating Wabanaki children who are raised in, and educated within, their respective cultural and linguistic frameworks. Without those generations of Wabanaki who will guide the journey towards Wabanaki sovereignty? We need to start the process now; Wabanaki languages are near extinction and the rebuilding process can be greatly aided by post-secondary institutions.

At UNB, as in all university campuses, colonial physical structures continue to exist. If at the end of the day negotiations on the future of the academy do not include Indigenous perspectives, wants, needs, and desires, then there can be no real alliance. As a graduate student, I volunteer my time with my graduate student association and my union of graduate of student workers. In my time at UNB I have paid close attention to

how these groups are treated. They make up a large majority of the overall population at UNB but those two advocate groups for graduate students have continuously experienced the same elitist, patriarchal, domineering and marginalizing attitudes, behaviours and practices experienced by Indigenous society. How would *Indigenous control of Indigenous education* work within a Eurocentric, top-down structure, where already there are limited resources to go around. As I enter my PhD, I am totally concerned with the future of academia here in Wabanaki territory because our resurgence is dependent on local lands, and waterways, we need these critical places to rebuild. We cannot go anywhere else for them.

What if Indigenous people across Canada withdrew their support of current post-secondary institutions until they apply UNDRIP principles to their overall governance structures and open their privileged places for grass-roots, action-based research that collaborates with local Indigenous groups working together to end the intergenerational trauma of settler colonialism and heal the on-going damage. Although, the corporatization of the university is growing field of critical study, I continue to feel it is dismissed while modern manifestations of settler colonialism are advanced, a reflection of all that affects us in academia. The monetary framework that guides the future of academia is frightening for qualitative researchers who require deep, long-term analysis of the issues affecting those at the *bottom* of a top-down structure. Qualitative, action-based research is a holistic and safe way to fight back against those at the top who determine for themselves who shall remain at the *bottom*. What is stopping all of us *treaty-minded* peoples working in academia to withdraw our support and efforts from academia and work towards a *treaty-peoples' university* where all marginalized groups

within society can take part within an egalitarian framework. We *treaty-minded peoples* can develop matriarchal or matricultural governance frameworks that apply egalitarian governance frameworks that apply egalitarian principles and values to their practice[13]. How strong are our commitments to decolonizing education, Indigenous resurgence and being a settler-ally despite the realities of our daily lives? We all need to eat to live. If the treaties of the peace and friendship remained intact and Wabanaki nations could have developed their territories and waterways and establish Indigenous settlements in peace and harmony, would they have eventually evolved into modern towns and cities? Instead, global geo-political interests manoeuvered and warred against each other and the ripple effects totally disrupted what could have manifested into a totally different social reality for Wabanaki people today. We are so ensconced in Canadian society that it is nearly impossible to take part on any level without perpetuating or being restricted by colonial attitudes, beliefs, and practices. For Wabanaki nations, the first step is to detach from colonial structures that Anglo-American settler colonialism systematically imposed. And then the next step is to take direct actions to effectively decolonize our educational realities, and engage in local dialogues about our future goals and how to achieve them. When you speak to power there are consequences. The price of those consequences, as it relates to Wabanaki peoples and their lived experiences, was paid in blood. This thesis is a way of pushing back at oppressive forces, of speaking to power in a safe and holistic manner.

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[13] http://www.second-congress-matriarchal-studies.com/goettnerabendroth.html

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This thesis, in many ways, has enabled me to see how I have been shaped by settler colonialism and neo-colonial educational practices. My research studies and literature review have allowed me to explore how other Indigenous educators have attempted to challenge these practices, and highlighted ways in which I can move forward as an educator with a renewed focus on Indigenous holistic growth and resurgence. Ultimately, this research journey has highlighted for me that decolonization is a mode of social justice which supports finding holistic ways of confronting the race-based, hegemonic, and patriarchal power structures settler colonialism has created. I believe rebuilding the longhouse means repositioning the role of the clan mother within modern society. The clan mother was a critical part of Wabanaki governance that worked in tandem with traditional male leadership roles to balance overall growth within a framework of communal wellbeing and holistic growth. The clan mothers I have been fortunate enough to collaborate with during this research are more concerned about the impact of our daily decisions on future generations, a concept that should be applied to any talk about reconciliation and future growth in Canada. Decolonization processes require that Indigenous and settler allies work within a framework of understanding, reconciliation, redemption, reciprocity, peaceful coexistence, and mutually beneficial holistic growth and development. The inherent structural obstacles preventing this type of collaborative transformation is settler control, which is completely counter to longhouse teachings of co-operative governance. The overriding lesson I have learned throughout this research journey is that decolonization requires detaching from settler control including colonial (patriarchal) attitudes, behaviours, and practices which control or

determine the kinds of indicators which define Indigenous wellbeing and future growth. In essence, self-determination means being determined to do things for ourselves within a framework of community at a micro and macro level. My research journey has shown me that for Indigenous people, the act of decolonizing is a healing work—that which involves re-establishing the traditional ways Indigenous people regenerated their cultural identities through a symbiotic relationship with the land and all of creation.

It is of critical ethical importance that decolonization processes at the post-secondary level follow OCAP principals. Anything short of *Indigenous control of Indigenous education,* outlined in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous* (2007) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *Principals of Reconciliation* (2015) is not an effective form of reconciliation, and it has little chance of addressing what settler colonialism took from Indigenous peoples. These are the lessons I have learned during my journey through graduate school, and I am left wondering, what's the next step? I feel the theoretical side of my journey has enabled me to re-focus my educational lens towards establishing land-based, decolonizing educational programs. I also feel my educational journey through graduate school revealed the enormous influence of colonial attitudes, behaviours, and practices on mainstream education in Canada. Settler control of Indigenous education in Canada on every level is still a major problem across Canada, and I feel nowhere more than in Wabanaki territory. In fact, neo-colonial boundaries separate Wabanaki nations and divvy up settler control of Wabanaki education across provincial, state, and federal boundaries. Much of the literature I have read for my thesis poses fundamental philosophical questions that many conversations with colleagues has focused on: What if Indigenous people across Canada withdrew their

support of current post-secondary institutions until they commit to direct actions to radically transform their institutions to be inclusive of OCAP, UNDRIP, and TRC principals? What if Indigenous people collectively took their funding dollars, and their participatory, action-based research efforts and established their own educational institutions across Canada? My first study highlighted how Information and Communication Technologies can help meet those lofty goals and are able to meet the linguistic and cultural needs for re-establishing traditional Indigenous knowledge exchange processes.

My plan is to continue on with community, participatory, action-based research at the PhD level, and I would like to include ceremonial scholars and knowledge keepers in a meaningful and effective way moving forward. UNB recognizes the critical importance of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission[14], and being located at a central location within Wabanaki territory can become a hub of Indigenous resurgence, and champion of social justice if their commitments are met with real, transformative actions. Within mainstream universities, the physical structures exist, but if at the end of the day *Decolonizing the Academy* falls short of Indigenous sovereignty and the future growth of the academy does not include Indigenous perspectives, wants, needs, and desires in an equal way, I do not believe there will ever be a real alliance. I started graduate school in 2013, and not until 2015 was there an Indigenous PhD on staff who could provide the cultural insights on decolonizing and Indigenous methodologies. In that time, I know of

[14] http://blogs.unb.ca/newsroom/2016/10/12/leveraging-the-power-of-education-in-reaching-reconciliation/

Indigenous students who chose other universities because of the lack of Indigenous faculty at UNB. Making the Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Center and their Council of Elders a part of a tri-lateral governing body that includes the Senate and the Board of Governors would be an effective first step towards transformational institutional changes, and show a real commitment to reconciliation.

As I enter my PhD, I am totally concerned with the future of academia here in Wabanaki territory, and because our resurgence is dependent on local lands and waterways, we need these critical places to rebuild. We cannot go anywhere else for them. The question that confronts me at the conclusion of this essay is whether mainstream universities in Canada are capable of the transformational changes needed for an effective and meaningful decolonizing process. I aim to use the rest of my career to work collaboratively with like-minded people to empower and enable healing social conditions through political advocacy, evidence-based, participatory-action research, and policy development at the community level. During the course of my graduate journey I have met so many emerging Indigenous academics who are exploring ways to empower resurgence in their own communities. At the core of decolonizing education and Indigenous holistic growth are questions about our collective humanity. In a broader sense, decolonizing education offers all Canadians a chance to consider if our society is structured in such a way that empowers holistic growth and development for all of society, not just the elite.

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Glossary

Decolonizing Lens

A decolonizing lens is a critical part of Indigenous research design and examines the intersectionality of race, gender, and class and how settler colonialism impacts holistic growth and development in those areas. Settler colonialism is patriarchal in nature focused on individualism and wealth accumulation at the expense of the other, whereas this thesis through a decolonizing lens aims to examine settler colonialism through a matriarchal lens. With a decolonizing lens, I hope to gain insight on settler colonialism operates at the local level to disrupt holistic growth and development of the family unit. Decolonizing my own lens taught me to critically explore historical events and read between the lines to imagine the impact of settler colonialism as a parent. So much of the historical record is focused on giving glory or proclaiming the greatness of colonial elites, when in fact their motives and actions had devastating impacts on overall human growth and development.

Holistic Growth and Development

When I consider what my overall aim of this thesis hopes to accomplish is to gain insight on how settler colonialism operates at the individual and communal level to disrupt holistic growth and development. This means to me what is written in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the 94 Calls-to-Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples,

and the hope of every parent that their child grow with in an appropriate cultural and linguistic framework within their own respective nation.

Longhouse

During my undergraduate degree ceremonial elders often espoused the teachings of the longhouse, which are traditional dwellings of many earth-based tribal cultures, including Wabanaki nations. The longhouse is symbolic of familial connection as longhouses were added on to with the addition of new family members. Each longhouse had a clan mother, who looked after the family and entrusted all needs were met. Rebuilding the longhouse is a conceptual model for reconciliation based on the *original teachings* of Wabanaki ancestors.

Settler Colonialism

My understanding of settler colonialism is always evolving as I become more aware of its modern-day manifestations and its impact on society. The literature I explored throughout this thesis broadly defines settler colonialism as a unique form of imperialism that aims to dispossess Indigenous nations of their lands and waterways for resettlement of their own peoples and resource extraction. Throughout I refer to settler colonialism in two stages: the internal colonial and neo-colonial periods. The internal colonial period I refer to in this thesis begins with the settlement of European satellite colonies New England, New France, and then Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick colonies. The neo-colonial period follows the internal colonial stage when those satellite colonies detached from the empire and became self-governing nation-states.

Wabanaki

The term Wabanaki has had various definitions throughout the last few hundred years. The term I use throughout this chapter was first introduced to me during my undergraduate degree by Wabanaki elders and teachers: that includes Abenaki, Wolastoqey, Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, and Mi'kmaq nations.

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