Respecting Worldviews Through Storywork

by

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Abstract

Epistemologically significant, relationships to land inform ways of knowing ourselves and others. This research provided Indigenous/non-Indigenous participants the opportunity to engage with the Canadian colonial narrative through stories of their connection to these lands and responses to an Idle No More news story. Considered in a consciously enacted ethical space (Ermine, 2007) and viewed through the Indigenous storywork principles of relationship, responsibility, respect, and reciprocity (Archibald, 2008), these stories revealed the epistemological divide between Indigenous and Westerns ways of knowing, and provided deeper understandings of how the national narrative incommensurably positioned participants by erasing and marginalizing some stories while privileging others. The consequences of colonization among participants included various forms of erasure and displacement, historical misrepresentation, cultural and linguistic loss, and struggles with envisioning meaningful connection to land and culture. We have all been colonized (Donald, 2010) and must recognize its costs within ourselves in order to effect meaningful reconciliation.
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To my daughter: Neither of us expected you and your family to be living with us while I completed my thesis, Cassandra, a circumstance that forced me to be attentive to the reality beyond my writing. Thank you for grounding me by sharing not only your life with me, but the clarity of your thought. My young grandsons Dashiell and Jude were immediate reminders of the necessity of responsible storytelling: stories begin to shape our worldviews before we know what a worldview is. To Dennis, my son-in-law, thank you for sharing so many interesting ideas, and providing me with challenging conversation on immediately relevant topics; they sharpened my thinking.

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.................................................................................................................. iii

Table of Contents..................................................................................................................... iv

List of Appendices................................................................................................................... vi

Chapter 1 Introduction............................................................................................................... 1
  1 Positionality .......................................................................................................................... 3
  2 Purpose statement and overview ......................................................................................... 6
  3 Rationale and scope of study ............................................................................................... 8
    3.1 Research questions ....................................................................................................... 10
    3.2 Scope .......................................................................................................................... 10

Chapter 2 Literature Review .................................................................................................... 12
  4 Distinct epistemological traditions ..................................................................................... 12
  5 Knowing in relation to people and place ......................................................................... 16
  6 Place, space, and stories .................................................................................................... 18
  7 National narratives and monuments ................................................................................. 20
  8 Cultural appropriation of Indigeneity ............................................................................... 24

Chapter 3 Theoretical Framework and Methodology ............................................................. 28
  9 Data collection .................................................................................................................. 30
    9.1 The sample ................................................................................................................. 30
    9.2 Measures .................................................................................................................... 32
  10 Data analysis and validity ............................................................................................... 34
    10.1 Researcher as instrument of analysis ...................................................................... 38
  11 Limitations ....................................................................................................................... 39

Chapter 4 Results .................................................................................................................... 41
  12 Part I—Being on this land ............................................................................................... 42
    12.1 “The history that we carry and walk through”—Bob ............................................... 42
List of Appendices

Appendix A Initial questionnaire.................................................................................................................91
Appendix B News clip transcript.....................................................................................................................93
Appendix C Recruitment email .......................................................................................................................94
Appendix D Recruitment material/Information/Consent letter .......................................................................95
Appendix E Feedback letter.............................................................................................................................99
Appendix F Transcript review form..............................................................................................................101
Chapter 1
Introduction

Land. Considering this word in a variety of contexts yields insights into what the word has represented to the people who have called these lands many things: home, land of their birth, Turtle Island, North America. For Indigenous peoples\(^1\), connection to these lands is the frame within which all else exists. Relationships not only between people, but between all entities, animate and inanimate, serve to create a reality informed by an awareness of epistemologically necessary interconnectedness (Kovach, 2009; Styres et al., 2013; Styres, 2017; Wilson, 2008). Disconnection to land can be understood as a profound act of dispossession wrought by the focused efforts of French, then British, colonialists—the fundamental act upon which the colonial history of this country rests (Egan & Place, 2013). For colonizers—those who established first contact between Indigenous peoples and Europeans—land was a resource representing access to economic power and social status; for settlers, it represented a hopeful widening into an unimaginable yet realizable future for themselves and their offspring. To later immigrants, who left the land of their birth to bear their offspring on foreign soil, land represented a rupture in extended family connections, cultural tradition, and understandings between generations regarding what life was like back home compared to life in a new country. In these cases, disconnection to land represented loss—of language, culture, and ancestral history. Consider, however, the difference choice has made for each of these groups: Indigenous peoples, settlers, immigrants. Consider the implications of choosing to come and establish a new life on lands whose connection to the stories of the peoples who had lived on them for millennia have been severed.

The truth about stories, Thomas King tells us, is that that is all we are (2003). Stories are not disconnected to land; stories emerge from the landscapes of the people who tell them. How people view land and their connection to it infuses the stories they tell with different values and

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\(^1\) When referring collectively to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people, I will use the term Indigenous peoples. The plural form connotes the variety of culture, language, worldviews, and traditions represented by First Nations, Métis and Inuit people. Although The Constitution Act, 1982, defines Aboriginal as an appropriate adjective to use when referring to First Nation, Métis, and Inuit people collectively, this word represents another act of naming by the federal government (Styres, 2015). The terms Aboriginal and Indian will occur in this paper as they appear in quoted material.
understandings (Styres, 2017). Defining land as the source of timber, fur, and food, replete with riches to be exploited, corresponds to an understanding of land as measurable in units of dimension and money, a definition ineluctably placing people in a relationship of existential distance and distinctness from it. Stories in these contexts focus on success defined by individual achievement and personal wealth, an adequate recompense for losses sustained in leaving behind lands of origin. In contrast to this Western\(^2\) conception, consider the storying that would result from an Indigenous framework in which a fundamental relationship to land provides the basis for all relationships. Haig-Brown and Dannenmann (2008) convey a sense of this essential interrelatedness between land, the entities living upon it, and the knowledge created by interactions with it, by inviting consideration of landscape as a story. The “true story” of a landscape, one evoking it as a living thing, is “…documented in the oral stories and daily practices of her people…It is etched on her rocky shore and sandy beaches…on the land surrounding the lake with its swamps, hills, and rivers, and on her islands, reefs, and waters” (247). As the landscape and practices enacted upon it are alive to each other, one seamlessly informing the other, language, too, as Armstrong (1998) conveys, is sourced in the land, the sounds of Indigenous language reflecting the rhythms of the land and the knowledge it holds.

Relationships to land are epistemologically significant, informing ways of knowing not only the land, but ourselves and others (De Costa & Clark, 2016; Kovach, 2009; Styres, 2017; Styres & Zinga, 2013; Wilson, 2008). On these lands now called Canada, 2017 was the country’s sesquicentennial. This milestone marked the imposition of ways of knowing and being upon the first peoples of this land who had no connection to European stories or lands. This imposition created new stories, stories resulting from the collision of “jagged worldviews” (Little Bear, 2000), the remnants of once-complete culturally enacted knowledge systems. In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released a multi-volume report documenting some of those stories through historical record and the testimony of residential school survivors. These stories of cultural genocide, perpetrated on the Indigenous peoples of these lands first by colonial and then later Canadian governments, are older than 150 years, but the sesquicentennial is not

\(^2\) Western is used in this document as an adjective to distinguish intellectual and epistemological traditions distinct from Indigenous ways of knowing. As a colonial country, Canada inherited western European intellectual traditions, values, and beliefs that continue to be privileged in our society.
marking an anniversary of attempted genocide. It is celebrating a fairy tale: the establishment of a country perceived to be fair and just, one with a reputation for tolerantly welcoming immigrants from around the world. Many Canadians are committed to this fable, seemingly ignorant of the history of residential schools, the internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II, the refusal of entry to Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany, and the head tax imposed on Chinese immigrants. As recently as 1962, when immigration legislation was revised to comply with changing international mores growing increasingly intolerant of blatant racism, racist restrictions on family unification were retained to “assuage public concern, particularly in British Columbia, about any sudden influx of dependent Chinese or South Asians” (Troper, 1993, p. 266 cited in Haque, 2012, p. 35).

On June 11, 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper stood in the House of Commons and issued a public apology to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people for the tragedy of the residential school system on behalf of the government and all Canadians (Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Canada, 2010). On September 25, 2009, the same Prime Minister stood before the G20 and claimed that Canada had no history of colonialism (Ljunggren, 2009). This manifestation of the classic Canadian characteristic of denial was shocking, but as unsurprising as it was richly ironic. Donald (2010) defines colonialism as “an extended process of denying [emphasis added] relationship, whether it be with the places where we live, or our head or our heart, or people who look different from us and so…everyone’s been colonized.” To his list I would add a denial of connection to the stories describing how the state of Canada was established and maintained, a denial demanded by Canadian claims to moral righteousness. This thesis considers how storywork (Archibald, 2008), can be used in the process of establishing relationships to these stories. Multiple and profoundly complex, an awareness of these relationships will challenge non-Indigenous Canadians to consider the role stories have played in determining their understandings of Canadian history, and how that history and its consequences have affected, and continue to affect, all of us.

1 Positionality

As the daughter of Italian immigrants, born on this land, I am a first-generation Canadian. I do not fluently speak the language of my parents—my children do not fluently speak the language of their grandparents. Teachers chastised my mother for speaking Italian to her children, so my
mother learned to speak the language of the society she had chosen to come to. At school, I learned I was neither quite Italian enough nor quite Canadian enough—the Italian children knew how to speak Italian, the Canadian children ate cake-like Wonder Bread, inspiring the eponymous and widely-used term *mangia cakes*. Amid this alienation, one story from my primary school days provoked an unsurprising yearning. Its details are lost, but it presented the possibility of feeling a part of the cosmos by naming the physical world and infusing it with spirit. The embodied life I lived, and the world I lived it in, were mirrored in the spirits embodied in the elements of this story by the sun, sky, and moon. Why, my child-self wondered, could we not read more of these stories? We did not; instead, we were taught to find meaning in stories describing landscapes whose surfaces we had never touched, lived on, or felt, about children with whom the suburban, immigrant children of my grade school had nothing in common. My education taught me to associate learning with disconnection; consequently, I agree with Donald (2010) when he contends that we have all been colonized. Ostensibly, colonization committed me to believe in the superior powers of intellectual analysis, logic, and reason to supply answers to the pressing concerns of life and society. At Catholic school, religion provided the spiritual balance to intellect.

Donald’s insight is significant, yet carries the potential for being misconstrued, for being perceived as attempting to equalize experiences of disconnection. That is not my intention. As limited as the options of early settlers, immigrants, and refugees may have been when they chose to come here, the state did not expropriate their traditional lands, outlaw their cultural practices and languages, or dismantle their communities through residential schooling. Outside of school, immigrant communities have been and continue to be free to choose the degree of their assimilation into Canadian society. St. Denis (2013) argues First Nations, Métis, and Inuit do not represent another flavor of multiculturalism; efforts to include them in the Canadian mosaic metaphor undermine their cultural and political sovereignty. I suggest that it also eases entry into various forms of appropriation.

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3 Issues of cultural appropriation are addressed in my literature review.

4 The theft and appropriation of property belonging to Japanese Canadians during World War II are well documented (Granatstein & Johnson, 1988; Kogawa, 1983).
Being on these lands implicates us all in acts of appropriation, in the consequences of colonization. My parents grew up on farms; homesick for the landscapes of their left-behind country, they spent many Sunday afternoons driving the family through the agricultural lands ringing Metropolitan Toronto in the 1970s. They were not educated here, and even if they had been, they may not have been aware of the layers of stories held in the lands rolling by the car windows. Like so many others who came before us, we enjoyed outdoor spaces innocent of what had transpired on them before our arrival: conservation areas, the ravines of Toronto’s park system, and cottage rentals at Wasaga Beach. Because they are innocent, these childhood memories are simply sensate: soft, warm summer winds; cool, clear water; the sweet-sharp smell of pine and softer scent of cedar. The sounds and images of my childhood found a more fulsome, complexly aware completion in the terrain around waterways through which I hiked and paddled canoes as an adult—the French, Spanish, Petawawa and Madawaska Rivers, the majestic northeastern shore of Lake Superior. Some of these waterways are famously storied as voyageur routes, the fur trade representing one facet of how First Nations and Europeans first engaged and then became enmeshed on these lands.

The consequences of this engagement are being celebrated during this year of the sesquicentennial, but for whom is celebration appropriate? This engagement has been traumatic for the first peoples, and that trauma is lying at the heart of the Canadian reality, a wound made manifest with each story of a murdered or missing Indigenous woman (Walker, et al., 2016), youth suicides on reserves (CP & Globe Staff, 2017; Chin, 2017), and the disproportionate representation of Indigenous children in foster care: in 2011, 48% of all foster children across Canada were Indigenous, yet they represented only 7% of all children 14 and under (Palmater, 2017; Statistics Canada, 2016). Indeed, in a literature review of First Nations child poverty, Brittain & Blackstock (2015) claim that “there are more First Nations in child welfare care today than at any time in the past, including the residential school period” citing “colonial practices and the ongoing and chronic underfunding of essential services for First Nations children and their families on reserve” (p. 60) as the culprits.

In each scenario, tragic outcomes can be traced back to the fragmentation of relationship within families and communities and the consequent destruction of culture caused by federal government policies in violation of its treaty responsibilities. Has only the federal government failed in its assumption of responsibility? We who have come to these lands with the hope of
reaping its benefits are implicated in these stories by our presence on these lands (Scully, 2015). The assumption of embodied, that is, personal responsibility (De Costa & Clark, 2016) to these stories requires some form of relationship.

Establishing a relationship respectful of difference can be facilitated by the discovery of commonalities. This introduction began by recognizing land, discussing it in the context of Indigenous peoples and those who caused, contributed to, and aided in maintaining their displacement from their lands. Land represents a multidimensional concept, one combining its physical materiality with associations of it as “...a spiritually infused place grounded in interconnected and interdependent relationships, culturally positioning, and...highly contextualized” (Styres & Zinga, 2013, p. 301). Styres (2017) explains that land becomes contextualized through the fusing of embodied experiences on and of the land with beliefs, philosophies, and understandings of self-in-relationship (p. 47), an Indigenous concept conveying an understanding of self informed by the physical, spiritual, emotional, and cognitive connections made to the landscape and its entities (animate and inanimate). Our intellectual and philosophical frameworks, and our stories of how we have come to be on the lands of this continent, will influence the nature of those relationships and what this land represents to each of us. As linguistic, religious, and cultural diversity are increasingly the norm in classrooms and workplaces in Canada, perhaps drawing explicit attention to the physical common ground beneath our feet and its associated, layered stories can allow for an extension and extrapolation of that shared relationship and lay a foundation for renewed, respectful relationships.

2 Purpose statement and overview

This research presented participants with the opportunity to engage with specific aspects of the Canadian narrative—their own stories of how they come to be on these lands, and a brief news story regarding an Idle No More protest—for examining how their responses to these stories alter when they are asked to interpret them through the Indigenous storywork principles of relationship, responsibility, respect, and reciprocity (Archibald, 2008).

This research began as a response to the correspondences I noted between Indigenous approaches to literacy and NLS (New Literacy Studies), multiliteracies (New London Group, 1996), and critical literacy. In a term paper, I identified the most striking similarity as the insistence on situating the act of reading in the context and culture in which the practice was
happening, an approach antithetical to any that would decontextualize literacy. This observation prompted me to consider other correspondences. The main question driving my interest was why, if there are so many similarities between these theories of literacy, Indigenous literacy is perceived as a distinct and separate area of study. This academic separateness, reflected in greater Canadian society, is troubling for how clearly it indicates a continuing cultural divide that seems un navigable.

For this thesis, I originally intended to explore how the Indigenous storywork principles of responsibility, respect, reverence, and reciprocity (Archibald, 2008) and additionally that of relationship (Styres & Zinga, 2013) could be used to explicitly frame literacy practices. I believed these principles could replace the critical framing aspect of the multiliteracies model to address what I perceive as its deficiency: The model implies these principles in its pedagogical dimensions of situated practice, overt instruction, and transformed practice, but does not make explicit the necessary role of reciprocity in creating a learning environment genuinely respecting and according legitimation to other ways of knowing. The literature is replete with examples of researchers using the model to introduce multilingual and multicultural practices into the classroom, thus affirming student identities (Lopez-Gopar et al., 2013; Lavoie et al., 2012; Lavoie et al., 2014; Pirbhai-Illich, 2010; Prasad 2013, 2015) but in each case, the research studies continued to conform to expected assessment practices and pre-existing curricular benchmarks regardless of what languages multilingual students had used to produce their work. In each case, the recruitment of student subjectivities served as a genteel way of co-opting student identities to achieve the goal: successful integration into the dominant ways of knowing.

Aspiring to provide a framework for epistemic pluralism, the multiliteracies model does not discomfit dominant Western intellectual traditions. Lopez-Gopar (2014) implemented a variation of the multiliteracies model to successfully use English instruction with Indigenous children to engender pride in their Indigenous languages. He discussed this study via Skype during a seminar I attended, suggesting pedagogies and education will change only when alternate epistemologies and ontologies are accepted (personal correspondence, March 29, 2017), a comment I interpreted as an awareness of the model’s limits.

I understood the replacement of critical framing with the concept of relationality as a way of disrupting the multiliteracies model, of revealing the possibility for a mainstream model to seriously engage with an expanded concept of relationship, one extending beyond interpersonal
interactions governed by hierarchical power structures. Yet as necessary as such disruption is, at some level the project seemed unnecessarily wieldy. Moving forward using a different subset of Archibald’s Indigenous storywork principles alone seemed more streamlined, less distracted by the intellectual reconfiguring required for disrupting the multiliteracies model. Yet without a Western framework, exposure to claims of cultural and intellectual appropriation haunted me. Without a framework developed by Western modes of thinking, my confidence in the power of my thought seemed superfluous to the task of entrusting my learning to the dimensions of heart and spirit. My unacknowledged doubts were confronted when my thesis committee members—to whom I am indebted—made it clear to me that using multiliteracies as the theoretical framework implied an imposition of Western ways of knowing upon Indigenous methods. In response to this insight, I used the concept of ethical space (Ermine, 2007) to replace multiliteracies as my theoretical framework. This concept and its application in this research is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 Theoretical Framework and Methodology.

Following the introductory chapter, this thesis is organized into four chapters. In Chapter 2, I identify relevant themes in the literature including: distinctions between Indigenous and Western ways of knowing; knowing in relation to people and place; connections between place, space, and stories; national narratives and monuments; and considerations of cultural appropriation. In Chapter 3, Theoretical Framework and Methodology, I outline my understanding of Indigenous epistemologies and storywork principles and how storywork supports the queries posed by my research. Chapter 4 presents the results of my research. The breadth of my participants’ discussion is organized according to themes determined by my analysis of the data informed by my research questions and methodology. Delving into the meaning of these results, in Chapter 5 Discussion I explore the connections between the research results and my research questions. The thesis closes with a brief conclusion.

3 Rationale and scope of study

The years that an Indian child spends in an Indian residential school has a very great deal to do with his or her future outlook on life and in my own case it showed me that Indian[s] are ‘different,’ simply because you made us different and so gentlemen I say to you, take pains in molding, not the Indian of to-morrow, but the Canadian citizen of to-morrow. For, ‘as ye sew, so shall ye reap.’

—Russell Moses, letter to Ministry of Indian Affairs, 1965
In the prefatory comments of its Final Summary, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada report identifies Canadians’ lack of respect toward their Indigenous neighbours not only as a legacy of the residential school system, but as an obstacle to establishing the new vision required to effect reconciliation, stating “virtually all aspects of Canadian society may need to be reconsidered” (TRCC, 2015b, p. vi). The complex nature of establishing mutually respectful grounds upon which to engage in newly imagined ethical relationships with Indigenous peoples have been enumerated (Donald, 2012; Ermine, 2007; Styres & Zinga, 2013). Responding to this complexity, the Commission issued 94 calls to action, one identifying the need to “educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms” (TRCC, 2015a, p. 7).

Attempts at such integration have been underway in Ontario since 2007 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007), but the Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework had not met one of its primary goals as of 2013: closing the academic achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). It could be that a focus on curricular content and cultural inclusion ignores how to ensure “educators become aware of the systemic challenges for overcoming Eurocentrism, racism, and intolerance” (Battiste, 2013, p. 28). Battiste dismisses attempts that ignore these factors as examples of an “add and stir” (p. 28) model, one which does nothing but sustain the superiority of Eurocentric knowledge and processes; consequently, “the education system has not yet ensured that non-Indigenous children develop an accurate understanding of the Indigenous peoples in Canada and their knowledge systems” (p. 32). The distinctness of these knowledge systems and their attendant learning orientations are not accommodated within schools because the values informing them are perceived as incompatible with “a Euro-institutional perspective of pedagogy in the context of formal Western schooling” (Atleo, 2009, p. 454).

In Ontario, ministry-provided teacher-training sessions on Indigenous history and culture are not mandatory. Among 56% of teachers who took such training, 79% implemented what they had learned (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 31). Reasons for teacher reluctance include apprehension over issues of cultural appropriation, insufficient knowledge, an inability to recognize the necessity of teaching such knowledge to non-Indigenous students, lack of resources, racist attitudes of non-Indigenous staff and students, and teachers’ own taken-for-

Instead of addressing content, this thesis addresses process: not what to teach, but how to teach. I invited six people to view their Canadian origin stories through the Indigenous principles of storywork. I sought to discover whether these principles could be used to frame the establishment of an ethical space within which the privileged status of Western epistemology might be revealed. As Ermine (2007) notes, the assumed universality of Western epistemology contributes to the continued struggle of Indigenous peoples on these lands to negotiate two realities—the one constructed via tribal epistemologies and the other constructed by an epistemology largely informed by European traditions (Archibald, 2008).

3.1 Research questions

This research posed the following questions: In what ways can the epistemological divide between Indigenous and Westerns ways of knowing be revealed and then bridged? How might the principles of relationship, respect, responsibility and reciprocity—common to both ways of knowing yet carrying distinct associations—act as a point of contact from which deeper understandings may flow? How can these principles be used to renew, refresh, or re-establish responsibility to land and its stories? How can they disrupt and challenge dominant epistemologies and transform the understanding of those who are positioned in relations of power and privilege?

3.2 Scope

I recruited six participants with an equal representation of Indigenous and non-Indigenous backgrounds. According to Creswell (2007), purposeful sampling may be done at one of several levels: site, event or process, or individual. I sampled at the individual level for participants who were interested in telling the story of how they have come to be on this land. With narrative inquiry, researchers sample for individuals with stories to tell (Creswell, 2007); this requirement intersected with my interpretation of storywork. In my recruitment email, I specified that participants would be sharing their stories of how they came to be on these lands (see Appendix C Recruitment email). My purpose in gathering Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants was to gain some insight into how attitudes toward the news story I presented for their consideration
would differ, and what we might all learn from each other because of those different perspectives. Ladson-Billings (2003) cites Wynter (1992) in positing that “those constructed as other have a perspective advantage” affording a “‘wide-angle’ vision” (p. 407) on societal norms. This country has a history of creating identities to impose on the “other”. I did not presume to predict who might have perceived themselves as having been so constructed and what their consequent perspectives might be; such presumption was not necessary. Their stories revealed the myriad factors influencing their perceptions of self-identity. Participants completed a survey requesting demographic information to contextualize their responses (see Appendix A Initial questionnaire).

Over the course of a three-hour group meeting, each participant presented her or his story. The story sharing was followed by a brief video of a news story reporting on an Idle No More protest. I was interested in discovering what kinds of relationships people have to the land and Canadian history, and how those relationships might change when viewed through the lens of relationality. (This is discussed in greater detail in the Theoretical Framework and Methodology chapter).
Chapter 2
Literature Review

Knowledge is not secular. It is a process derived from creation, and, as such, it has a sacred purpose. It is inherent in and connected to all of nature, to its creatures, to human existence.

Marie Battiste, *Decolonizing Education*, 2013

Identifying the parameters of the research conversation I wanted to have for the purposes of a literature review was an interesting journey, taking me from the obvious to the unforeseen as I traveled from preparing for my research to interpreting its results. Dealing with Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews required a clear understanding of how demarcations are understood and described, and I discuss relevant themes in the section Distinct epistemological traditions. Because Indigenous ways of knowing depend on relationship to place, and I used the principles of responsibility, respect, and reciprocity to characterize the relationship to people and place I wanted to examine, I sought studies investigating similar ideas. Knowing in relation to people and place reviews relevant literature. As I pondered place, I realized its multidimensionality demanded an understanding of how stories both spring from and are anchored to it; in Place, space, and stories I review scholars known for their work in these areas. As my research participants made clear, Canada has its own stories; I discuss those narratives and how they are disseminated in National narratives and monuments. Finally, as a non-Indigenous researcher presuming to use an Indigenous methodology informed by Indigenous ways of knowing, it would have been irresponsible not to consider issues of appropriation. Those are discussed in the final section, Cultural appropriation of Indigeneity. These topics are closely related, yet distinct; some facets of one recur in another. This recurrence expresses a relationality of thought I resisted imposing a categorical structure upon, choosing instead to understand it as an expression of the interconnectedness implicit in my research questions and my focus group’s discussion.

4 Distinct epistemological traditions

Kovach (2009) defines epistemology as a “system of knowledge with internal references for the social relations of knowledge production” (p. 21), and deliberately employs the word Western to distinguish between Indigenous and Western ways of knowing, distinctions that have become
increasingly confused as they have become increasingly, unavoidably integrated (Ermine, 2007; Kovach, 2009; Little Bear, 2000). Countering the pervasiveness of Western epistemology necessitates a clear understanding of how ways of knowing in the Western tradition differ from Indigenous ways of knowing. The literature is replete with characterizations of Indigenous ways of knowing anchored by epistemological-ontological interdependence (Ross, 2014; Wilson, 2008) contrasted with Western ways of knowing predicated upon categorizing knowledge into disciplines.

The humanistic tradition of Western thought elevates humankind to a plane of existence above all other entities by merit of language and reason (Smith, 2012), a hierarchical order informing inter-personal power dynamics and aggression (Armstrong, 2002; McMahon et al., 2017). Smith (2012) presents the West and its ways of knowing as a cultural archive, a repository containing a multiplicity of traditions, knowledge, approaches, values, and beliefs, governed by taken-for-granted rules insiders cannot delineate. Those educated in mainstream, hegemonic ways of thinking internalize knowledge acquisition and production processes (Ladson-Billings, 2003).

Hatcher et al. (2009) describe Western science as being predicated on concepts of authority, empirical observation, and separation of the observer from the observed, implying a de-contextualized apprehension of reality. Classifying and categorizing knowledge, organizing it into subject disciplines (Archibald, 2008; Hatcher et al. 2009; Smith, 2012) facilitates an understanding of knowledge as a collection of truth propositions or beliefs (McMahon et al. 2017). A corollary of Enlightenment period thinking influenced by Descartes’ proclamation that the individual mind was the source of knowledge (Ladson-Billings, 2003).

Perceiving and categorizing reality according to “silos” of knowledge (Hatcher et al., 2009), combined with learning stripped of context (Heath, 1983) develops an ability to understand entities and their attributes as separable, yet impedes possibilities for other ways of knowing. A participant in De Costa & Clark’s (2016) study could not understand how First Nations people “just couldn’t get” (p. 199) a party game that relied on categories, requiring a player to respond

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5 While post-modernism has challenged such positivistic claims, presenting reality as a multidimensional, fragmented construct, Smith (2012) posits that the cultural fragmentation experienced by Indigenous peoples is a result of colonialism, connecting Western epistemology to imperialism (p. 29).
no when another says; when one says black, the other replies white. According to Little Bear (2000), Indigenous languages do not provide for categorical dichotomies (p. 78). Minds trained to slot inputs into dualistic categories lack the capacity for holistic approaches to reality (McMahon et al., 2017). Citing Toelken & Scott (1981), Archibald (2008) relates Toelken’s experience with a story a Navajo elder related to his grandson in response to a query regarding the origins of the snow in Montezuma Canyon. The story describes a reciprocal relationship between the Spirits who are the keepers of a beautiful burning material and the person who finds it. The snow represents the burning material’s ashes, a gift to reward the patience and endurance of the seeker. After hearing the story, the boy asked where the snow in other canyons came from. The Elder lamented the question as evidence of his grandson’s inability to understand the story, attributing it to the child’s mainstream education.

Indigenous knowledges are as varied as the places and peoples from where and whom they derive, informed by and expressed through cultural practices, oral traditions, and languages. Contextualized by and associated with their places of origin, they are expressions of complex and sophisticated responses to the natural world (Munroe et al., 2013; Hatcher et al., 2009). Scientific knowledge is understood as a means for living in and with nature, a relationship engendering intimacy between knowledge and the knower. As reality is understood to be multidimensional, sources of knowledge are not limited to bodily senses; dreams and visions also provide access to knowledge in a worldview perceiving reality as both physical and spiritual (Battiste, 1998; Hatcher et al., 2009; Kovach, 2009). Knowledge is not sourced from the individual mind; the multilayered complex connection of interrelationships between living entities, the physical world, and the spirit world create a repository of knowledge in each tribe conveyed by language mirroring the sounds and lessons of the land itself (Armstrong, 1998; Basso, 1996; Battiste, 1998; Haig-Brown & Dannenmann, 2008; McMahon et al., 2017; Styres, 2017; Styres et al, 2013; Wilson, 2008). People exist because of these relationships, and relationships to family, community, tribe and nation (Archibald, 2008). Learning is not limited to the intellect; it must encompass and engage the heart/emotion, spirit/soul, and body/physical (Graveline, 2012; Archibald, 2008). The individual, poised to attain understanding as learnings are filtered through all perceptive and apprehending modes, must remain aware of the historically and culturally situated complexity of the relationships from which meaning will be made (Ermine, 2007; Styres & Zinga, 2013).
Knowledge is apprehended as learners come to it, as they are receptive to received teachings (Wilson, 2009; Archibald, 2008). This implies an inherent respect for the learner on the part of the teacher, who must exercise awareness of and acceptance for the learner’s process. Knowledge represents responsibility: knowledge keepers accept a relational trust for its maintenance and transmission (McMahon et al., 2017, p. 46). This, in turn, entails reciprocity. The maintenance of relationships, noted earlier as being epistemically necessary, depends on individuals being- and knowing-in-relation: engaging with all of one’s relations in a manner that abides by the principles of respect, responsibility, reverence, reciprocity, and relationship.

Despite their differences, successfully integrating the two worldviews is possible. Biepistemic approaches are used in the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience, a program aimed at increasing the number of Indigenous high school graduates who continue to university. McMahon et al. (2017) describe how the principles of relationality (Wilson, 2008) are used to create egalitarian relationships between instructors and Indigenous students involved with the program. Incorporating relationality (Wilson 2008), practitioners in the AIME program taught through and with relationship in their presentations and used culturally relevant material. Drawing from Western traditions, the program partnered each Indigenous student with a non-Indigenous university student. Since 2005, 25 students at one university site have expanded to 4864 students at 18 university sites. The successful integration of Western and Indigenous ways of knowing Battiste (2013) describes was explicitly requested at a Mi’kmaq community schooling meeting (Munroe et al., 2013). For Indigenous parents, successful integration would produce a strong cultural identity and the development of requisite technical skills to engage in mainstream society as students needed or desired. Such a goal has been expressed by Indigenous leadership since colonialists first offered schooling as a component of treaties (Battiste, 1998; Friesen & Friesen, 2002; TRCC, 2015c). The legacy of colonialism can be identified as one contributing factor explaining the ongoing inability of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples to establish the necessary relationships to address this issue.

Suggestions for how to approach the issue exist. Smith (2012) describes an Indigenist decolonizing research project which aims to attenuate connections to Western ways of knowing by centering on Indigenous understandings of land and cultural knowledge, including language and Indigenous stories. Battiste (2013) expands on this concept by including Wilson’s (2013) call to incorporate a relational element into research approaches. Non-Indigenous researchers can
use methods which are Indigenist, i.e. decolonizing, ensuring their work is contextual by relating it to the community in which they are working, engaging in relationship with community members, and ensuring research is being done to benefit Indigenous peoples.

5 Knowing in relation to people and place

Relationship is a multidimensional concept relevant to understandings of people and place, intimately connected to responsibility. In investigating to what extent non-Indigenous people felt responsible for engaging with issues of colonial or current injustices, De Costa & Clark (2016) found that exposure to Indigenous peoples in their immediate communities was the determining factor for delegating or personally assuming such responsibility, yet as Scully asserts, non-Indigenous peoples are “already implicated in relation to Indigenous people” (2015, p. 88, emphasis in original) by merit of being on these lands. Participants in a Toronto focus group with limited personal relationships to Indigenous people relied upon stereotypes to inform their views of Indigenous issues, identified as a reliance on national discourses that themselves present relational obstacles (De Costa & Clark, 2011). Government and Indigenous peoples were identified as the parties responsible for addressing Indigenous issues of historic or current injustices. In contrast, focus group participants in small, northern British Columbia communities that afforded opportunities for personal interactions with Indigenous peoples felt a personal sense of responsibility to these relationships, identifying a desire to learn more about Indigenous cultures and epistemologies. The results of this study point to the need to provide an entry point into alternate perspectives for non-Indigenous Canadians lacking the relationships to Indigenous peoples that would provide an antidote to stereotypical discourses.

Relationship to place deepens understanding of both a place and its people (Brown, 2010; De Costa & Clark, 2016; Hare, 2015; Styres, 2017; Styres et al., 2013). In interviews with Indigenous and non-Indigenous instructors teaching a required Indigenous education course in a faculty of education in western Canada, Hare (2015) found that connecting with community and learning from place were identified by instructors as the most effective pedagogical strategies. Non-Indigenous instructors struggled with feelings of authenticity while teaching this course; however, Hare concludes authenticity is a function of being part of the life lived on these lands, that is, a function of relationship. Therefore, it is the responsibility of everyone, regardless of ethnicity, to understand the true history of these lands. In a study of how a course entitled
“Aboriginal ways of knowing” could foster relationships between faculty and student teachers, Brown (2010) describes a field trip to an island off the west coast of Australia known to non-Indigenous Australians as a vacation destination. For Indigenous peoples, however, this same place is known as the site of historic Indigenous male incarceration and deaths. The field trip provided students an opportunity for considering relationships to place and knowledge. Reflecting on the emotional responses exposure to the place provoked, some students noted they would not have shared those feelings in other courses: They believed responses provoked by exposure to sites of suffering would have been dismissed as superstitious, suggesting intuition and spirituality are significant but overlooked aspects of knowledge construction. This study supports the insight that developing nurturing relationships can be hindered by understandings of accepted forms of knowledge.

Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991), Styres and Zinga (2013), and Romm (2015) make explicit the role relationship plays in meaning-making, emphasizing the importance of respect, responsibility, and reciprocity. Drawing from global Indigenous knowledges, Romm (2015) examines how the concepts of knowing-in-relation and being-in-relation can be made explicit for the purposes of orienting focus group discussions. Researchers identified themselves as the conduits through which participants’ knowledge on inclusive education would be disseminated to the country (South Africa). Equality between facilitators and participants was emphasized by identifying the reciprocal nature of a knowledge building model dependent on all participants in the group listening to each other’s questions and responses. In feedback sessions, participants acknowledged appreciation for having been heard, an indication of respectful interactions. Reciprocity is understood as an acknowledgement of instructor humility: listening signals mutual respect— instructors must listen as deeply to students as they expect to be listened to (Brown, 2010; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991; McMahon et al., 2017). Establishing respectful relationship for learning is a necessary pre-condition for meaning-making in Indigenous oral traditions (Archibald, 2008) and in the teaching of Indigenous sciences (Hatcher et al., 2009), requiring observance of the principles of respect and reciprocity.

Making meaning depends on the relationships within the immediate learning environment, as well as an understanding of the paradigm determining the arrangement of the knowledge under study. The following section considers the ways in which place figures in meaning making.
6 Place, space, and stories

Ross (2014) notes a distinct difference in “central organizing theme[s]” (p. 41) between Western and Indigenous approaches to ways of apprehending reality. Western thought uses time as a referent for organizing a shared, knowable reality; Indigenous paradigms use space and place. In this section, I review themes pertaining to distinctions between place and space and how place becomes known as a dimension of embodied experience eventually informing, even as it is formed by, cultural and individual identity.

In considering place, Styres (2017) notes the commonplace observation that “landscapes and places are located spatially and temporally, that is, grounded in space and time,” and examines conceptions of space and place as they are understood in the generally accepted assumption that “space, in its formal context, is primary, absolute, infinite, and empty and that place making emerges from the vastness and existence of space” (p. 46). Casey (1996) outlines how modern philosophy identified “space’ [as] being the most pervasive of cosmic media, [therefore] that about which we must have general knowledge (p. 16).” Burdened with the requirement to “conceive of space in terms of its formal essence,” the Western mind sought “mathematical expressions of pure spatial relations” (p. 19) and voided space of content by locating space and time— “pure forms of intuition”— within the human subject; consequently, according to Kant, the human subject could “position” herself in space and time (p. 20). Understood as primary to place, absolute, empty and infinite— “neutral and empty”—this Western conception of space enabled Europeans to see Turtle Island as “unstoried and theirs for the taking” (Styres, 2017, p. 46).

This modern concept of space as primary contrasts with premodern, postmodern, and Indigenous understandings of place as primary (Casey, 1996; Styres, 2017; Ross, 2014; Michell et al., 2008). As human beings inhabiting bodies, we cannot be without perception, and perceptions cannot be experienced outside of place: “the experience of perceiving…requires a corporeal subject who lives in a place through perception…and a place that extends its own influence back on this subject” (Casey, 1996, p. 22); in this way, bodies and places “interanimate each other” (p. 24) in a relationship of reciprocity and dynamism (Basso, 1996). Consequently, a location becomes placeful as a result of interactions between it and residents (Michell et al., 2008). “In other
words,” states Styres (2017) “we find our existence in the intimate and embodied expressions of place” (p. 47), expressions understood as multidimensional and storied.

The multidimensionality of place is variously described. Casey (1996) articulates the ways in which place is multidimensional through its power to gather things, not only animate and inanimate, but “experiences and histories, even languages and thoughts” (p. 24). Bereft of what has been gathered, places become void space; therefore, they also hold. Places hold what has been gathered together, and do so in accordance with the contours of the landscape and all that has been gathered within it; consequently, “[b]eing in a place is being in a configurative complex of things” (p. 25). Michell, et al. (2008) identify five dimensions of place. In addition to an experiential dimension, they include a relational dimension encompassing epistemological understandings of inter-relatedness, and a multidimensional aspect conveying the physical/spiritual duality of place. Cajete (2000) expounds on the significance of the local and land-based dimensions: “Native people interacted with the places in which they lived for such a long time that their landscapes became reflections of their very souls” (cited in Ross, 2014, p. 45).

The relational dimension of place creates culture, its products—myth, prayer, music, dance, art, “religious and political ritual” (Basso, 1996, p. 109)—further serving to emplace individuals. In relating stories from the oral traditions of the Western Apache, Basso (1996) presents places as geographic anchors to the wisdom of a people, expressing their moral and social mores. “Such knowledges,” Styres (2017) writes, “are highly contextualized, soulful, (re)membered, and experienced” (p. 47). It is in these remembered experiences of the past, tied to place, that we are reminded “…of our connections to what happened here” (Chapman, 1979, p. 46 cited in Basso, 1996, p. 4). Such recollections can be personal, limiting memory to individual experience, yet they can also provide access to broader communities, serving as conduits to group consciousness. Having a sense of place is to experience a sense of belonging, inclusion, and connection to the past that “roots individuals in the social and cultural soils from which they have sprung together” (Basso, 1996, p. 146).

Stories are an integral part of developing and maintaining a sense of place (Archibald, 2008; Basso, 1996; Styres, 2017). Intimately tied to the landscape from which they have sprung, the traditional stories of Indigenous peoples are the repositories of their wisdom and knowledge
(Archibald, 2008; Basso, 1996; Chamberlin, 2003; Kovach, 2009; Styres, 2017; Wilson, 2008). Because place is multidimensional, stories of place locate people not only in place but in time: “storying may be seen as a crucial component of understanding one’s place in the past in order to be in the present” (Styres, 2017, p. 50). “Place-making” (Basso, 1996, p. 5) involves acts of remembering and imagining. Memory guides and constrains possibilities, while imagination exploits them “to create possibilities of a new and original sort, producing a fresh and expanded picture of how things might have been” (p. 5). In this place-world created by the emplaced remembering and imagining mind, history is not only re-constructed but, Basso (1996) contends, the past can be revised.

Studying history can increase our awareness of how we are implicated in its stories. Arguing a case for the continued study of the humanities, Ferrero (2011) posits that the study of history reminds us of the larger stories that contextualize our own lives and connect our lives to those sharing our historical context. Yet stories informing history are not always ethically created; peoples can become objectified and voiceless in histories, their cultures subsumed, and their stories usurped in acts of appropriation. With these consequences in mind, I turn to a closer examination of how Canadian national narratives have been construed.

7 National narratives and monuments

For there was a time in this fair land when the railroad did not run
When the wild majestic mountains stood alone against the sun
Long before the white man and long before the wheel
When the green dark forest was too silent to be real
When the green dark forest was too silent to be real
And many are the dead men too silent to be real

Gordon Lightfoot, Great Canadian Railroad Trilogy, 1966

The results of the focus group discussion clearly identified the concept of a national narrative as a requisite theme to investigate in the literature review. This literature review considers salient aspects of the national narratives at play in Canada, considering their treatment of individual identities in the project of imposing a national one, and the role monuments play in reifying national narratives and serving as mnemonics for collective memory.
National narratives are an integral aspect of nation building. In nations with peripheral domains and diverse populations, they are especially important (Osborne, 2001); as a fledgling nation, Canada had both. Drawing from Wertsch (2004, 2008), Anderson (2017) identifies two Master National Narrative Templates, the first of which emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and identified the “colony-to-nation storyline” (p. 16), a narrative presuming a construct of nation reliant on national identities as innate and naturally occurring (Anderson, 2017; Stanley, 2006). Haque (2012) identifies this understanding of nationhood as the primordial school of thought, in which nations evolve from an “original and enduring” group (p. 9). In Canada, this group was white and western European (Anderson, 2017; Stanley, 2006; Haque, 2012), settling across unpopulated and unused land (Stanley, 2006; Donald, 2009). White settlers battled the wilderness and triumphed over adversity, their successes combining with the efforts of politicians and industrialists to create a nation committed to progress (Anderson, 2017).

Progress is typically measured against a benchmark. Implicit in this colony-to-nation narrative is the marginalization of Indigenous peoples as such a measure. Donald (2009) presents the walls of the colonial fort as the metaphorical divide between the civilizing, industrious, progressive Europeans inside the fort and their Indigenous counterparts outside the fort, excluded from the narrative of nation building. The fort metaphor represents a “colonial binary” (p. 9), a representation of the colonial relationship stripped and deprived of the complexity and nuance Donald maintains were integral to the fur trade. Indigenous peoples—and francophones—are included in this version of the narrative only insofar as they obstruct nation-building progress (Anderson, 2017; Stanley, 2006).

As the nation-state of Canada grew, its narrative also evolved. During the period from 1896 to post-World War I, the needs of a growing economy determined immigration policy. Preferred immigrants were those who met economic requirements and were considered compatible with the cultural, racial, and political/ideological norms of Canada. Those failing to meet the latter faced restrictive entry or were exploited as cheap, but otherwise valueless, labour (Troper, 1975; Avery, 1975; Troper, 1972). Despite immigration policies in effect from 1885 to 1962 that continued to either openly discourage or prohibit non-white and non-European immigrants (Taylor, 1991 cited by Haque, 2012, p. 32), the white settler character of the country was changing. During the 1960s, European immigration declined, while immigration from Asian, African, and South and Central American countries increased (Haque, 2012, p. 38). Social
changes were afoot on other fronts, as well. Groups previously excluded from the national narrative—women, Indigenous peoples, cultural minorities (Anderson, 2017; Stanley, 2006)—were commanding increasing attention from positions in public life, including academia, politics, and school curricula (Anderson, 2017). Anderson posits a second national narrative to reflect the changing character of the country, one maintaining a progressive, colony-to-nation storyline, but relating a narrative of redemption (Schick & St. Denis, 2005); the immigrant qualities of tenacity, perseverance, and hard work are not only seen to overcome once-existent racism, but reconcile immigrants into a narrative bestowing “social equality for all” (Anderson, 2017, p. 19) in a tolerant, multicultural country.

The formulation of Canada as a multicultural nation was a direct result of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1963-70). Investigating the state of Anglo and French relations, the Commission held hearings across the country. Many Canadians, rejecting a bicultural formulation of Canada, insisted upon recognition for non-British and non-French identities, forcing the Commission to produce the unanticipated Book IV: The Cultural Contribution of Other Ethnic Groups (Wong and Guo, 2011; Haque, 2012). The government’s response was to pursue “a policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework [...] as the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians” (Trudeau, 1971 qtd. in Raptis and Fleming, 1998, p. 173) on an individual level. Haque argues Trudeau’s choice of phrasing was deliberate: an emphasis on individual instead of collective rights maintained inequitable funding for cultural programming; failing to specifically identify the Indigenous groups who had similarly submitted testimony to the Commission was to include them in the larger pool of multicultural Canadians. Multiculturalism within a bilingual framework would socially integrate ethnic minorities into the two official languages groups, and reassure official-language minorities. The white-settler hegemony of the Canadian narrative was maintained, with additional subordinate hierarchies of difference and belonging included (Stanley, 2006; Haque, 2012).

Multiculturalism has operated as another narrative thread with multiple functions. Equating First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people with immigrant ethnic groups, it denies their reality as dispossessed peoples who have never ceded their autonomy (St. Denis, 2013), consequently undermining their claims to political sovereignty in the public mind. Its conciliatory tone relegates racist injustice to the past, denying connections between present-day struggles and past,
or existing, racist practices (Anderson, 2017; Schick & St. Denis, 2005). It actively maintains white hegemony by constructing the “other” necessary for supporting settler solidarity (Haque, 2012; Schick & St. Denis, 2005). These functions operate invisibly within a narrative enabling Canadians to perceive themselves as tolerant and inclusive.

Although national narratives claim to incorporate the experience of all Canadians, they clearly do not, giving rise to contending narratives. Anderson (2017) identifies these as Counter National Narratives. They contest and challenge accepted hegemonic versions of history through new historiographies, post-modernist critiques, the application of decolonizing and Indigenous epistemologies, and through art. Anderson’s mention of Kent Monkman immediately recalled Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience, his touring exhibit. The Daddies, one of the paintings in that show, is a reformulation of the Robert Harris painting Fathers of Confederation. In that painting, an ottoman, empty except for a cloth draped over it, sits before the men seated and standing around many tables. In Monkman’s version, the ottoman has been replaced with a wooden crate mostly obscured by a flowing Hudson Bay blanket, upon which is seated Monkman’s nude alter ego, Miss Chief Testicle, her back to viewers. To convey the multifaceted nature of this disruption, Everett-Green quotes Monkman: “She's trying to get a seat at the table, or she could be a hired entertainer” (Everett-Green, 2017). By confronting the absent Indigenous presence in a manner stripping the occasion of its solemnity, mocking the authority and presumption of these ostensible nation builders, Monkman addresses Canadians’ “collective amnesia” (Osborne, 2001, p. 41). The counterpart to collective amnesia is collective memory, which is produced by rendering national history as a mythic narrative; both collective memory and amnesia, according to Osborne, provide the “crucial underpinnings of national-state identities” (p. 41). By re-painting an iconic image capturing a pivotal moment in Canadian history, Monkman defies received national identities.

Objects reifying the national narrative act as mnemonics for collective memories. Monuments act as “visual prompts for the collective memorizing of an official historical script” (Leith, 1990 cited by Osborne, 2001, p. 51), and as events in Estonia and Russia, South Africa, Spain, and Canada have shown, people are deeply affronted when their understandings of what a statue represents are contested (Goodrich & Bombardella, 2016; Jones, 2017, August 15; Werstch, 2008). Regardless of the intended meaning, public reaction to a monument determines its purpose, either contributing to a cohesive, mutually agreed upon collective memory, or
representing “active elements in a public discourse of redefinition” (Osborne, 2001, p. 53). As Young suggests, monuments never fully meet the expectations of those who erect them:

monuments have long sought to provide a naturalizing locus for memory, in which a state's triumph and martyrs, its ideals and founding myths are cast as naturally true as the landscape in which they stand. These are the monument's sustaining illusions, the principles of its seeming longevity and power. But in fact... neither the monument nor its meaning is really everlasting. Both a monument and its significance are constructed in particular times and places, contingent on the political, historical, and aesthetic realities of the moment. (Young, 1999, p. 6-13 cited by Osborne, 2001, p. 54)

Unlike the material in which they are cast, carved, or poured, the meanings ascribed to monuments do not remain as true to the form as the statue, rendering the continued physical existence of monuments problematic. As public objects representing collective memory and public knowledge of who we collectively are and have come to be at the moment of viewing, the right to contest their meaning does not seem to come under question. Using cultural artifacts and knowledge not considered universally public, but perceived as being a distinct identifier of a minority culture, raises issues of appropriation.

8 Cultural appropriation of Indigeneity

In considering cultural appropriation in the context of this research, I am interested in exploring three themes: how the literature defines it; why people engage in it; and how it intersects with, or creates a barrier to, engaging with what is perceived as Other for the purposes of learning and mutual understanding.

Turning to the Oxford English Dictionary, Haig-Brown (2010) provides dimensions of meaning other scholars reflect in their work. Beginning with the French verb appropre—“to render one’s own”—the list of definitions for the verb include: “to make (a thing) the private property of anyone, to make it over to him as his own; …to take possession of for one’s own; …to make or select, as appropriate or suitable, to select” (p. 929). Haig Brown points out that lacking context, these definitions do not distinguish between cases of theft and instances of acceptable use. Styres (2017) provides a comprehensive list of what appropriation may include,
encompassing not only material manifestations of culture, but knowledge as well as spiritual beliefs and their attendant stories, ceremonies, and traditions (p. 168).

The forms of appropriation are as varied as that which is appropriated. Shand (2000) identifies three categories of appropriation: commercial exploitation, modernist affinity and postmodern quotation. Daniel Francis (1992) argues that the Imaginary Indian, a fabrication of white society, has been bestowed with varying attributes according to the marketing needs of the product, service, or sporting franchise being marketed. Modernist artists who emulated and, in some cases, simply copied aspects of Indigenous artwork into their own did so in recognition of their ‘affinity,’ as the title of an exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City entitled Primitivism: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern implied (Shand, 2000). In response to the negative consequences of industrialization and urbanization, modern artists appropriated Indigenous art forms in a celebration of the simpler, more innocent times art forms not yet corrupted by Western civilization represented (Phillips, 2012, p.341) Such appropriation, notes Shand (2000), “affects a dislocation of the source form from its initial cultural context. In so doing, specific meanings are erased and cultural significances shift and slide” (p. 4); where meaning is concerned, appropriation is not neutral. Shand’s final category, postmodern quotation, most clearly demonstrates how appropriation is ultimately engaged in meaning-making. If, as post modernism contends, all meaning is uncertain and illusory, then “all forms, regardless of their original cultural context are available for re-inscription” (p. 5). Regardless of its form, Shand concludes that appropriation causes “real harm for Indigenous peoples, their ancestors and their descendants” (p. 6). As Durnin (2011) notes from the field of comparative literature, colonization has resulted in Indigenous authors writing in English; the danger lies in English-speaking critics assuming this “authorizes” them to read and interpret stories “without attending to their undercurrents of cultural specificity and resistance” (p. 4). Discussions of Indigenous cultural appropriation are necessarily informed by the spectre of colonization, and necessarily involve considerations of power, “the significance and implications of who is speaking and who is listening” (Shand, 2000, p. 6).

In claiming Indigenous cultural symbols as their own, non-Indigenous people are not only extending a claim to land, they are also extending a claim to identity. Daniel Francis claims with each act of appropriation “non-Native Canadians are trying in a way to become Indigenous people themselves and to resolve their lingering sense of not belonging where they need to
belong” (1993, p. 190). This is one possible interpretation; another is the need settler societies have to differentiate their identity from that of the mother colony (Phillips, 20120). In 1773, when disgruntled colonists objected to being taxed for their tea, they disguised themselves as “Indians,” boarded the ships in the Boston harbor, and dumped the tea overboard. King (2003) cites Deloria (1998, p. 25) in explaining the act as one of laying claim to the custom of the land to refute British, i.e. foreign, custom; the only North American past old enough to have laws of custom was that of its Indigenous people, and hence the disguises.

Citing the popularity of debased shamanism, exotic tattoos, and world music, Shand (2000) contends that “attraction for otherness remains an important feature of Euro-American cultural values” (p. 3). Yet what of genuine curiosity, a desire to expand understandings of one’s established way of understanding the world via the insights of a secondary discourse (Gee, 2008; Tedlock, 2013)? Drawing from Gee’s discussion of deep learning—instruction versus an acculturation into the practice of what has been learned, such as learning physics versus becoming a physicist—Haig-Brown describes a process of interacting with Indigenous peoples and their everyday practices and understandings that helped inform and reshape her own understandings. In the context of narrative ethnography, Tedlock (2013) posits “a third in-between space” (p. 237) which eschews binary oppositions and the need to impose one worldview upon another. Instead, multiple cultural and ethnic identities intermingle, affording each the opportunity to “change while maintaining certain of their unique qualities” in “an overlapping dialogue based on becoming” (p. 237, emphasis in original). Learning to become responsible for what you have learned (King, 2003; Archibald, 2008), introduces problematic issues of appropriateness in terms of the fulsomeness of understandings being shared.

Archibald (2008) addresses the ethical use of stories. Ethical principles are initially established by asking permission to enter someone’s territory. Cultural protocols must be respected to establish sincerity of purpose, thus enabling story keepers—the Elders—to ascertain that a party’s intended purpose is congruent with their own. The accuracy of stories obtained through oral story telling must be verified responsibly through the verification of all transcripts. If copyright has been retained by a storyteller, the limits of its use must be respected as well as its territorial origins and associated cultural protocols. Published stories citing Indigenous involvement does not guarantee accuracy; not all dimensions of a story may have been captured. Doing meaningful storywork requires understanding the cultural principles embedded in
storytelling. Non-Indigenous people lack such cultural authority, yet working from story
curricula prepared by Indigenous people and appropriately bolstered with additional knowledge
can minimize the possibility of disrespectful story use.
Chapter 3
Theoretical Framework and Methodology

The ethical space outlined by Ermine (2007) provided the theoretical framework for this research. To augment my understandings of how to maintain its integrity, I turned primarily to Wilson (2008) for epistemological guidance, and drew from storywork methodology (Archibald, 2008) as the means for facilitating participants’ understandings of how their stories exist in relationship to those of others and Canadian history.

Ermine (2007) proposes an ethical space as a response to the assumed universality of Western thought, which claims to possess a ‘God’s eye view on humanity’ (p. 198), a metaphor invoking both omniscience and omnipotence. This belief has created a monocultural existence in mainstream Canadian society, one not equipped with understanding other cultural norms because it has no frames of reference for concepts beyond its own. Cultures do not share a common moral vocabulary, a common vision of the nature of human beings as actors within the universe. Ermine claims this subconscious universality lies simmering in the West, “in the sub-consciousness of the masses and recreate[d] from the archives of knowledge and systems, rules and values of colonialism that in turn will into being the intellectual, political, economic, cultural, and social systems and institutions of democracy” (198). Ermine labels this “institutionalized monoculture” and faults it as the cause for accepting current struggles afflicting Indigenous-Western relations as the norm.

Ermine (2007) argues the boundaries of this struggle are not as well-defined as they once were. Reprising the history of interaction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples as one characterized by alternating periods of engagement and disengagement, culminating in the forced re-engagement represented by residential schools and other forms of colonialism, Ermine argues these cycles have led to transcultural confusion: “We no longer know what informs each of our identities and what should guide the association with each other” (p. 197). Ermine suggests this confusion is the consequence of an entanglement in our political and social lives; we remain trapped in the same patterns, unable to provide clarity to either thought system.

Seeking clarity, I turned to Indigenous scholars who delineate fundamental epistemological differences between Western and Indigenous ways of knowing. Wilson (2008), Opaskwayak Cree from northern Manitoba, draws from those traditions to inform his work, and describes an
Indigenous research methodology grounded in relationality. Indigenous ontology and
epistemology are based upon a process of establishing relationships which create a mutually
informed reality. Ontological entities are perceived and understood through the relationships they
hold with other entities. Wilson invites us to imagine ontological entities as knots of being, equal
in worth and value, none privileged. Each knot extends and receives lines of relationship to and
from other entities, existing within necessarily reciprocal relationship to one another. Without the
relationships which sustain and maintain them in this network, and the relationships in which
they support other entities, ontological entities become meaningless; within such an
epistemology they simply do not exist. Wilson provides a linguistic example from his Indigenous
language: English equivalents for the words nookom (my grandmother) and kookoom (your
grandmother) do not exist; a person “can’t be a grandmother without being attached to
something” (73). Decontextualizing entities, removing them from relationship to those entities
which define their purpose and provide the means by which they can be understood, unravels
reality. Relationality as the founding principle of Indigenous ontology entails that “egalitarianism
and inclusiveness become not merely a norm but epistemologically necessary” (92).

Contrast this to Western thought and its historic concepts of self, society, and the natural world.
Smith (2012) identifies Greek philosophy as the first thought system to distinguish between the
individual and the natural environment. Possessing language and reason, humans were placed on
a higher plane of existence in the humanistic tradition established by Socrates, Plato, and
Aristotle. Constructs of mind, body, soul and reason underlie Cartesian dualism and Hegelian
dialectic, constructs reflected in language. Smith identifies these frameworks as constituent of
reality as conceived by the West. Citing Waters (2004), Kovach (2009) identifies an analysis
comparing the “dualist binary ontology” of English with the “nonbinary complementary dualist
construct” of many Indigenous cultures (24). The history of Western thought and the products of
its ways of knowing—reason, literacy, democracy and to Smith’s list I would add logic—were
cited as evidence that Western ways of knowing should be reified upon contact with other
cultures; they represented what it meant to be civilized.

These are the epistemological boundaries of the ethical space as I understand them, with both
Ermine and Kovach (2009) arguing that a strong Indigenous knowledge base is necessary for
their establishment—for Indigenous researchers. As the inheritor and product of a Western
knowledge paradigm, described by Kovach (2009) as one in which atoms and particles live
autonomously, life is mechanistic and determined by cause/effect, humans are all-knowing via their intellect which can measure and account for “all energy patterns” (p. 77), contributing to the maintenance of this ethical space demanded that I explicitly and actively counter this intellectual position. Instead of categorizing stories, I sought connections among them. I resisted the impulse to impose an interpretation on my participants’ stories, instead letting their words flow toward a meaning I could not discern in the moment. Kovach (2009) claims that Indigenous knowledge can be neither fragmented nor reduced. In considering how to apply this quality of holism to my method, I cultivated an attitude of acceptance and patience while listening to my participants’ stories. Implementing a storywork methodology within the framework of an ethical space required this of me.

Storywork (Archibald, 2008) is a method for foregrounding relationship to make meaning from stories by applying storywork principles understood through Sto:lo and Coast Salish traditions. Traditionally, Indigenous peoples have used oral stories for teaching and learning purposes, the practices for their telling unique to each nation, comprising protocols and rules for teaching and learning purposes. Wapaskwan (Lightning 1992, pp. 229-30 quoted in Archibald, 2008, p. 84) distinguishes between the “surface” of a cultural story and the implicit narrative contained within it. Multi-layered, such stories contain keys to understanding meanings intended to unfold over time. Archibald identifies two categories of story, sxwoxwiyam and squelqwel. Citing Carlson (1997, p. 182), Archibald describes the former Sto:lo category as “myth-like stories set in the distant past,” and the latter are “‘true stories or news’ describing ‘experiences in people’s lives’” (p. 84). Although my research depended entirely on stories from the latter category, being attentive to the surface meaning/implicit meaning distinction supported my efforts in drawing connections between participants’ stories.

9 Data collection

9.1 The sample

All six of the study’s participants responded to a recruitment email (see Appendix C) disseminated via the Indigenous Education Network at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE). This organization provides a forum for Indigenous and non-Indigenous members affiliated with OISE/University of Toronto (UT) to meet and establish relationships.
I had originally intended to recruit teachers as my participants. An initial email to a contact at the Aboriginal Education Centre yielded the following information: participant recruitment of any Toronto District School Board (TDSB) staff through TDSB staff or schools requires prior review and approval of the proposed research by the TDSB External Ethics Review Committee. My proposal received U of T ethics approval in July 2017 but the TDSB was on summer recess until the fall. Contacting potential participants through personal networks, if the research is not specific to TDSB practices, would not require a TDSB ethics review. As I implemented other recruitment measures--contacting teachers I am acquainted with--I sent a recruitment email to the Indigenous Education Network. Although I received numerically adequate replies in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous categories, most respondents were not teachers. The thoughtfulness of one respondent’s email, however, confirmed the importance of my initial recruitment criterion: a resonating interest in the study. I became convinced that applying this criterion to potential candidates would enhance my study’s overall quality regardless of my participants’ professions. As I demonstrate in my findings, storywork principles are an effective means for revealing how colonial narratives continue to include and exclude individuals based on cultural, linguistic, and religious identity. The applicability of these revelations to the teaching profession will be demonstrated in my findings and conclusion, but their discovery was not contingent upon my participants’ professions.

Gender distribution in the sample was as follows: two participants identified as male, two identified as female, one identified as a two-spirited female, and one participant identified as transgender.

Within this sample, two subgroups were represented: Indigenous and non-Indigenous. The subgroups were significant, as I needed representatives of two distinct worldviews. The line between these subgroups seemed distinct, but was blurred, manifesting Ermine’s characterization of our collective entanglement. Of the three self-identifying Indigenous participants, Frank\(^6\), a 62-year-old PhD student, identified as an Anishinaabe Ojibway, but both female participants had mixed ancestry. Jessica, a 32-year-old fine arts student born in Montreal, is the descendant of Canadian-born parents and grandparents. Descendants of European settlers, family members on

\(^6\) All participants’ names are pseudonyms.
her paternal side describe themselves as “mutts”: possessing a French last name, they are not fluent in French, and part Irish and part Spanish. Her maternal grandmother gave her a Mi’kmaq name, and in 2011, when gender inequity was addressed in the Indian Act, she claimed her First Nation status. In selecting both settler and Indigenous identifiers on the initial questionnaire, she fully reflected her heritage. Clarissa, a 61-year-old retired nurse, is the daughter of a woman born in pre-World War II Poland. Her father’s family traces its roots to the Gaspe, where Clarissa’s grandfather and “full-blooded” grandmother raised thirteen children. Upon the death of her mother, research into her family history revealed the Indigenous heritage of her paternal grandparents: Abenaki, Maliseet, and Mi’kmaq.

The non-Indigenous participants’ backgrounds were similarly varied. Forty-one-year-old Bob, whose family moved from the United States to Canada when he was five, is a PhD student. He identified as a Canadian, a settler, and an American who could trace both sides of his family’s presence in North America to the landing of the Mayflower. Tom, a transgender 56-year-old, identified as Canadian and Irish, reflecting not only his ethnic heritage but his travels to Ireland as well as short periods of time spent living there. The first in his family born in Canada, he is a Ph.D. student. Adele, a 33-year-old PhD student, identified as a settler. Her mother’s family has been in Ontario since the mid-1800s; her American father, a “cultural draft dodger,” was raised in a community where “everyone he knew was always, and had to be, Jewish.”

9.2 Measures

Participants in this study completed an initial questionnaire (see Appendix A Initial Questionnaire) designed to prepare them for discussion. The first section—living in Canada—inquired as to whether they felt a responsibility for knowing the stories of this land and how they would describe their relationship to this land. Interested in knowing whether people would describe their relationship to land differently if Canada was the land of their birth or not, I asked them to describe that relationship if Canada was, or was not, the land of their birth. The second section gathered background information, including ethnicity (Indigenous or non-Indigenous), age, gender, and profession or program of study if they were students. They were also asked how they identify themselves as a person living on this land and provided with five options: settler, immigrant or child of immigrants, a Canadian, First Nations, Métis, or Inuit, or other.
Participants were asked to identify whether their parents or grandparents were born in Canada (De Costa and Clark, 2016).

In Indigenous methodologies, preparing for research involves becoming knowledgeable about cultural protocols (Archibald, 2008; Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008). As a non-Indigenous researcher drawing from these methodologies, using neither Indigenous content nor working in an Indigenous community, it was incumbent upon me to consider how I would prepare myself for the thoughtful application of storywork principles. Indigenous research methodology requires evidence of methodological process (Kovach, 2009). To show respect, I was prompt in responding to my participants’ initial emails, polite in requesting from them their scheduling details, and clear in identifying when and where the focus group session would take place.

In preparing the meeting room for the focus group session, I took direction from Archibald. “In Sto:lo and Coast Salish cultures,” she tells us, “the power of storywork to make meaning derives from a synergy between the story, the context in which the story is used, the way that the story is told, and how one listens to the story” (2008, p. 84). Making meaning from stories requires interaction between the storyteller, the listeners, and the context of the telling, including the physical space and time of day, a collaborative process potentially creating a “synergistic story power” (p. 100) with educational, healing, and spiritual aspects. Aware of the significance of these factors, I carefully arranged the seating in the room to maximize participants’ comfort. I considered arranging the chairs in an open circle, but rejected it as an option which, among strangers, might leave them feeling exposed and vulnerable. I arranged the available desks in a rectangle, placing the chairs on its periphery. The 6:00 pm meeting time coincided with dinner, and knowing some participants were coming directly from work, I provided a light meal (crudités and dip, tortellini salad, chips and salsa, cookies and beverages). I addressed their physical needs as a sign of respect and appreciation for their time, but additionally the food signaled a personal, internal boundary in the ethical space I intended to create. In Italian culture, food is a central component for conveying warmth and hospitality, and a sign of generosity. The enactment of my family traditions was an expression of my cultural origins and served as a clarifying declaration of my position.

Before members of the group began to share their stories, I indicated that we would be doing so in an ethical space as described by Ermine (2007). This required us to respect not only the
different histories we each had, but the different worldviews and experiences that have informed and created those histories. I related to them that acknowledging and respecting the boundaries represented by those differences is critical to the establishment of an ethical space. When it came time to share our stories, I indicated I would speak first, and we would continue around the table from my left. I shared my story as a sign of reciprocity and responsibility: It was my role to set the tone for our sharing and embed myself within those shared stories. Ross (2014) repeatedly draws attention to the embeddedness of the individual within relationships, suggesting this profoundly reciprocal relationality distinguishes the Indigenous worldview from the Western one. Given that our group interacted for such a brief time, the relationality we established would be fleeting, its quality depending entirely on the stories we told and their reception. Speakers were not interrupted; each person spoke secure in the understanding that their words would be listened to. Given the nature of thoughts in such an environment to flow and connect in the moment to others’ stories, this did cause some topical detours, but even those proved to be connected to the colonial narrative. As Bob noted, “you learn from all of it.”

Following the telling of individuals’ stories, I screened a short video report on the consequences of a 2013 Idle No More protest (Ferguson, 2013). A statue of Sir John A Macdonald, Canada’s first prime minister (referred to herein as Macdonald), in a Kingston, Ontario park had been vandalized the night before an event being held to celebrate his birthday. The report depicts the results of the protest and includes brief comments from Ryan Zade, a spokesperson for the Bicentennial Commission, and Kingston’s mayor, Mark Gerretsen. To contextualize participants’ responses, a fuller description of the news clip is provided in the Results section. For the video script, see Appendix B News clip transcript.

10 Data analysis and validity

Through oral storytelling, meaning is socially constructed as listeners ponder the content of a story, consider it in the context of their own culturally situated life experience, and discuss their responses with others present. The collective sharing of responses to the story in that moment extends the meaning of the story and deepens understanding. Precisely because each individual present recruits unique interior knowledge, each person’s contribution has the potential to reveal for others insights previously unavailable to them. Using the principles of traditional oral storytelling can produce such results from storywork (Archibald, 2008).
Because I was interested in discovering if these principles could reveal a relationship amongst participants based on their common presence on this land, I would be investigating connections and commonalities in participants’ stories. I contrast this centering of relational knowing in Indigenous Storywork methodology to narrative inquiry, a research methodology that uses and produces story as its main instrument of investigation. In the following discussion, I rely exclusively on the work of Connelly and Clandinin. As pioneers in the methodology, they continue to offer detailed refinements (Clandinin et al., 2016; Clandinin, 2006; Connelly & Clandinin, 2006; Connelly & Clandinin, 2000) for its implementation, enabling me to distinguish it from storywork.

According to Clandinin (2006, p. 45-46), story is the interpretation of experience. Experience, captured in story, is the phenomenon under study in narrative inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 479). Clandinin (2006) notes the variety of philosophical understandings of experience available to draw from—Aristotelian, Marxist, post-structural—and identifies Dewey’s pragmatic philosophy (1938), particularly his criteria of experience, as the philosophical foundation of narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2006). For Dewey, experience has two criteria—interaction and continuity. Interaction acknowledges the social dimension of being human; people “cannot be understood only as individuals. They are always in relation, always in a social context” (Dewey, 1938, p. 2 cited by Clandinin, 2006, p. 46). Continuity expresses the understanding of experience as a series of events linked in time, such that experience “both takes up and moves forward from past experiences to present and future experiences” (Clandinin et al., 2016, p. 16). In the three-dimensional space Connelly and Clandinin (2000) provide as a framework for narrative inquiry, the Deweyan concept of continuity is reflected in the temporal dimension. Significantly, this dimension is intended to capture people as beings in states of transition, as past experience informs the present positioning them toward the future (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 480). Interaction is reflected in the dimension of sociality which addresses personal and social conditions, a distinction made to remind narrative inquirers of the need to balance between exclusive focus on the feelings, reactions and thoughts of participants and treating participants as manifestations of social processes and structures (p. 480). The place dimension identifies the specific concrete, physical, and topological boundaries of place; experiences occur somewhere, a dimension reflecting the Deweyan understanding of situation
Relationality is implied at each juncture of this framework as captured by the following:

[Narrative inquiry] is collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst and progresses in the same spirit, concluding the inquiry still in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of the experiences that made up people’s lives, both individual and social. (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 20)

Appreciating all these facets is critical for enabling the researcher to establish a relationship with the research subjects, enabling entry into their lived, moment-to-moment experience. This attentiveness to a holistic appreciation of a research subject’s position acknowledges the interconnectedness of lived experience, but no principles are identified for governing the relationality between subject/researcher, or between the experiences of the participants under investigation.

An illustrative scenario provided by Clandinin (2006) provides an opportunity to examine this more closely. As part of a two-year research project at an urban multicultural school, children were given cameras and asked to provide pictures of their communities. Most of the children took pictures of schools, churches, and gas stations, images that reflected their, and their teacher’s, understanding of community in accordance with the curricular mandates. One Indigenous student, however, took a photo of three children sitting on a sofa, and a composed portrait of three guitars. The teacher interpreted these photos as evidence that “Josh” had not understood the assignment. When Clandinin questioned Josh, he explained that the young girl in the photo was his sister and the other two children her young cousins with whom she played when they visited. As for the guitars, one belonged to his father, the other to his uncle, and one to Josh; they played their guitars together. Clandinin places the teacher’s interpretation of Josh’s photos into the context of Schwab’s (1970) “ideas of curriculum commonplaces” (p. 49), that is, the assumptions, aims and intentions contributing to what is identified as legitimately curricular, and how the interaction between teacher and student experiences creates a “curriculum of lives” (p. 49). Josh’s pictures “created a rupture” (p. 50) in the expected curricular outcomes by articulating a different narrative. What is striking in this explanation is how the narratives, understood as the respective experiences of Josh and the teacher to the curriculum, remain
isolated in their individuation. How are these “curriculum of lives” related to each other and the world outside the classroom? How do they inform each other and to what beliefs and ways of knowing are they responsible?

Josh’s pictures revealed the mandated concept of community for what it was: a hegemonic curricular construct intolerant of alternate views. Such concepts are imbued with taken-for-grantedness to the same degree as the intellectual and cultural sources informing them. Clandinin and Connelly suggest that researchers can become so familiar with their subjects’ personal landscapes that they can enter these landscapes with the same “taken-for-grantedness” (2000, p. 76, italics in the original). I argue that researchers enter those landscapes already burdened with taken-for-grantedness: the hegemonic intellectual and cultural concepts that equip them in constructing and knowing reality. Clandinin arranged for the school principal’s intervention to ensure that Josh’s concept of community was valued; lacking that support, Clandinin wonders if his alternate concept would have been displayed at the school’s open house. This begs a question about the ‘curriculum of lives’; are these lives considered in reciprocal relation to one another, or is the hierarchical arrangement of the status quo left undisturbed? Perhaps researchers, teachers, and principals might re-examine to whom and what they are responsible. Storywork provides an additional lens through which to view the stories of participants’ experiences by insisting on their relationality.

I reviewed the transcript for all points of intersection between my participants’ stories. These points would identify how having a common place—this land—placed my participants in relationship to each other not only in the immediate context of the session, but in the larger national context. Archibald (2008) describes a holistic model that provides the context for Indigenous storywork. The model places the individual within the centre of expanding rings of relationship--family, community, nation—which are reciprocal, and further informed by and responsive to the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical attributes of all entities existing within the animal/human kingdoms, nature and land (p. 11). Data were analyzed with the intention of revealing such reciprocal relationships between stories and lived experience. After sharing personal stories, participants were asked to consider how the principles of relationship, respect, reciprocity and responsibility were ignored in the video clip. Responses to this question were analyzed to determine if they revealed how dominant ways of knowing continue to
determine what stories, and how those stories, are told; in other words, did their responses reveal transformed understandings and insights into how dominant epistemologies could be disrupted.

As the researcher, I had a responsibility to the relationships I established with my focus group participants, demanding respectful interaction during the sessions and afterwards in my treatment of their data. According to Wilson (2008), “knowledge that the researcher interprets must be respectful of and help to build the relationships …established through the process of finding out information” (p. 77). My interpretation was governed by these considerations as I strove to ensure my interpretations were as true to the spirit of a participant’s intended meaning as I could determine.

10.1 Researcher as instrument of analysis

Being the instrument of analysis for this qualitative research required I examine and present my own biases to support the validity of my analyses (Kovach, 2009). I identify as a Canadian, yet struggle to comfortably call this land Canada. As land acknowledgements have become an increasingly common element in a variety of opening ceremonies, they remind us all that we are a nation built not only on the geographic dislocation of its first peoples but deliberate attempts at their physical and cultural eradication. Canada is the nation-state responsible for this; as a child, I identified as an Italian-Canadian. Now, I identify as a Canadian, but do so in an act of seeming renunciation—I am Canadian by merit of not feeling qualified to claim an Italian identity. Furthermore, my claim to being Canadian is an assertion of my right to that title as someone born on the lands claimed by Canada despite being neither Anglo-Saxon nor fluent in French. Implicit in this assertion is a residual resentment of the colonial narrative in which I was raised, something I understood even as a child: being Canadian meant you were English or French, and if you didn’t happen to be either ethnically, then language would serve as an assimilative substitute. My awareness of how this colonial narrative had positioned me had left me with a glaring blind spot—I had not recognized its universality and how it positions all of us in a widely ranging array of hierarchicalized identities. Some choose to reject these categories. None of the Indigenous participants identified themselves as Canadian on the initial questionnaire.

Expectations can also create biases. In considering how to establish an ethical space distinguished by respect for the worldviews of my participants, I expected to find distinctly articulable boundaries between these worldviews which would find expression in their
understanding of what it meant to be connected to and in relationship with this land and its stories. People’s positions vis a vis worldviews were kaleidoscopic, not monochromatic. In anticipating responses to the news report about the 2013 Idle No More Protest, I expected some level of defense for the hegemonic colonial narrative presented by the two interview subjects in the news clip. There was no such defense; instead, unanimous condemnation of their perspectives united my participants, alleviated only by one participant’s suggestion that Macdonald’s legacy was more nuanced than the news story’s version accommodated. What I had failed to consider was that regardless of cultural background, we are all products of an education system which inculcated us all in the Canadian narrative. When a celebration of Canada’s 150 years as a nation-state came amidst the reverberations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s report and its 94 Calls to Action, what I found were a select group of people united by skepticism regarding received histories and narratives.

11 Limitations

The limited sample size and its composition are limitations of this study. Of the three non-Indigenous participants, none were a person of colour or a member of a visible minority; perspectives from those minorities are, therefore, missing from this research. Four of the six participants are PhD students, making this group disproportionately representative of Canadian educational attainment.

My positionality limits the interpretation of these findings. In the context of the history of these lands, I am a relative newcomer, an outsider both to settler and Indigenous stories. While a researcher must assume some degree of outsider status in analyzing data, this doubly-layered outsideness may prevent a deeper grasp of understanding relationality, thus inhibiting my interpretations.

Archibald (2008) notes that making meaning from stories requires time to think and relate stories to life experiences. This thesis represents the time required to make such meaning; however, the degree to which my participants took time after our session to further ponder the significance of our stories’ intersections is something I placed beyond the bounds of this study. Arguably this constrains the reciprocity of my findings, but I did provide all participants the session transcript and opportunity to revise their words. I also made this thesis available for their review.
The three-hour time limit on the session was also a limitation. It prevented me from presenting participants with an additional story I had prepared, forcing me to constrain the discussion to the shared stories and responses to the one news story.

One of the principles of storywork which I chose not to use in this study was reverence. I made that decision months before undertaking my research, from the position of a secular woman made uncomfortable by the concept of reverence. Now, however, I understand reverence as the principle affording consideration of and entry into our spiritual dimensions. The lack of an explicit spiritual dimension in these results is a limitation of this study.
Chapter 4
Results

The collision of jagged worldviews (Little Bear, 2000) cannot but impact the experiences of those living within the perimeter of the cataclysm. Little Bear’s descriptor evokes an event cosmic in scope—a worldview encompasses the totality of our lived realities, providing a multidimensional scaffold upon which we build individual and community identities, positioning us in space, place, and time. As when worldviews collide, with shockwaves spreading across infinite stretches of time and space, so too was there a sense of infinite expansion in the aftermath of colonialism as participants’ stories revealed increasing points of commonality. Disconnection was a surprisingly common characteristic among them, even as that disconnection was incommensurable. As Frank, an Indigenous participant, noted of the Indigenous colonial experience, “There’s never been such a concentration of church, state and education system to eradicate a people,” and his personal story is a palimpsest providing glimpses of this macro history.

All the participants’ stories could be similarly sketched against historical backdrops. Seen as stories within stories, they unfolded over the course of a few hours to carry us from the arrival of The Mayflower, to the ruins of pioneer homesteads in Prince Edward Island, to events as contemporary as Bill 101, the controversial language law passed by Quebec’s provincial government in 1977.

The results presented in Part I and II address the first three research questions. I sought to discover how the principles of relationship, respect, responsibility and reciprocity could reveal the divide between Indigenous and Western ways of knowing, providing a point of contact from which deeper understandings might flow and whether they could renew, refresh, or re-establish responsibility to land and its stories. The subsections of Part I are organized according to themes selected to demonstrate how the stories people shared were part of the larger colonial narrative we all continue to “carry and walk through” as Bob described it, stories placing us in relationship to one another. Shared experiences with language and related issues of identity erasure and outsider status served to demonstrate how the people in the room were related through/by a colonial narrative.
Results in Part II address how the denial of reciprocity, respect, relationship and the misapplication of responsibility maintains the colonial narrative. These results suggest how the application of these principles can help re-write the colonial narrative by challenging and disrupting dominant ways of understanding informed by Western ways of knowing.

12 Part I—Being on this land

To prepare participants for storytelling, they were first asked to complete a questionnaire that asked them to describe their relationship to this land, and then they listened to my origin story. “My parents instilled in me a connection to land as a result of their being farmers,” I told them. Furthermore, I explained that my lack of fluency in my parents’ native language was attributable to a teacher’s insistence that my mother speak English to my eldest brother. My story catalyzed unexpected resonant themes: the impact of the colonial context on family history; language loss and acquisition; identity erasure and reinscription; and the complex of experiences contributing to a sense of connection, or non-connection, to land.

12.1 “The history that we carry and walk through”—Bob

The histories people provided of how they came to be on this land were informed by their positions within the colonial narrative. The quote above are Bob’s words, taken from the prefatory comments he made before he shared his story: “It’s so interesting to hear the story of land behind these faces…It’s just stunning the history that we carry and walk through.” Adele noted that her mother’s family has been in southern Ontario since the mid-1800s, but alluded to no historical events her predecessors might have lived through. Jessica could claim her FNMI status when the Indian Act was amended by Bill C-3, Gender Equity in Indian Registration Act, in 2011 (INAC, 2017). Bob and Clarissa, the progeny of settlers, guided us through centuries of colonial history in describing how they came to be on this land.

Bob framed his story with his names: each of his three names is linked to the history of this land. His first name, the name of a Turtle Island First Nation, simultaneously reaches to a time before European and Indigenous contact, and the time of his conception in a tipi and birth in “Mohican territory in the western edge of Massachusetts.” The second name comes from his mother’s side, an English-born man who moved to Syracuse, New York in 1917 and married a German woman already settled in the large German population on Lake Onondaga. His third name can be traced
back in “three different ways” to the captain of the Mayflower and the establishment of the New England colony of Massachusetts, where another ancestor signed the Plymouth Rock Declaration.

Clarissa’s story likewise reaches back into time:

On my father’s side they came here in the 1600s…and when they got here they had their native wives whatever and you know intermarried and stayed and it was thanks to the Aboriginal people that took them in that helped them survive and even helped them survive during the Deportation, helped them to escape. It was Mi’kmaq people whatever helped them escape during the Deportation because a lot of them got thrown in like canoes and put out to sea with no paddle or nothing.

Clarissa is referring to the Acadian Deportations, which took place over an eight-year span beginning in 1755 (Johnston, 2007). Her grandmother’s people “had to go through the Deportation twice...from Nova Scotia. The first time they ran to the States for their lives and then the second time they ran to Quebec and that’s how they landed up in Quebec.” Of some of her known 50 first cousins, she said “they were always going on about French...how important it is to speak French because of the war. They had a war between the French and the English and the English won.” These events in Canadian history were alluded to with no reference to dates. Events and their consequences were significant; when they happened did not seem to be, endowing them with the quality of timelessness. Yet Clarissa did date events she had lived through: she identified 1983 as the year she came to Ontario; her mother had died “about four years ago.”

An Indigenous man of non-mixed ancestry, Frank is descended from ancestors who have been here since time immemorial. He did not state or allude to this fact, but instead described the colonialist impact of the Roman Catholic Church on his family. Frank grew up in an isolated village in “the land of the rapids,” known in English as the Sault St. Marie. Born in the 1950s, he went to school at a time when Indigenous children were still being sent to residential schools, but “we didn’t have a residential school ‘cause we were so isolated and the priest could control it.” What the priest could control was the language his laity spoke, and while I address this in more detail in a later section, it is worth including Frank’s observation regarding the long-term effects of language loss here as part of the history he carries and walks through:
Language is such an emotional thing for me. I think it’s uh we have to…we have to do this for our people. We have to bring that language back. We have to. They say if something doesn’t change drastically it’ll be gone in two to three generations. And I can see it. My own kids don’t speak it. They did. But my ex is…was so--was in a residential school, but she was so…brainwashed, whatever, she wouldn’t speak Cree—would not—even in this day and age.

Although he made no connection between his former alcoholism and colonialism—a week from the night of our focus group, Frank would celebrate 29 years of sobriety—he discussed Indigenous alcoholism and information provided to him by his contacts in CAMH in the context of cultural loss:

We weren’t allowed to practice our spirituality until 1963. It was against the law, right…before that we didn’t have our …traditions, our teachings, our elders, that kind of stuff, we had to go underground…and now with the teaching and all that we’re gone back the other way and now there are more alcoholics in white society than there are [among] Aboriginal people.

Even as Frank identified ways in which his parents continued to enact connections to land through cultural practices (described in more detail later), he told another story illustrating how his parents were living lives that were forced to straddle two worldviews.

There [was] yet an older man, a native guy. He was very traditional, wasn’t Catholic or anything, and he’d drum once in a while. And my mom and dad would lock all the doors. ‘He’s doing the work of the devil.’ I’m not kidding you. That’s what they…believed.

The role played by the Roman Catholic Church in colonial and Canadian history is well-documented (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015b, 2015c). Clarissa described its influence in her family history: Two aunts became nuns; five uncles became priests. “My father was Catholic, and my mother was Catholic […] I went to Catholic school…I was surrounded.” Her grandmother, who “was full-blooded,” was better educated than her husband because “she was sent with the nuns”: 
What they did with my aunties they sent them to…the convent […] they went through all that teaching ‘cause that was what you did. You sent your girls there to get a good education with the nuns, right. And before my father married whatever he thought he wanted to be a Jesuit. So he went to you know to study with the Jesuits and people told …my father--in those days in the 20s and 30s they didn’t talk about sexuality or anything […] They said to my dad just be careful at night. Don’t let anybody touch you, and he’s wondering what the hell are they talking about […] Eventually he found out what they were talking about—sexual abuse.

12.2 Language

In the first of many unexpected story intersections, Tom almost immediately commented on language loss when he shared his story after I spoke. “My parents didn’t know Irish. There’s this connection with language erasure” he observed. In Ireland, the measures to erase Gaelic were aggressive. His mother grew up in southern Ireland where “they brought people out to get rid of the language,” and in Ulster, which is still part of the United Kingdom, “it was forbidden to learn the language.” Despite these efforts at eradication, the language remains in Tom’s family were more than artifacts of speech. While the Gaelic words for shut up and close the door are the fragments he retains, more significantly he reported that “I obviously think in Irish, because I make mistakes grammatically in English all the time.”

Frank’s story of forced language loss is not too dissimilar from Tom’s. Frank grew up in an isolated village which “the Catholic priest ruled with an iron fist.” His “word was the word of God; there was no way [his parents] would go against him,” and the priest had the authority to refuse his mother the right to name one of her son’s Calvin. The priest policed people’s language use, insisting that once children went to school they would no longer need Ojibway. Until their children went to school, Frank’s parents spoke Ojibway to them, but once school began, “they wouldn’t speak Ojibway to us to save their lives.” Fluent only in their native language when they began school, children were given the strap for speaking it in a school environment where only English was tolerated. Although Frank did not attend a residential school, “we didn’t have a residential school ‘cause we were so isolated and the priest could control it,” the language aspect of his educational experience was “just like residential schools.”
As Clarissa reminded us, the English were not the only Europeans guilty of imposing their language on those with different linguistic backgrounds. Born and raised in Montreal with a Canadian-born father and a European-born mother, she spoke English at home but “French I learned at school because it was shoved down our throat. That was fine; I didn’t mind. But after a while, I just got fed up.” At both the English-language university and nursing college she attended, “there were a lot of francophones there too and you know nobody made a big deal except the government. So they’re just as bad as the English were, forcing it down their throats to learn English.” Also born and raised in Montreal, Jessica’s family, although with a French last name and Roman Catholic, “grew up speaking English […] but they don’t speak French very well.” When Bill 101 was first passed in 1977, all professionals were required to pass a French language exam to practice in Quebec. Upon graduating from nursing school, Adele passed the test but by 1983 “I got so fed up…because I said I don’t need this. I speak French. I speak English” and she came to Ontario. Clarissa expressed her frustrated exasperation with Quebec language policy repeatedly: “What’s the big deal? You know? What’s the big deal here? It’s just the language; that’s all it is.”

Frank and Jessica offered distinctly different opinions on the “big deal” of language. Before introducing herself, Jessica offered a warning/apology: “Ok I’m going to try something out. Bear with me.” Then she told us “that was the first time I’ve ever introduced myself in my Mi’kmaq First Nation language.” Later she revealed

there is actually a lot of anxiety and shame that comes from me trying to introduce myself in the beginning like that, like what if I say it wrong or like who does she think she is? and um…I think it can be estranging at times but in other community groups where I see people identify that way it’s to show that we have nationhood and that we share this with others. So…I wanted to do my part and try it out.

Jessica’s Mi’kmaq name was given to her by her grandmother. When she would try to pronounce it, “there was this kind of like look that my friends, like ‘what did she call you?’ and like ‘What does that mean?’ So…I guess I’ve been silent on it.”

Frank spoke after Jessica, and with his first words he addressed her: “That was very good and I’m very proud to hear you say that—the words in your language. That was awesome.” Then he introduced himself in Ojibway, alternating between Ojibway and English translations. As he
approached the end of his introduction, he spoke solely in English: “I’m an Ojibway man, I’m a grandfather and I’m a Midewiwin second degree to Midewiwin in the Midewiwin lodge in the Ojibway Medicine Society--I won’t say all that heh heh in Ojibway—I can!” His pride in his fluency was unmistakable, and he offered further explanation for his passion for the Ojibway language:

So that’s why I’m doing my PhD in language…. I didn’t start to try to relearn the language until I was a year older than [Jessica] now—33--and uh I’m doing my whole thesis on blood memory and storytelling method. That’s my way. I have students in Sarnia--8 and 9 years old--who are almost fluent after one year of the storytelling method—I’m not kidding you […] those kids, everybody in the class they’re almost fluent. I’m not kidding you. They are going to be a couple of my stars in my dissertation by the way. But--uh that’s the thing. For me, the language—that is my passion. That is the connection to the land because there is so much, so much, even--if you say treaty (Ojibway word) it’s that stuff that comes out of the land, and grows up and has those flowers in there (repeats the Ojibway word) all that is in that word, one word, and that’s the connection to the land and that’s what we lost through the residential schools.

12.3 Connection to land

Above, Frank provides an example of how Ojibway words reference land to express meaning. To speak an Indigenous language, he implies, is to articulate a connection to land as a function of communicative discourse. But speaking was not the only way a relationship to land was manifested. Even though Frank’s parents were devout Catholics, they maintained practices from “the old ways.” In response to thunder and lightning, his mother would burn cedar on the stove. The thunder and lightning would cease, or move “’cause my mom was burning that cedar.” His father was a logger, and when he had logs to saw, he would have a fire burning and put the first log in the fire “for the spirits.” When they would “get medicine in the bush […] they would put tobacco down. I’m not even sure they knew why they were doing that or the thoughts behind it, but they would do it.” “Everything that we do,” Frank said, “we need to put back. We don’t just take. We..uh..offer tobacco.” These practices suggest that a connection to land is multifaceted, encompassing respect and gratitude manifested through ritual to maintain and sustain relationship. Adele describes another way to effect this connection:
that landscape of PEI was one that I grew very attached to, and in many ways the land there was a kind of a refuge for me through difficult periods of my life. I was a distance athlete and I would run and I would like go out for hours and hours.

Even as Adele established a personal relationship to the land of her birth, neither of her parents were born there. They were “back-to-the-landers,” living the ideals of a movement with “pioneering undertones” on a piece of land where “…the foundation from the house of the original English settlers is still there. So…that history is really …present in the landscape.” When she came to Toronto in 2007 (ten years ago), she was coming to a landscape with family history associations. “My mother’s family has been in Ontario since the mid-1800s. One….of the four great grandparents lived in Toronto so I actually have a long history of family here,” one she had had no reason to consider in the landscape of her birth. In Toronto, she lives by the lake, “and I run early in the mornings, and I’ve become…very attached to that landscape, and running up the Humber [River] and thinking about the histories that I’ve started to learn about those particular geographies.”

For Bob, land is a source of comfort and strength. “I was born up in a beautiful, rural country. I remember my first memory is waking up under the white pine trees and they’ve—that’s been part of my life ever since. My relation to land—that’s literally my first memory as a 10-month-old baby, looking up at the white pine trees and waking up.” Traumatizing experiences in his childhood led to his “suffer[ing] post-traumatic stress disorder of the most complex level” when he was assaulted as a teacher. “Luckily,” he told us, “I found the land.” In his youth, he was given a feather from a male relative who worked rescuing eagles. Twenty-five years later, this memento was identified by an Anishinaabe Elder as an eagle feather, an object with significance in Anishinaabe traditions. As he has increasingly turned to Indigenous methodology for his PhD research and as a means of healing himself, he has realized “that the land has actually been my first teacher…[it] has actually protected and cared for me and sustained me right from when I was a little boy.” Committed to action that “acknowledge[s] the wisdom that is here in the land” and the consequences of its colonial past, he has worked to restore a medicine garden on the Don River and cultivates tobacco, sweet grass, sage and cedar in his own garden. The tobacco he held between his fingers, bound in a small piece of cloth, harvested from his garden, represents his connection to land.
Even as Tom struggled to determine whether he did, or had ever, felt connected to this land, the earliest connections he had made to land were through physical artifacts. The landscapes of his childhood were marked by two symbols: Monarch butterflies and the maple leaf. “I lived by a place called Monarch Park—I used to call them Monarch Park butterflies. I thought they were from that park…when I got a bit older and found out…they’re from all over the world, I was really upset.” He was also “devastated” to discover during his travels “that the maple leaf doesn’t just grow in Canada—it grows in Sweden.” For Tom, “what gave me some connection to land was probably my first trip to the Amazon and travelling around the world and seeing what other land looks like elsewhere.”

As Tom continued to puzzle over what connection to land could mean to him, commenting “[s]o I don’t know where I belong”:

I just still feel like an outsider. And when I went to Ireland I realized no, I am Canadian. It’s weird. You have to leave Canada to figure oh yeah, I realize that these parts are Canadian, do you know? …What is Canadian? I mean the argument is just that you are not American right… So is that what it means? I don’t know what it means. It should be connection to land…I wonder about connection to land. Like are any of us really connected to the land in [the] way that we’re going?” [An allusion to environmental degradation.]

As he returned to land connection—again—Tom said “I don’t feel connected to the land, you know. Unless I’m out working on it.” This evoked the memory of Voltaire’s Candide, and Tom briefly paraphrased Candide’s philosophy toward those who came to him with their problems: “This person had this horrible life—start planning some tomatoes.” This belief that engaging in a ritual act of hope—planting—can connect us to our physical, emotional, and storied selves is available to all of us.

Jessica moved to Ontario from Quebec in 2000, and identifies that relocation as “when my ideas of identity changed, and ideas of relationships to my family kind of dismantled itself and I feel like that has to do with transgenerational trauma as well as relationship to land.” Relationship to land, she implies, is intrinsic to questions of identity and familial relationship.
12.4 Insider/outsider status: “Having identities given and taken away”—Adele

My childhood is marked by memories of being surrounded by Italian-speaking children—on my street and in my classrooms—whose linguistic abilities heightened my self-consciousness regarding my inability to speak Italian. “I wasn’t quite Italian enough for the Italian kids who did speak Italian,” I shared with the group, “and I wasn’t quite Canadian enough for the Canadian kids because I was still kind of Italian, right?” This insider/outsider dynamic was not unique to my experience. Even as Jessica has claimed her First Nations status, and is intent about “repairing that connection to culture” through language and understanding treaties, “that being said I’ve never felt connected to—and always felt like an outsider as well.”

Adele describes growing up ‘Jewish’ in Prince Edward Island:

I have a Jewish last name and that was a real marker of outsider status despite the fact that I was born there …and my dad kind of fled this very um internal looking--I think what he found to be quite oppressive social environment…in which everyone he knew was always and had to be Jewish, to this place where there were no Jews…therefore I grew up..in a way that was largely removed from the culture. There’s a kind of hodgepodge mixed Jewish community there--but I was very Jewish in that context but when I moved here--I was definitely not. So I also have one of those experiences kind of transiting and being sort of like…having identities given and taken away.

Tom, too, described his feeling of outsider status and attributed it to his struggle to feel connection to Canadian land—because I always felt like an outsider in the 60s growing up here, and I did live in Ireland off and on too—in the north of Ireland—but living here—it was a very Anglo-Saxon city. So I remember one of our neighbours saying, ‘Oh, I like the Irish but they fight too much.’ There was always that sort of …crap, right?

What Tom alludes to as “crap,” might also be thought of as simply the dominant Canadian narrative, which Jessica lost no time in naming as the force contributing to her struggles for identity:
I grew up in the Canadian ideology. You go to public schools and you learn colonial-Canadian history and growing up I didn’t know what I was. The word that we used was Indian and I remember when I was in grade school we had to go around the table and describe our nationality and because I grew up in a highly South Asian, Jewish, and Greek neighbourhood they thought I was referring to South Asian Indian. They’re like—‘you’re not Indian.’

12.5 Part I: Summary

The personal stories participants shared revealed how each of us embody through our lived experiences a facet of the national narrative. The stories touched on the early colonial history of two modern states—the United States and Canada—as specific references were made to the Mayflower, Plymouth Rock, the Acadian Deportations and intermarrying between early colonists and Indigenous peoples on the east coast of present day Canada. References to residential schools and changes to the Indian Act contributed to a sense that the collected histories of these people reflected a more complete one than the one we were taught in schools.

As historic forces moved people out of communities, they found themselves entering new ones. Clarissa explained how Canada’s east coast history and people became linked to Montreal, the site of historic struggles between the two official languages. Stories of insistent and aggressive imposition of language on both First Nations people and immigrants of non-Anglo Saxon and French heritage were also shared. The links between language and connection to land in Indigenous culture were made explicit by Frank, and referenced by Jessica, as people discussed ways in which they did, or did not, feel themselves to be connected to land, and the larger narratives framing their lives.

13 Part II—The colonial narrative

After sharing personal histories of how people came to be on this land, participants were asked to share their responses to a news clip about an Idle No More protest. From discussing the personally experienced implications of colonialism, the conversation shifted to an examination of it as an impersonal force that continues to inform public discourse.
The news clip begins with an image of city workers scrubbing the words *colonizer* and *murderer* from the large base of a statue of Macdonald. Red paint is still visible on the statue’s head. Two people are interviewed. Ryan Zade, a representative of the Bicentennial Commission, notes that he and others are there that day to celebrate the birthday of Macdonald, the man who established a parliamentary democracy in which protest is tolerated—although it is disappointing that this protest happened. The mayor of Kingston, Mark Gerretsen, describes the irony of the protest. It is because of great Canadians like Macdonald, he contends, that Canadians have the freedom to protest in this manner. In other parts of the world, people would be seriously punished for such breaches of city by-law.

### 13.1 Maintaining “the whole colonial thing”—Tom

For Tom, the news clip was an example of the “whole colonial thing, the cloak is there and all that repression” to assert control over the narrative:

> There’s no relationship, right, it’s just telling you—it’s telling you how to think. It’s not giving you any breathing space. It’s just saying, you know, this is a great country because we have this great leader even though they put paint, poop on him whatever—whatever that was.

After spending an hour establishing relationship with the other participants through listening to one another’s stories, Tom was struck by the complete lack of relationship in this news story.

Implicit in the praise the subjects in the news clip heaped on Macdonald’s democratic impulse was the gratitude Canadian citizens should feel living here. Tom noted this:

> In another country—and God forbid you were in another country—you could be here where it’s so nice that if you decide to put paint upon something, or make a protest that’s against the bylaws, you’re okay. Like we’re not really going to come after you.

Echoing Tom’s anger and irritation, Jessica noted the success of “cultural amnesia” in Canada as it informed the perspective of the journalist:

> You have these news reporters speaking to vandalism that is inherently political, yet [he’s] been indoctrinated so much by the colonial agenda that [he] believes that gospel to
be true. And therefore there isn’t a critical analysis or insight on the actual movement or [what] the protest was about. So it’s fused within the institutions [where] we’ve learned and in the households and in the families, and because of having so many identities in this country as it stands today, I feel like…it’s um very easy to forget and to put a blanket over this…you can see like this motion. They’re washing off these words. They’re erasing it.

Bob noted the insidious workings of indoctrination, or the “colonial agenda.” It works most effectively when its proponents are oblivious to its machinations: “buddy who’s talking there [in the video]—he doesn’t know that he’s got this in him.”

Tom used the term “double speak” to express the process of misrepresentation the interview subjects and the reporter were practicing. Adele provided an analysis describing exactly how the double speak was effected:

The sort of casualness and smoothness with which those two men tried through their words to just seamlessly undermine and steal the political content from the protest by being like…‘this is just consistent with [Macdonald’s] ideas’. Like…‘it’s not even a thing’. It [is] just sort of like…an attempt to eradicate the power of an action like that, which I thought was a really slimy strategy, but maybe effective because it was really irritating. It’s kind of powerful in a way, on their part, to do something like that.

The statue itself, as Jessica pointed out, “is a reflection of the behaviours you’re seeing in present times,” in other words, a physical manifestation of the colonial narrative double speak.

Other responses were immediate calls for truth. Clarissa’s response addressed the need to “chang[e] history”:

So down east with the deportation they actually changed the history books down there and they actually wrote what happened with the deportation twice because at one point they had locked people in the church and then burned down the church with the people in there. So they actually you know they went in there and changed history and actually put down what exactly went down in the east.
While Frank was watching the video, he told us “I was thinking, Jesus, those guys really believe what they’re saying…where’s the pity there?” Frank provided facts to counter the depiction of Macdonald as a “great man”:

Never mind that he was a drunk. Never mind that there was one dead Chinese person for every mile of track went out west and [those] were his policies. ‘Let’s get that damn thing done while I’m still in power. I don’t care how many Chinese people die.’ When he eradicated the Ojibway food that grows on the water—to control the Aboriginal people he had them burn all that wild rice along around Peterborough and all the way around the area there […] He didn’t give a damn about human life unless it was one of his constituents. He said burn all that rice. Get rid of all that food and we’ll starve them into submission. Never mind they were people—women, kids […] that were going to be affected by his policies. And that’s only two examples.

The allusion to using food as a coercive tool intimates the brute force with which colonialism was enforced—a reminder that colonialism has not endured through words alone.

On a recent trip to Kingston, Bob was “struck by [the] military presence” in the city, and as he traveled through the area:

What came forward for me was the Haudenosaunee stories of Peacemaker, and that this was Mohawk territory, and the Mohawk’s job was to show those things—speak of Idle No More—500 years of resistance and they got such a beat down for trying to protect that history.\(^7\)

Considering the use of force to repress resistance led him to pose this question: “How do you fight against something without becoming the very thing that you’re fighting against?” Referring to his personal history, he noted the consequences of failing to engage with this conundrum:

Here you have the Puritans who were fleeing religious persecution that are responsible for what? […] Starting that whole burning of the villages […] my parents were looking

\(^7\) This seems to be an allusion to the 1990 Oka Crisis.
for these spiritual ideals and these things, yet had no problem—were able to excuse such horrible things happening to me.

Bob’s answer to this conundrum came in an image of the two-row wampum: “between the two rows are peace, friendship and respect and anytime those are getting crossed there’s something wrong and I think that goes both ways.” The challenge of resisting violence without enacting violence is a conundrum he described as “a sticky” issue. The group tangled with that stickiness as Frank objected to what he interpreted as a call for a peaceful response regardless of the provocation.

In the early 1970s, Frank attended a National Indian Brotherhood conference in Windsor where, he told Bob, “your speech you just made—I heard that word for word. Well, I shouldn’t say word for word. Everything you just said was at that conference.” The ideals of Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Mandela were very influential during this period, and Frank, too, subscribed to them. “Until I heard, what was it they were talking about, oh, don’t fight back if they hit your child, don’t fight back if they hit your grandchild […] if someone hit my grandkid, I would brain them with a baseball bat, you know what I’m saying?” A peaceful response in the face of offensive provocation has reaped what result, Frank wondered. “We’ve been doing it for years—for hundreds of years. We need to stop that crap.” Alluding to the Canadian federal government’s 1969 White Paper, Frank maintained that it was only with the potential for violence “all across Canada” that “Trudeau listened and stopped the White Paper. It doesn’t work the other way.” Tom supported him, referencing that peace in Northern Ireland came about only when the British themselves faced attacks on their own soil. “Sometimes,” Tom said, “violence is needed” to obtain necessary change. Bob returned to the issue, clarifying his position: “Peace doesn’t mean just laying down. Peace means fighting back when fighting back is necessary.”

13.2 Capitalism

In defending Indigenous people from the claim “some people” make that “we give them the moon and the stars,” Clarissa drew capitalism into the discussion. A reference to occurrences of cancer on “some reserves” caused by mining practices led her to the topic of proposed pipelines: “How sick are the people going to be with that? Very sick. Because there’s always a leak…There’s going to be problems. Our people have been saying that [for] a long time. No. No
pipelines. Water’s important.” Pitting “the billionaires [who] have just been lining their pockets” from profits derived from oil and car production against the wisdom of Elders who have said “we’re not going to keep going at this rate,” Clarissa questioned what will happen “when there won’t be no cell phone, there won’t be no computer—what the hell are you people all going to do? […] I’ve heard that it’s going to be our people who are going to tell the people how to survive again. Pull them out of the water again and show them how to survive.”

Returning to capitalism later in the discussion, some participants yoked it to other concerns. Bob draw a parallel between “the whole colonial mindset of ‘I know and you don’t, I’m going to fill you up with this’ and you were talking about capitalism. It’s the same idea: oh, you don’t have, I have, and I will give you everything you need, whether it’s Bacardi or whatever else.”

Capitalism presented Jessica with the opportunity to distinguish between two ways of knowing. By alluding to a comment Frank had made earlier in the session “about the land and you take only what you need and you leave the rest and this comes with ideas of like [what Clarissa is] saying about resource extraction and taking and capitalism and colonialism and you have these like two very disparate views of how you relate to each other.” A few minutes later, referring to capitalism as “the corporatization of land,” Jessica more pointedly addressed its moral component: “there’s a greed to this type of behaviour, and a lack of listening, and a lack of distributing wealth or social capital […] these resources will deplete and something else will take its place, and that’s the idea, I guess, of the four directions and the idea of cycles of everything, so what you’re left with is your relationships.”

In another example of how participants continued to connect their storied opinions and thoughts to those of others, Tom discussed technological exclusivity in the context of buses and bridge-building. The affluent bought cars; the less affluent rode buses which were not accommodated on the low-ceilinged bridges physically connecting rich and poor neighbourhoods. Clarissa, who introduced the subject of transportation, trains, and buses, returned to it, commenting on the relational quality of capitalism:

8 The online news clip was preceded by a brief ad for Bacardi rum.
[T]hese billionaires were telling the people this is it. […] you don’t have a choice about the train. You’re going to have buses. You’re going to get on buses. We’re telling you! This is it. That’s the relationship. It’s a dictatorship.

13.3 “But that’s not a story”—Tom: Countering the colonial narrative

After sharing their initial responses to the news story, participants were asked how the principles of respect, responsibility, relationship and reciprocity were, or were not, reflected. These principles are mutually informative; in some cases, participants identified them individually and in other cases, provided wider-ranging responses incorporating them.

Clarissa began by contrasting respect with disrespect. Although Macdonald was spoken about “like a super nova or something out of the galaxy…he really had no respect [for] anybody,” evidenced by his attempt to “get rid of native people.” For Clarissa, ignorance of historical facts—the Mi’kmaq helped people escape death during the forced deportations of the late 1700s, and the herding of “the buffalo off a cliff to make sure that people had nothing to eat”—is connected to an inaccurate belief that Indigenous peoples “get everything” including “free tax, free housing, you know everything free.” For Clarissa, ignorance informs a lack of respect that in turn informs the workings of capitalism. Drawing from various contemporary and historic stories—the pipelines being proposed by the current Trudeau government, the robber barons of the rubber trees and Mr. Dupont, and “all [the] billionaires in [President] Trump’s cabinet”—she introduced a theme others wove into their responses, as noted above.

Stating again that the speaker in the clip “looked like he believed what he was saying so there was no respect there,” Frank intimated that respect is expressive of a willingness to “take another look at [an issue]: RE-spect.” In stark acknowledgement of disrespect, Frank said “[The man in the clip] doesn’t believe our people have the right to be angry…you can tell that straight up…most of the people do not believe.” Tom “There’s no respect except for this […] statue that’s meaningless except that it’s an icon. It’s an image. It’s a mythology.”

Bob suggested that an understanding of these principles depended entirely upon seeing them in relationship. “For instance,” he said, “[the men in the clip] are being very responsible to John A’s very narrow, packaged legacy” because they perceive themselves to have a relationship with
that history. Bob re-imagined how the entire report would have been done differently if the intention of it had been similar to “the intent of storywork […] to come into a greater understanding of things.” What, Bob asked, is the relationship one is establishing with the story in question? “[I]s your premise to learn about John A or is your premise to indoctrinate?” Identifying the purpose establishes what questions might be asked, but those questions must include to what, or whom, one is being responsible or respectful. Such an approach has the potential of raising questions that would present the perspective of each actor in the story—the Idle No More protestors and the mayor of Kingston alike. Potentially, the unexpected might be revealed: “this is a lot more complex than anybody was talking about.” To Bob, Macdonald’s story was that of a man caught between being the oppressor and being the revolutionary, a more nuanced understanding than the one reflected in the story.

Adele observed that “the men who spoke were acting responsibly in relation to particular structures of power,” two of which she named: “colonial ideologies and the patriarchy”. They did so in a way “that represented a kind of disciplining, like not listening, not engaging, not asking questions, not being curious about what any of those principles might mean but acting on sort of an unannounced orders” but she seemed to provide her own explanation for that discipline when she pointed out that these power structures are what “they’re defending and representing when they occupy that position and that microphone. Especially with that kind of thoughtless casualty.”

Tom expanded upon this perspective, presenting a different dimension by introducing his comments simply as “so, it’s about stories.” The men in the clip were being responsible to the requirement demanded of them by “their editor in chief whatever […] to show the white Anglo Saxon Macdonald.” Their responsibility, in other words, “is not to show the whole story”, so “there’s no real reciprocity there because all the stories are not being told.” Consequently, “the only relationship they’re having is with the statue—that isn’t a person, it doesn’t exist, […] and they completely ignore” the words written upon it by the protestors. The only respect they showed was to the statue, as well, “an image of […] what makes Canada great: ‘cause this clown built a railroad. That’s our history.” Tom was adamant on one point: “The responsibility is to hear all the stories.”
In discussing reciprocity, people’s responses revealed multidimensional understandings of the term. For Tom, the clip reflected no reciprocity for a simple reason: “First of all they’re not even—not only are they not interviewing the Idle No More—they’re completely ignoring them.”

Frank’s initial trouble at pronouncing the word segued into other problems he has with reciprocity:

I always have trouble with that word because of those…they’d come back and kick the shit out of a whole bunch of them—you know what I’m saying? I don’t have no problem with that. How many of our people died? Kids? You know [they] found that residential school in Six Nations, there were 600 bodies—little tiny skeletons lying in there? How many of our kids? That’s only one school. And people they’re saying oohh now we need to be peaceful and talk this out. Like I said that was being said when I was 18 years old. Same story—nothing has changed.

Connecting Tom’s point and Bob’s earlier one about the intent of storywork, Jessica expressed the manner in which the principles worked to support relationship in our group:

I spent some time while we’re going around this circle reflecting and think[ing] about the idea of relationship building and the concept of storywork. I guess to tie it in together, throughout this experience that we had, what I found happening is that when we give each other space to speak our story and to take turns, I know that personally I found things that I identified myself in in everyone’s story and that’s why I smile and that’s why we share this camaraderie. There’s a lot of parts of our history and our upbringing—we grew up in the same place. We’re from the same place. We have very similar—if not the same history, renditions or commonalities in those things that can make us feel like we have an empathy or an understanding of where we sit.

13.4 The power of story sharing

The fascinating aspect of sharing a story when in a respectful, receptive space is its power to elicit more stories. Words spilling out of one person’s memory and mind trigger the flow of responsive memory in another, and stories begin to cascade from an initial fall of sound, creating
streams of words carrying thoughts off in various directions which nevertheless return to the initial source.

When Clarissa addressed the need to “change history,” she told a story to illustrate the consequences of historical inaccuracy and stereotypes.

When my mom passed four years ago I had to go home six to eight times to do paperwork—it’s quite something when somebody passes away--and I was coming back and I was taking a cab from the train station. This guy he had his get up and you know I figure oh yeah this guy’s from Afghanistan. He started to open his mouth and he starts to say that native people get everything. They don’t pay tax. They’re all drunks and just...and I said just a minute here, I said to him, you don’t know what you’re talking about. You really don’t. Not every single native person is a drunk and an alcoholic and a drug addict. […] You get some of the new population of people that come here that think this crap you know. Yeah, so, yeah, so I had to deal with that. Where’d you hear that? He had his get up. I could have gone on too, right, but I didn’t. I thought, oh my God, shook my head.

Forty minutes later, when Frank reported the CAMH findings regarding the greater proportion of alcoholics in white versus Indigenous populations— “Now they’re the drunks. I’m not kidding you” --he pointedly addressed Clarissa “So anyway, if you ever hear one of those guys saying [that] to you again, tell them that.”

Tom provided an Irish perspective on the power stories have when used in the service of maintaining dominant social narratives:

I was thinking of Peter Tosh. Everyone knows Bob Marley, but Peter Tosh was also in the same band, and he had a great term called the shitsdom or the system. I think it’s a great term. When I was young, I remember--just to get into the story real quick--Bloody Sunday. I know people know the song and sort of what happened--there’s a movie about it and so on. When we were in Ireland when I was about 8 or 9--it was ’69--we came back and then Bloody Sunday happened. And the newspaper[s] here—it was The Telegram what became The Sun, the same idiots and then The Star—and there was
almost nothing in it. It was about these hooligans who started this fight and then the British shot at 11 people whatever but there was no story. The story was the shitsdom.

Considering further reasons for the incomplete coverage of stories led Tom to consider Boston, where a greater number of Irish residents may have prompted a more complete account of Bloody Sunday in Boston newspapers. Yet even in Toronto, “a very British city in the 60s” the presence of Irish people alone had never been enough to counter the power of the dominant story as revealed by this exchange:

Tom: […] even the first St Patrick Day. People don’t realize the very first St. Patrick Day parade here that the Orange Order killed some of the people. The Orange Order would have been the Protestant side, they actually killed—

Bob: In Toronto?

Tom: Correct. Of course it was a hundred years ago. So that’s why they didn’t have a St Patrick’s Day for so long. […] But anyways people don’t even know that history. That’s my history. So I know my history was ignored here […] I have to explain it to people.

Bob provided insight into how aggression and hostility can be the outcome of ignored and incomplete stories when he shared an experience he had while “working on the land in the Don River, and I was there trying to change some minds, and introduce some Indigenous history to the land.” One participant, a master warrant officer with five tours of duty, had grown up near Penetanguishene and gone to school with Indigenous students from the Christian Island First Nations. Bob shared his story with us.

Every time when he went to school, the bullies were the Christian Island kids. He said, ‘You pick on one Indigenous kid from Christian Island, and you would get the whole lot of them’ […] And the racism in that particular area is still very strong today between the settler and the Christian Island First Nations. And so he grew up there getting--and so what I kept finding is how am I going to say to this guy, no, you’re wrong when his lived experience has been ‘I am getting bullied. I am witnessing all the known stereotypes’? I am not going to change this guy’s mind by telling him he’s wrong and that his training is wrong, but at the same time I’m not going to give an inch in accepting that this is gonna
be true—no, no this is—and so isn’t he the guy who calls me up after the fact because I went toe to toe with him on that, that still reaches out to me after I left that place and to asking me questions on how to teach in this way and how to […] and he was the most—literally most militant of the bunch, but it was cause I listened to his story, the power of his story and the land and where he came from.

Jessica offered a different interpretation of “bullying” when she wove threads of this story into a revelation on the multifaceted nature of relationality:

In an earlier story, these Penetanguishene people, they had this distorted perception of how the Indigenous there ganged up and bullied all on this one person. I see like what exists there is relationships. Those people stuck together to stand up for others because they nurtured relationships and they maintained that connection with each other and they saw with their eyes and their hearts how we can get along and how we’re stronger together.

Seeing with heart was a theme Jessica returned to a number of times, most poignantly when she lamented the lack of heart in the teaching of history:

I have a difficult relationship with history just because of a lot of the things that we’re talking about, like not being told the truth in our history, having things kind of glazed over, or even just being plain out lied to. Somewhere in my own blood memory I couldn’t memorize things, like, who is this guy? Why did he do this? There’s no heart to this story. It’s just like he got this, this worked (indiscernible) then they moved here and like the red hand—like I think it was a World War thing. It’s not that I disrespect those stories. It’s just that when you don’t have the heart in the stories and the reason to have reciprocity than you can’t practice it.

Adele teaches a course called Geographies of Colonialism in North America. Although she did not link her comments, below, to Jessica’s above, juxtaposing them raises possible solutions for how to teach history, a point I will return to in my discussion:

I think [my students] have an anxiety about learning specificities and so I’m very committed to teaching history [contextually] because I also feel like I can’t retain—like
the cards are stacked against my ability to retain historical specificity in the way that I’ve always been taught it, which made me feel really dumb for most of my life, and so I really want the students in my class who think like I do and can’t think that way to learn.

Bob addressed another aspect of historical representation with a story of a statue in Orillia.

[W]hen [Champlain] came it was Wendat—Wendat people kind of that were around but they had in the paper though they were running a story from an Indigenous historian who was saying--talking about Champlain coming and then they couldn’t figure what happened to him. He’d been gone for a couple of days. They had to go out and find him. He got lost. But that story isn’t contained in that statue…

When commenting on the “white-washing” of history, Tom circled back to the above story to bolster his position:

Somehow, we came—the Europeans came over and they knew exactly what they were doing. You mentioned some guy got lost for a couple of weeks. Of course he got lost. He was lucky he didn’t fall off the boat. You know what I mean—it’s amazing these people survived at all. And all that’s ignored.

Frank drew our attention to “the power of stories to educate the heart” (Archibald, 2008, p. 73) with an experience he had just outside Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory “across the bridge there [where] they’re all very Loyalist there,” and

[t]he people putting on [this] conference were very afraid that they were going to be literally physically attacked by these kids and their parents. They asked me like I was going to help (laughter). But come as the Elder see if you can calm things--anyway those kids were soooo receptive. We told them the first half of the morning was about residential schools and then we asked them to write down on sheets of paper what they thought about it. Oh my God. About 80% of them said they were so ashamed of themselves; they’re ashamed of their parents; oh how could we have done this; this was so awful. Thank God we asked them to write it down and of course after—of course as the Elder I had to help them, but I told them you don’t have anything to feel ashamed about. You don’t have anything to feel guilty about. You weren’t there. You’re only
young people. I mean, you know your duty now is if you see racism to say no. It’s not acceptable. That’s all you have to do. It was just astounding. The way they felt; I didn’t expect that from a bunch of Loyalist kids.

13.5 Part II Summary

The Canadian history represented in the news clip presented a version of relationship where the interviewees were responsible to, and respectful of, a heroic Canadian narrative celebrating the establishment of a tolerant democracy. Focus group participants identified this narrative as an ideological one which not only denied relationship but revealed how the erasure of non-conforming narratives are necessary for maintaining its supremacy. Bob and Frank noted that the two speakers in the news clip had completely internalized this narrative, leaving them incapable of recognizing the truth and legitimate anger conveyed by the words spray-painted on the statue.

Participants shared stories illustrating how the principles of respect, reciprocity, and responsibility establish relationships. Bob’s story of respecting the master warrant officer’s story demonstrated the power of refusing to accept aggression at face value. Instead, Bob established a relationship through storying that enhanced their mutual understanding. When received narratives are not questioned, we act from scripted expectations, yet we can still be surprised. Frank’s experience with the Loyalist students exemplified the need to tell all the stories, and the hope we can justifiably place in their power to illuminate and inspire a sense of responsibility for them. Clarissa’s story of the Afghan cab driver provides the best example of how stereotypes are perpetuated—when not all the stories are told, stereotypes all too often fill in the blanks of people’s ignorance.

Participants were united in their condemnation of the lack of respect, responsibility, and reciprocity demonstrated in the news story. Having established a relationship through storywork—even if only temporarily—they seemed particularly sensitive to the abnegation of its principles. The stories shared in the first part of the session established a sense of ease and understanding among the participants, and they shared even more stories as they responded to the news clip.
Chapter 5
Discussion

Mr. Commissioner [...] be wary of becoming another well-intentioned pawn...Many well-intentioned people will testify before you. Many well-intentioned people come before me and before the Band Chiefs of Treaty No. 3 all the time. But it is your duty to look behind the good intentions and understand the long historical process of which we are all merely a part.

John Kelly, We are all in the Ojibway circle, 1990

This research revealed the power of looking at the national narrative through the lens of relationality. Initially established by colonists and maintained by settlers, the national narrative retains its hegemony by denying principles of relationship. Regardless of whether the national narrative erased, included, or excluded participants’ personal stories—and languages—each of their stories was influenced by it, positioning them, however uncomfortably and incommensurably, within it. Connection to land is mediated by embodied experiences and stories; an incomplete national narrative, however, creates the conditions for disconnection to land. Addressing such disconnection requires that all the stories be told; anything less truncates our lived realities, dispossessing us of our own embodied experiences and denying us the opportunity to identify shared experiences. Storytelling that tells all the stories has the power to not only change history, but connect all people who call these lands home to the heart and soul of a renewed national narrative.

14 Inscription and reinscription of identity

Identity is a multifaceted concept. It radiates outward from the individual into the first ring of primary relationships, typically but not always the family, and eventually into a community and nation, each ring of relation eliciting different facets of identity. According to this model, drawn from Archibald’s concentric rings of being (2008, p. 11), an identity is not a static construct, but a fluid, interconnected way of being informed by not only other people but all entities—animate and inanimate. This concept of identity as an expression of interrelated being is conveyed by Virginia Woolf in her 1925 novel Mrs. Dalloway:
It was unsatisfactory, they agreed, how little one knew people. But she said, sitting on the bus going up Shaftesbury Avenue, she felt herself everywhere; not ‘here, here, here’; and she tapped the back of the seat; but everywhere. She waved her hand, going up Shaftesbury Avenue. She was all that. So that to know her, or any one, one must seek out the people who completed them; even the places. Odd affinities she had with people she had never spoken to, some woman in the street, some man behind a counter—even trees, or barns. (Woolf, 1976/1925, p. 135).

Although one novelist of exquisite and unusual sensibility is not representative of Western thought, the passage above suggests that experiencing oneself as an interconnected consciousness is not exclusive to a specific worldview, but a human potentiality that a worldview can support—or deny. When we offer explanations for how other people, places and entities complete us, we are telling the stories of who we are, creating our identities through stories linking disparate people, places, and entities. The story of who we are is supported, or overwritten, by family, and local community and national communities which either fully accommodate and reflect our lived experiences, or exclude them.

As stories are written over, “identities are given and taken away,” as noted by Adele. Initially, her identity was formed in the place of her birth, Prince Edward Island, where her Jewish American father’s identity marked her as being “very Jewish”; therefore, an outsider. Her family’s presence alone could not disrupt the unisonance of the hegemonic narrative in place. The family lived on land originally homesteaded by English settlers—the community narrative is the grand narrative (Stanley, 2006) of the nation. As one community bestowed an identity, the next one stripped it away. In Toronto, home to a well-established Jewish presence comprising orthodox, conservative, and reform communities, “I was definitely not [Jewish].” Another place with another story, this place revealed how she was not quite the Jew the community had in mind. However, generations of settlers on her mother’s side provided entry into the grand national narrative (one her mother and father were reliving as back-to-landers). Yet Adele did not wholeheartedly embrace this newly discovered identity-in-waiting. Perhaps being initially marked as an outsider cannot help but leave us leery of the imposition of yet another storied identity, especially when those stories do not fully accommodate our lived realities. The settler narrative depends upon caste solidary (Haque, 2012), encouraging white immigrants of ‘invisible’ ethnic backgrounds to meld into it, an option open to Adele as a white woman. Yet
even as the Jewish community in Toronto served to weaken her claim to being Jewish, this aspect of Adele’s identity remained. When we are caught between stories, we cannot escape their complexity and multiplicity; we begin to see them everywhere. Jogging along the landscape of the Humber River, Adele thought about the stories she was learning of this landscape. As the descendant of settlers, this landscape held her family’s stories; consequently, this landscape completed part of her own story, as well.

Tom did not seem caught between stories, but excluded from them. He grew up in an Irish household, traveling between Toronto and Ireland throughout his childhood. The Irish identity he formed within his family, however, did not place him in a position of unencumbered privilege within the national narrative, despite his white skin. The Irish were forbidden from speaking Gaelic by their British occupiers; this enforced language loss, as well as continued violence against the Irish—Bloody Sunday and the first St. Patrick’s Day parade in Toronto—identify yet another crack in the monolithic settler caste the national narrative attempts to assert. More than once, Tom returned to question connection to land, a term I introduced into the group’s conversation with my story. Stories are one dimension mediating such connection; when the narrative purporting to reflect our national identity deliberately excludes us, that avenue for connection remains closed.

It is possible to assert an identity, thus troubling the narrative of what identities are accepted within a community. As a young student, Jessica made this attempt before South Asian, Jewish, and Greek classmates, but her claim to being Indian was immediately denied because she did not match their understanding of a South Asian Indian. “So,” she tells us, “there was a lot of covert practicing of culture that was embedded in my growing up,” but family trauma and the lack of a coherent frame to make sense of these experiences—“I didn’t have the worldview for it or the understanding”—made the need to hide her Indigenous identity inexplicable. The shame she described feeling when she tries to speak Mi’kmaq is born from this: we hide what we have been shown will not be accepted. But her identity was there: she had been given a Mi’kmaq name, and in this naming lay a connection she was unwilling to forego. Given to her by her grandmother, she did not give up trying to track down its meaning even after her grandmother jokingly told her it meant fat cow. “The name that I said translates to they move like shadows and it’s related to the lynx animal,” a fact she uncovered during an Internet search. Jessica is committed to
pursuing knowledge of the Mi’kmaq language and culture, and re-connecting with her Indigenous relations: she is journeying toward connection and narrative coherence.

My goal is to work in tandem to... I guess to connect with my situationality of being displaced numerous times from places I grew up and try to piece it together and collectively heal that, by developing a knowledge base of strength, so that I can understand and forgive and come to a place where I can liaise or alliance with these multiple histories.

Multiple personal histories were a shared experience for both Jessica and Clarissa, whose ancestors were Indigenous, British/anglophone, and French/francophone. This complex inheritance is not captured in a national narrative insisting upon easy categorizations. If the Other contains elements of Us, where can lines of demarcation be drawn? Consider Frank’s parents locking their doors in response to traditional drumming being enacted outside their home. People of a shared culture were taught to internalize a foreign standard of Us to such a degree they identified community members, dimensions of themselves, as Other. Creating the conditions for such an intimate uncoupling of self from a community of belief is to create the conditions for the dismantling of a people.

Multiple identities within an individual are a result of both ethnogenesis and cultural hybridization, the result of people and worldviews colliding. When viewed through the lens of relationality, the common experience of a personal narrative failing to cohere with the hegemonic narrative at play in the broader community exposes a worldview that insists on slotting people into categories.

15 Language

Language identifies privilege in the Canadian national narrative. Haque (2012) argues that establishing a bilingual framework for multiculturalism ostensibly disavowed a national history of racial and ethnic discrimination only to replace overtly racist policies with linguistic policies that continue to hierarchicalize difference. When Clarissa repeatedly asked “what’s the big deal?” regarding language, she did so as the product of a national narrative that recognizes its power. At its most basic assertion, the insistence on speaking the language of your parents is a refusal to have someone outside of that relationship determine your identity. The loss of a native
language connection severs people from the community of their birth—marking a loss of significant identity formulation.

It is commonplace to describe people as being displaced when acknowledging their removal or departure from the location of their home community, the base of their cultural and familial connections. Displaced connotes loss of home, family, and attendant ruptured social networks, but despite the similarities that occur when people lose language, it is not commonplace to refer to people as being displaced from language. Yet when we speak a language, the very act of doing that places us securely within a cultural milieu and the worldview informing it, and when we speak the language of our ancestors, we articulate our place in a continuum of familial inheritance and experience. It is these dimensions from which we draw our deepest sources of identity, reflected in Tom’s assertion that he thinks in Irish, despite not being able to speak Irish.

Frank’s passion for reclaiming Indigenous language is similarly informed. “[W]e have to do this for our people. We have to bring that language back. We have to,” he declaimed. Language reclamation is also a commitment to defying history, a proclamation of continuing nationhood in the face of active persecution.

…I always say to people who say “how do you natives think you’ve had it so bad?” There’s never been such a concentration of church, state and education system to eradicate a people. The very first Minister of Indian Affairs, Duncan Campbell Scott, said—and I don’t use that word in reference to us—Indian—I don’t like that word. It’s the label of the oppressor, but this is the way he said it back then in the 1800s—he says our policies will continue until there’s not a living, breathing Indian left in Canada.

Residential schools were established in recognition of the role language played in maintaining cultural connections, traditions, and knowledge (TRCC, 2015c; Milloy, 1999). In lieu of residential schools, the priest in Frank’s village implemented the same assimilative policy of prohibiting Indigenous language in order to eradicate Indigenous culture; Frank’s ex-wife, who did go to residential school, “…wouldn’t speak Cree--would not--even in this day and age” Frank told us.
Speaking a language associated with negative memories and emotions can be profoundly difficult. Jessica spoke of the shame associated with her attempts to speak Mi’kmaq. Shame is defined as

> the painful emotion arising from the consciousness of something dishonouring, ridiculous, or indecorous in one's own conduct or circumstances (or in those of others whose honour or disgrace one regards as one's own), or of being in a situation which offends one's sense of modesty or decency (“Shame,” 2017).

Community standards are the accepted determinants of what behavior is dishonourable, ridiculous or indecorous; this is why we can experience shame on behalf of others. Similarly, we can perceive our behavior as shameful only in relation to those standards. Shame is something we have to be taught. But the same community that inflicts shame can also provide acceptance. Jessica suggested her feeling of shame derived from her anticipation of others’ responses, which she identified as follows: “who does she think she is.” The indecorum of speaking Mi’kmaq derives from being seen as making a claim to an Indigenous identity others will not accept—as they had not in her past. If the immediate community of listeners do not accept her claim, how can it be legitimate? Again, we see identity claims as not being a function of individual assertion alone, but also depending upon community confirmation. Identity is a function of relational reciprocity. In a national narrative where there is neither reciprocity nor relationship, only a clear requirement to either integrate via an official language or remain excluded from the story, other languages will continue to be lost to successive generations within minority language communities if the narrative does not change.

### 16 Connecting to land through story

In Indigenous ways of knowing, language, land, and being are inseparable. Frank made us understand the Ojibway language as the vehicle articulating connection to land; the language refers to the land to express meaning. Both Frank and Jessica described the ascendancy of verbs in Indigenous languages. “It’s all action words. Everything is action” said Frank. Yet as Styres (2017) insists, the verb-based ‘action’ of Indigenous languages reflects a fluid perception of reality where “[t]ime, place, and creation are all made of interconnected and fluid waves of movement constantly stretching outward and inward” (p. 145). Jessica described Indigenous languages as “entirely separate from colonial languages or like Eurocentric languages that are
based in nouns, like labels, this is mine, this is me, this is you. […] in Indigenous languages it’s based in verbs.” Nouns are understood as a category of words not dependent upon context for meaning, static and complete unto themselves, the only relationship conveyed through possessive pronouns—a category of noun—denoting ownership. Yet as Casey (1996) demonstrates, we do not create a sense of place as a result of being exposed to “denuded things” (p. 14). We are born into storied places, and our multidimensional, embodied interactions with place serve to internalize a place’s story within us and extend its meaning (Basso, 1996; Styres, 2017; Styres & Zynga, 2013; Styres, Haig-Brown, & Blimkie, 2013). Objects are imbued with meaning for this very reason. An eagle feather was valued by Bob’s relative, who had rescued eagles and taken care of them: in this case it represented a relationship to eagles based on action. As Bob acquired more knowledge of Indigenous ways of being through his work with an Anishinaabe Elder, he grew to understand the significance and sacred relationships associated with eagle feathers in those traditions.

Tom’s impulse as a child to identify Monarch butterflies and maple leaves as markers of his distinct place were an example of place-making. Yet as Camus tells us, “[s]ense of place is not just something people know, it is something people do” (Camus 1955, p. 88 cited by Basso, 1996, p. 143). Tom’s ‘devastation’ upon realizing they were not unique to his place suggests a deficiency in Western ways of knowing. As discrete objects of possession, butterflies and maple leaves lost their power to signify place when he learned they were not unique to Canada: this country alone did not lay claim to them. Having a connection to land requires us to interact with it, but the quality of the interaction determines the nature of the relationship to land we establish. Without respect and reciprocity, the relationship loses the potential for becoming a portal into dimensions of knowing, being, and understanding ourselves in relation to the world we walk through.

When Tom shared with us his feeling of connection to land in beautiful landscapes around the world, he was expressing a universal truth Frank stated on his initial questionnaire: “We are all related to Mother Earth.” As creatures of the planet, we cannot help but respond to it, but the quality of the response seems determined by the instruction we have received. In Western ways of knowing, concepts of property and having dominion over the natural world deny access to an understanding of being in relationship with its entities. Frank’s parents continued to enact the
principles of relationship by practicing some of “the old ways,” despite the priest’s presence in their village.

The relationships we have with the people and entities of our immediate, lived-in environments represent one dimension of our place stories (Osborne, 2001). These stories are local, expanding to encompass the experiences we gather as we travel to other terrains, deepening our appreciation for the breadth and depth of our relationship to Mother Earth. These local stories would, ideally, be accommodated within the larger narrative of these lands, meaningfully connecting us to others.

The existing national narrative did provide a surprising depth of connection between participants. As Jessica observed:

[w]e share this camaraderie. There’s a lot of parts of our history and [our] upbringing… We grew up in the same place. We’re from the same place. We have very similar—if not the same—history; renditions or commonalities in those things that can make us feel like we have an empathy or an understanding of where we sit.

I had not anticipated this response, but the empathy was palpable, as was the increasing enjoyment of it. “You got a great crew, by the way.” Tom said to me at one point. “We got to do this again.” It seems paradoxical, yet the mutual experience of disconnection served to bridge cultural differences and allow us to understand ourselves as being historically connected. More than once, Tom considered what it meant to be Canadian; perhaps the answer was all around us. We are Canadian by merit of a shared narrative arc within which exist myriad identities; it is not the identities we have in common, but a recognition of the forces which have wrought them, forces which have not acted upon each of us with the same violence, but nonetheless demanded compliance to the norms of a narrative through assimilative pressures. According to the myth, Canada is a progressive democracy, a tolerant nation that welcomes newcomers who, through their sacrifice, determination, and perseverance overcome difficulties to build fulfilling lives for themselves and their offspring. In reality, to be Indigenous in this country is to face a narrative of hostility that normalizes acts of violence against Indigenous peoples and continues to do so. In reality, the narrative creates barriers for accessing a true sense of belonging. If it is not the colour of the skin that marks difference, it is the pronunciation of the English or French being spoken that marks deviance from the expected norm.
17 Indoctrination via narrative

Participants’ initial responses to the news clip revealed a shared expectation of relational story telling it profoundly disappointed. Tom described the news clip as indicative of “no relationship…it’s telling you what to think.” For Jessica, it was a clear example of people having been “indoctrinated so much by the colonial agenda that we believe that gospel to be true.” Frank seemed to be almost amazed by the fact that “those guys really believed” what they were saying. Bob, too, noted that “buddy who’s talking there, he doesn’t know that he’s got this in him.” Requesting people to view an ideologically representative news clip through the lens of relationality revealed indoctrination as its diametrical opposite. When there are no competing narratives allowed, when all other stories are silenced through physical or political acts of violence, what remains is a non-inclusive narrative presented as the single source of national identity. This is a narrative of “unisonance” (Haque, 2012).

When the story was discussed in the broader context of relationship, Bob raised the question of intention, distinguishing between an intention to learn or indoctrinate on the part of the journalist who wrote the story. If the intention had been to learn about Macdonald, instead of remaining within the “narrow, packaged” understanding of his legacy, the journalist would have asked more questions. As Bob implied, intention determines the position we assume in relationship to stories. An intention to learn must always be explicitly associated with the courage to ask questions. I introduce the word courage because as a one-time teacher myself, Bob’s comment caused me to ponder the difference between teaching and indoctrinating.

In the teacher training I took, learning the package of information prescribed by the curriculum was a corollary to engaging student interest. The primary focus in the classroom context is on the teaching—the learning is measured by an assessment in which the teacher already knows what answers the student should have. When it comes to research, I continually puzzle over those who seem to know what their research will reveal before they have done it. If we already know the answers, how is it research? What if we approached learning in the same way—as an exploration, an act of discovery for teacher and student alike down a path leading to greater understanding. Perhaps if teaching were framed by the same ethical space in which I conducted this research, and the principles of reciprocity, respect and responsibility governed the relationships between all the people in a learning environment, qualitatively different learning
would result. In this scenario, teachers would have to be willing to relinquish their authority, to see each person in the classroom as a source of learnings for everyone, not an empty vessel waiting to be filled up with pre-packaged sound and text bites of the national narrative. The knowledge incorporating it takes many forms, but it is the national narrative and its associated worldview we learn at school, and because we all learn this narrative as school children, it is as taken for granted as the air we breathe—and unconsciously accepted as being just as necessary. This is how indoctrination operates through unconsciousness to benignly cradle the pernicious machinations of a national narrative that positions us in relations of inequity and misunderstanding.

National narratives are conveyed through many media. They include school curricula, museums, art galleries, public monuments, and landscapes (Anderson, 2017; Osborne, 2001; Phillips, 2012). Nation-states employ these strategies to embed the narrative within a collective memory made material in the landscapes we walk through. In this way, we can understand claims to land as being made through story; the placement of a statue is its physical enactment. Tom was angrily dismissive of the misapplication of principles of relationship revealed in the news story especially as they were revealed by the interviewees’ attitudes toward Macdonald’s statue: “There’s no respect except for this--again--statue that’s meaningless except that it’s an icon. It’s an image. It’s a mythology. That’s the problem.” We will have to do more than share stories to address the problem of the mythology embodied by such statues: we must counter monuments, as well, and we should do it in a similar manner of inclusion. For every statue of Macdonald, the government responsible for the monuments in each park—federal, provincial, or municipal—should announce a competition, inviting artists across the country to design a statue that completes Macdonald’s story by reifying the consequences of his actions. As Minister of Indian Affairs from 1878-1888, he implemented residential schools, the pass system, and the numbered treaties, polices which rendered the Indigenous people invisible (Daschuk, 2015, p. 42). Statues of this man should be surrounded by statues representing those he left dispossessed, towering above him in a diorama of silent retribution.
Telling all the stories: Countering shame, power, and received histories

Our positionality within the narrative conditions our expectations of each other, but it is ignorance which guarantees those expectations will be met. For Frank, years of experience had produced bleak expectations of empathetic response from non-Indigenous people. Most people, he said, obviously implying non-Indigenous people, do not believe that “our people have a right to be angry.” But when confronted with the history of residential schools, Loyalist students shocked Frank with their assumption of responsibility for this story, understood through their expressions of shame and guilt. Stories help us establish relationship, extend our understanding, and impose responsibility. Once we have heard a story, Thomas King tells us, the hearing of it becomes impossible to deny (2003). Until all the stories are told, our potential to respond to history with empathy and compassion—and responsibility—will remain untapped. Responsible storytelling demands reciprocity: until all the stories are told, we are not engaging in responsible story telling; we are simply acting as outposts in a colonial narrative, extending its reach and legitimacy by perpetuating its storyline.

Individual stories of how people have come to be on this land are ineluctably in relationship with the larger Canadian narrative, but this relationship is one of unequal power—the colonial narrative positions individual stories closer to, or further away, from an epicenter of power conferring identity and degrees of belonging. The closer to the centre of power an individual’s story positions them, the greater an individual’s power to position others’ stories at a further distance from the centre and their own stories. As Adele noted, the journalist and the two interview subjects in the news story were in positions of power, maintaining those positions by conveying respect to and responsibility for the maintenance of the national narrative, not only unquestioningly accepting their power to eradicate the story the spray-painted words on the statue told, but actively engaging in the process of its erasure by ignoring the words and making no mention of the people who had sprayed them. Exclusion from the national narrative results from an exercise of power that constrains and truncates identity, and a belief in its moral legitimacy to do so. Instead of punishing the vandals, the narrative gives the powerful an opportunity to laudably demonstrate their generous democratic principles.
19 Conclusion

When people share their stories within an ethical space—one governed by respectful listening, a sense of shared responsibility for the truth of the stories being told and to the essential integrity required from each of us to engage in this way—it is not our differences that are noted. Stories framed by a common narrative, in this case a national narrative, present the possibility for interpreting difference as alternate possibilities, recapitulations of aspects of our own lived experiences. For this reason, they resonate within us with the power of familiarity—of family. Striking with the weight of profundity was the revelation of how our stories, seemingly so different in specificity, have been so similar in their effects. Even as we live in storied relationship to one another, we can recognize that relationship only to the extent that all our stories are heard. By listening to these stories, the principles of respect and reciprocity can be enacted. Once all the stories enter the national discourse, it becomes our collective responsibility to understand the nuanced reality these stories reveal.

The struggle to re-write the colonial narrative cannot be left to Indigenous peoples alone. This imperative is not only entailed by the demands of justice and decency, but a much simpler fact: We have all experienced various consequences of colonization, been subjected to various forms of erasure and displacement, whether defined as historical misrepresentation, cultural and linguistic loss, or an inability to recognize the significance of respecting and maintaining a connection to land. Until we can recognize those costs within ourselves, the greater injustices suffered by Indigenous peoples cannot be adequately addressed, simply because without becoming “decolonized,” non-Indigenous Canadians cannot respond to these stories with any heart. It was heart that was supplanted by the requirements of a manifestly intellectual undertaking. The imposition and maintenance of a national identity and its Western worldview are profoundly heartless—and ruthless—tasks.
References

20 References


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Respecting Worldviews through Storywork

Before beginning the session, please compete the following survey. This information will be kept confidential. Among other things, it provides information regarding the demographic make-up of research participants. Answer all questions as they apply to you. Please do not include your name on this form.

Section 1—Living in Canada

1. History can be thought of as the stories of a land and its peoples. As someone living on this land, do you feel as though you have a responsibility to know its stories?
   □ yes □ no

2. If Canada is the land of your birth, does that fact identify a relationship between you and this land? How?

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

3. If Canada was not the land of your birth, but a land you or your family chose to come to, how would you describe your relationship to this land?

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

Section 2—Background information

1. Ethnicity: I am □ Indigenous □ non-Indigenous

2. I identify as □ a settler □ an immigrant/child of immigrants
   □ a Canadian □ FNMI □ _________________________ (complete as required)
3. I am ________________ years old.

4. I identify as  ☐ a man  ☐ a woman  ☐ trans  ☐ ________________ (complete as required)

5. My grandparents were  ☐ born in Canada  ☐ not born in Canada.

6. My parents were  ☐ born in Canada  ☐ not born in Canada.

Please identify your profession: ________________________________________________

If you are a student, please identify the program you are currently studying in:

___________________________________________________________________________
Appendix B

News clip transcript

Reporter: Officials took a reasoned response to the vandalism to Sir John A Macdonald statue in city park. Part of Macdonald’s legacy they said was a tolerance for political protests like this.

Ryan Zade, Bicentennial Commission: I think we’re here to celebrate Sir John A and his birthday. If I had some thoughts it would be that uh ...that Macdonald built this country and uh and that he built a parliamentary democracy and expressions like this, although we uh we’re disappointed that they did occur, uh this is a democracy and uh..and uh protest is part of that.

Mark Gerretsen, Mayor of Kingston: I hope that everybody can appreciate the subtle irony that exists with what happened this morning or late last night which is that it is because of great Canadians like Sir John A. that we Canadians have the ability to express our...our...our opinions the way that we do. And yes, this was against the city by law, but when you think about it there are parts of the globe where if you did something like this you would be seriously punished for the crime. (Ferguson, 2013)
Respecting Worldviews through Storywork

Seeking Indigenous and non-Indigenous ddteachers for research project

Would you like to contribute your voice, opinions, and insight to a research project? The purpose of my MA thesis project is to explore ways in which the storywork principles of relationship, respect, responsibility and reciprocity can be used to transform understandings of our relationship to history and relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. As an Indigenous or non-Indigenous teacher, your views on introducing Indigenous perspectives into the classroom are of great interest to me. As a non-Indigenous first-generation Canadian, I believe addressing the relationship we each have to this land through our shared history may provide insights into how we can re-think relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

The session will be structured as follows: after sharing in provided refreshments, participants will complete a brief survey in order to answer some preliminary questions. Then each participant will be asked to briefly describe how she/he has come to be on this land. Following those introductions we will watch a two-minute video report about an Idle No More protest, listen to a short audio file providing the historical context for the protest, and read a short text. After each story, questions will be used to facilitate discussion. At the end of the session, we will discuss what insights we have gained into re-thinking our relationships to this country, its history, and its peoples. The session will be held at OISE, last approximately 2 to 2.5 hours, and be audio/videotaped to provide a record of the session. After the session, you will be offered an opportunity to review a transcript of the session. If you choose to review it, you will be provided with a hard-copy of your comments, on which you may revise, correct, or delete any comments as you wish.

If you would like to be involved in this research, please contact Rosalinda Furlan at rosalinda.furlan@mail.utoronto.ca.
Appendix D
Recruitment material/Information/Consent letter

Invitation

Would you like to contribute your voice, opinions, and insight to a research project? The purpose of this MA thesis project is to explore ways in which the principles of relationship, respect, responsibility and reciprocity—common to both Western and Indigenous worldviews—can be used to transform understandings of our relationship to history and relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. As student-teacher or teacher of Indigenous or other ancestry, your views on introducing Indigenous perspectives into the classroom are of great interest to me. As a first-generation Canadian of Italian heritage, I believe addressing the relationship we each have to this land through our shared history may provide insights into how we can re-think relationships between Indigenous and all other peoples.

The Research Session

The session will be structured as follows: after a brief meet-and-greet over snacks, participants will complete a brief survey and answer some preliminary questions. As a group, we will watch a brief video clip, listen to a short audio file, and read a short text. After each story, questions will be used to facilitate discussion. At the end of the session, we will discuss what insights we have gained into re-thinking our relationships to this country, its history, and its peoples.

Each session will be held at OISE, last approximately 2.5 hours, and be audio/videotaped to provide a record of the session. After the session, you will be offered an opportunity to review a transcript of the session. If you choose to review it, you will be provided with a hard-copy of your comments, on which you may revise, correct, or delete any comments as you wish.

Potential benefits and risks

As a participant, this research may help you gain insight into understanding how the history of this country has been told, how it has influenced our understandings of our relationships to one another and our responsibilities to one another. For all participants, a benefit for this research may be a greater understanding of the challenges involved in moving relationships between
mainstream and Indigenous peoples onto a more ethical ground. As teachers, these insights may provide new approaches for offering lessons on Indigenous perspectives as mandated by the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Policy Framework, 2007.

Group discussions of this kind can involve some risk for individuals, including psychological or social risk related to expressing an opinion in a group setting. Participants will be reminded to speak and listen respectfully, and think before they speak.

Confidentiality

All information provided during the session will be considered confidential and grouped with responses from other session participants. Please respect the confidentiality of other session participants by keeping all information that could identify a participant and/or his/her comments confidential. I am asking this in order for the session to provide as safe a space as possible for the sharing of ideas, opinions, and experiences.

Written accounts using this data will not identify any individual by name. Quotes will be anonymously attributed, ensuring confidentiality and the integrity of the participant’s voice and opinion. The audio/videotapes from this session will be used only to create written transcripts and will be kept in locked cabinets in locked offices and on secure password-protected computers.

All electronic documentation produced from these transcripts will be stored on secure pass-word protected computers in compliance with the University of Toronto’s data security and encryption standards. http://www.research.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/documents/2013/05/datasecurity1.pdf

All data (written, video and audio-files) will be destroyed after seven years via confidential shredding and erasure of digital recordings and audio computer files--unless the research is ongoing. All confidential, identifiable electronic information outside of a secure server environment will be encrypted consistent with University of Toronto’s data security and encryption standards. Only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to the data. All individuals with access to the research data will be bound by and trained in confidentiality protocols.
University of Toronto’s research ethics program may have confidential access to data to help ensure participant protection procedures are followed consistent with the university’s policy as outlined in the Guide for Informed Consent.

**Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decline to answer any questions or participate in any component of the study. You may choose to withdraw from this study at any time during or after the session without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled; however, given that an individual participant’s data will be interwoven into the larger session discussion, and such data will by anonymized, withdrawal during the session cannot guarantee a complete withdrawal of data, especially if withdrawal is requested after data analysis begins. At that point, data become inseparable.

**Publication of Results**

Results of this study will complete my thesis, thus satisfying my MA requirements. Results of this study may be published in professional journals and presented at conferences. Feedback about this study will be provided to you if you choose to provide your address. The results will be available fall 2017/early 2018.

**Contact information and ethics clearance**

If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact Rosalinda Furlan by phone (4160 484-9628 or via email rosalinda.furlan@mail.utoronto.ca .This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at OISE, University of Toronto. If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the University of Toronto’s Office of Research Ethics by email at ethics.review@utoronto.ca or at 416-946-3273.

Thank you for participating in this research.

**Participant Consent**

I agree to participate in this study as described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information Consent Letter. I have had the opportunity to have
further questions addressed and understand that I may ask questions as they occur to me in the future.

Name: ______________________________________
Signature: ___________________________________
Date: ____________________

If you would like to be contacted to review your transcript and/or to receive a copy of the results of this research, please provide your contact information including a phone number where you can be reached.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
Appendix E
Feedback letter

Overview

You have just participated in a focus group session as part of a research study. The purpose of this study is to explore ways in which the principles of relationship, respect, responsibility and reciprocity—common to both Western and Indigenous worldviews—can be used to transform understandings of our relationship to history and relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. You were invited to join this session, and your views the aforementioned topics as well as on introducing Indigenous perspectives into the classroom are of great interest to me.

If you have experienced any emotional distress as a result of participating in this study, please speak with the traditional Elder-in-residence to obtain help in finding a resource that will provide an opportunity for you to discuss your feelings. Your participation may provide the greater academic community with insights into how to meaningfully incorporate distinct worldviews.

Confidentiality

All information provided during the session will be considered confidential and grouped with responses from other session participants. Please respect the confidentiality of other session participants by keeping all information that could identify a participant and/or his/her comments confidential.

Written accounts using this data will not identify any individual by name. Quotes will be anonymously attributed, ensuring confidentiality and the integrity of the participant’s voice and opinion. No one’s name will be associated with any quotes; quotes will be used in order to represent your voice and opinion but will be anonymously attributed. For example, “one participant in the session said…” The session was audio and videotaped. The audio/videotapes from this session will be used only to create written transcripts and will be kept in locked cabinets in locked offices and on secure password-protected computers. They will only be reviewed by my thesis supervisor and myself who are bound by and trained in confidentiality protocols. University of Toronto’s research ethics program may have confidential access to data.

All electronic documentation produced from these transcripts will be stored on secure pass-word protected computers in compliance with the University of Toronto’s data security and encryption standards. http://www.research.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/documents/2013/05/datasecurity1.pdf

Publication results

Results of this study may be published in professional journals and/or presented at conferences. If you provide your mailing address, feedback about this study will be sent to you. Results will not be available until December 2017. If you have any questions about the study, please contact Rosalinda Furlan by phone (416) 484-9628 or via email at rosalinda.furlan@mail.utoronto.ca.

Ethics Clearance

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance from the Research Ethics Board at OISE, University of Toronto. If you have any comments or concerns regarding your rights as a participant in this study, please contact the University of Toronto’s Office of Research Ethics at (416) 946-3273 or via email at ethics.review@utoronto.ca.
Appendix F
Transcript review form

Integrating Worldviews through Storywork

Researcher: Rosalinda Furlan

Name of participant: (please print legibly):

Respecting the privacy and confidentiality of participants is an important aspect of research. In keeping with the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, 2014, this research has been conducted in a manner congruent with respecting the human dignity of research participants by respecting their privacy and striving to ensure that participants’ data remains confidential.

You are being provided with a transcript from the focus group you engaged with in order to make any corrections, clarifications, or additions to your part in the dialogue. Please note transcript changes directly on the transcript and complete the attached page as needed. Please respect the confidentiality of the sessions, including the content of this transcript which may include references to other individuals or organizations in the community and keep this information confidential.

In signing this form, I certify that I have been provided the opportunity to review the transcript of my participation in a focus group session. I have had the opportunity to make corrections, clarifications or additions to my part of the dialogue in the transcript. These changes have been noted on both transcript itself and the attached page.

Signature of the participant: _______________________________________
Date: _________________

I have reviewed the transcript and researcher commentary with the named participant.

Researcher signature: ______________________________________________
Date: _________________
Transcript Review Form—Comments

Please mark any corrections, deletions, or clarifications directly on the transcript. Please briefly note below why you made the changes.

Are there any additional comments you would like to make? Please note them in the space provided below