

Place-based Redress
- AND -
The Spectacle of Reconciliation

by
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Abstract

Essay 1: This essay proposes an effective strategy to confront Canada's colonial public policy is settlers conducting place-based redress work rather than participating as allies in reconciliation. Despite the popularity of territorial acknowledgements and the performing of reconciliation dialogue, the structural inequities persist in Canada. This essay brings together both autoethnographic and quantitative data on the role of accomplice work (Benally 2014) for critical interventions with settler power. Through engaged research experiences, autodidactic methods, mentorship from Elders, and participation in Coast Salish witness ceremonies, I became reflexive about my role in dominant culture's fallacies. I need not wander far from terra nullis assumptions to discover the harmful underpinnings of an intact colonial system capturing willing participants for reconciliation's charade of inclusivity.

Essay 2: Spectacle and reconciliation serve a hegemonic role to continue Canada's access to sovereign Indigenous Peoples' lands and resources. As Canada sought a quick reconciliation with genocide, and marked its 150th birthday in 2017 with cultural celebrations, it relied on spectacle (Debord 1967) and Indigenous labour as audience commodity (Smythe 1981) to deliver the illusion of change. Far from bringing about national consensus to deliver rights and title, and repair settler and Indigenous relations, reconciliation instead delivered a liberal fantasy to maintain the extractive capitalist economy. This paper proposes reconciliation is a cloaking device to hide Canada's assimilation and termination of rights agenda. With Canada's incursions into Wet'suwet'en Nation, the lack of progress for Crown / Indigenous relations with benefits to transnational extractive capitalism has been exposed. The relation between the spectacle of reconciliation and maintaining colonialism has come increasingly into the light.

Keywords: spectacle; reconciliation; redress; colonialism; Canada 150; autoethnography; settler studies; Coast Salish; place-based

Dedication

This work is in honour of my father, Dirk Oostindie, who taught me to understand the world through the lens of history, a helpful strategy to separate myself from the settler denial growing up in occupied Coast Salish lands. My father experienced first-hand the occupation of the Netherlands during WWII, and who's harrowing survival story I have chronicled with my daughter Inessa at www.vankijkduinstraat.nl. My father's sharing informed my own lifelong community-engaged praxis. My MA experience started in the Fall of 2016, and was interrupted for family leave as I helped taking care of him for almost 18 months. He passed away in my arms on December 8, 2019. This writing represents a moment in time between my ancestors learning and my descendants learning.

Acknowledgements

My writing is geared to educating settlers on our roles and responsibilities to end colonialism where we live. As a Dutch settler I have had the honour and privilege of learning from many Coast Salish Peoples whose unceded lands I live on including: Leonard George, Bobbie George, Lee Maracle, Ta'ah Amy George, Cease Wyss, Ronnie Dean Harris, Gabe George, Charlene Aleck, Rueben George, Carleen Thomas, Khelsilem, Damian George, and others. Thank you neighbours for allowing me to share a part of this work, admittedly imperfectly. I am also grateful to Indigenous scholars and activists including Gord Hill, Pam Palmater, Ryan McMahon, Arnell Tailfeathers, Russ Diabo, Art Manuel, Brian Grandbois, Kamala Todd, and others.

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Robinson my research will be published as a chapter in the cultural studies book:
Creative Conciliations: Reflections, Responses, and Refusals (ARP Books, 2020).

I presented this engaged research at numerous public and academic events in Toronto, Ottawa, Winnipeg and Vancouver. For those opportunities I wish to thank Samir Gandesha, Indigenous Research Rising Up, Jonathan Paquette, Canadian Cultural Policy Research Network, Independent Media Arts Alliance, BC Alliance for Arts & Culture, Am Johal, SFU's Vancity Office of Community Engagement, Heart of the City Festival, and Maplewood Flats. These talks can be viewed on the YouTube channels of Coast Salish LIVE and SFU's Institute for the Humanities. The themes from these essays also appears on my applied research website: www.RedressVancouver.ca.

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Essay 1:
Place-based Redress

Introduction to Place-based Redress and Autoethnography

I was born the same month as Joseph Boyden; but, despite my life's work promoting redress, I have not become Indigenous in the 53 years that I have lived on these unceded lands of Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish, and Musqueam. I am a Dutch settler to this area popularly known as Vancouver. In the Fall 2016, when Joseph and I both turned fifty, when his life unravelled in front of international media, I quietly began my autoethnographic writings pursuing a MA (Master of Arts) in Communication at SFU (Simon Fraser University). Mostly, I just needed time to write and think and talk about my understandings about what needed to be done by settlers to get out of the way of Coast Salish sovereignty.

While I have met Boyden (we are not friends), we both hold a revered friend in common in writer Lee Maracle, of the University of Toronto, who has Tsleil-Waututh roots from the area near where I grew up. At that time, Boyden was making headlines not for his evocative historical best-selling writings, but for claiming to be Indigenous while born of Scottish and Irish descent. At various times Boyden claimed Nipmuc, Ojibway, Wasauksing First Nation, Ojibway of Cape Croker, the Huron-Wendat, the Red River Métis, and membership in the Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association (also known as the Woodland Métis Tribe) (Joseph Boyden, n.d.). A few months after the media disclosure, Ojibway filmmaker Lisa Meeches adopted Boyden as a sibling (Robinson-Desjarlais, 2017).

In this post-Idle No More era of resurgence and resistance across colonial Canada, the Boyden scandal divided settler and Indigenous academic and cultural sectors and exposed the challenges of self-defining and the high-stakes for people traversing the colonial and ancient definitions, including how autonomy and self-determination play out as resistance to colonialism becoming mainstream cultural discussion. For Maracles' part, she offered her perspective: "It is up to the individual Indigenous families and communities to decide. If a family or community accepts you as a member, you are a member. And other families and communities need to respect that" (Boyden, 2017, para 32).

As a Dutch settler, while I do not claim any Indigenous blood quantum or membership to a band council or specific land sovereignty movement, I do claim to be

an accomplice in resisting colonial structures imposed on Tsleil-Waututh and Coast Salish Peoples in these lands where I have spent the past 53 years. I claim status as a student and learner of Coast Salish past, present, and futures, and endeavour to follow protocols taught to me. This redress work I feel deeply honoured to carry forward as a settler. My life's work is caught up in similar debates that ensnared Boyden, as my position as a settler includes membership in the Tsleil-Waututh community. In their unceded lands, I have produced and delivered thirty years of work exposing and confronting Canada, disrupting and dismantling colonial apparatus perennially overlaid onto the lives of Indigenous Peoples who are my comrades, friends, and neighbours.

Later in this essay, I will set out more of my thoughts on my deeply rewarding relationship with local Indigenous resistance to colonialism, which is usually challenging (and occasionally fraught), but also necessary. My observations in this essay are the result of being situated simultaneously in the way and out of the way of local sovereignty movements. This type of active participation predates this university research time when I analyze, and write. Having chosen to do this work inside of a colonial educational institution, which itself illegally occupies the lands of the very people I collaborate with, causes me concern and itself warrants analysis. I am voluntarily pursuing a reflexive ethnographic approach to describe this work, and my own and my family's location and perspectives on and within it.

Reflexivity is a necessity for any researcher to best understand the complicating factors visible or hidden in the research, and so it is with real purpose I seek to understand particular traditions and departures in qualitative research involving the fields of social sciences, anthropology and critical theory studies during the past half century. Ethnography forms one powerful academic tradition that addresses our conditions of reflexivity that affords a set of practices for documentation, interviews, observation, and critical engagement. Paul Atkinson, Sara Delamont, and William Housley have suggested that there has been a shift from the "classic" emphasis on "holism, context and similar ideas" in ethnography to the increasing fragmentation of ethnographic research. Moreover, they claim that this has led to a situation where "different authors adopt and promote specific approaches to the collection and analysis of data" and "particular kinds of data become celebrated in the process" (Atkinson, Delamont, & Housley, 33). When ethnography turns to the researcher themselves for data on their observations, it departs the clinical bounds of studying the "other" in favour of

fragmented and risky research methods. Autoethnography and participant action research are both methods I have employed, but which have been criticized for their subjectivity. The criticism of the methods followed their emergence from more classical anthropology and social sciences field work where objective distance was defended as required, and yet which rejected accountability by their (most-often) white male privileged vantage points. Ethnographic research was most often conducted by these white researchers away from their homes or educational institutions, in foreign sites that became the object of research repatriated to home institutions. Reflexivity crept into academia; and, by 1965, scholars were beginning to acknowledge that “the ‘native’ point of view presented by a sympathetic foreign ethnologist who ‘knows’ his native is not the view presented by the native. Both views are legitimate, but the native’s point of view is yet to enrich our discipline” (Uchendu, 1965, 9). Suspicion of ethnography’s own biases and power structures led to a turn in the field, to take up questions of reflexivity in new ways. This includes structural analysis of the very possibility of ethnographic knowledge and a turn to new modes of understanding to situate the role of the researcher in knowledge production. “Subjectivism and personal involvement, then, need not necessarily be methodological ‘problems,’ but can be assets to deepen ethnographic understanding” (Hayano, 1979, p. 101).

In 1971 Aram Yengoyan noted that “the ethnographer who feels . . . he must be accepted and ‘liked’ by all members of the group he is working with is fairly naive. It is practically impossible to immerse yourself fully in another culture. One such outcome of this reasoning is that it suggests anthropologists in the field can never be more than ‘marginal natives’” (Dolan, 537). In this context, “entirely new theories, concepts, and methods derived from other possible epistemologies” were openly promoted to transform ethnographic methods. New resources have developed for “subjectively oriented data analysis, incorporating techniques and theories adapted from other disciplines . . . [including] applied, action, or radical anthropology emphasizing the practical uses of anthropology in support of one’s own people and, therefore, of oneself” (Hayano, 102).

At the same time, as ethnography has confronted the Other in new ways, the field has been increasingly confronted by the very population groups ethnographers have historically studied and subjugated to extractive scientific methods (including ethnography) for the profits of institutions, governments, and settler societies. Increasingly sensitive and more effective approaches to research on the other hand,

draw on fragments from the field of qualitative methods. Atkinson, Delamont, and Housley have described this as a “postmodern” approach to ethnography, which devalues “systematic analysis of action and representations, while privileging rather vague ideas of experience, evocation and personal engagement” (Pink, 44).

In response, autoethnography is among the methodological frameworks that has emerged in recent decades to deepen work on reflexivity while often contesting colonial and other systemic forms of power in the production of ethnographic knowledge. There is a growing number of Indigenous researchers and allies who employ autoethnographic methods, popular education, and consciousness-raising to expose settler colonialism and reorient ethnographic work. In my autoethnographic work, I align my focus with Tuck and Yang who propose that we make “settler colonial metanarrative the object of social science research” in order to “bring to a halt or at least slow down the machinery that allows knowledge to facilitate interdictions on Indigenous and Black life” (Tuck and Yang, 2014a, 223).¹

The Methodological Situation

I highlight my own experiences combining quantitative and qualitative research methods across three decades of redress praxis. In this methods section I give particular emphasis to the value of autoethnographic methods and the awareness I carry of the value of a sensitive reflexive engagement with Coast Salish Peoples who I have had the privilege of standing next to as an accomplice. While “most auto-ethnographers agree that . . . self-imposed social and psychological distance in fieldwork can only be so effective . . . [t]he choice of a problem, method, and theory is always affected by one's position in a particular society and by personal and situational factors such as sex, age, degree of rapport, the location of fieldwork, and the restraints of the sponsoring institution (also see Sjoberg and Nett 1968:96-128)” (Hayano, 1979, p. 102). With this in mind, the autoethnographic methods that have enabled development of my analysis and

¹ While there are expressions of this increasing decolonization of education, there remains funding contradictions and real estate development politics by many of these university institutions. As much as SFU performs reconciliation and ‘indigenization,’ and Coast Salish People spend thousands of dollars towards accreditation by this public body, the ugly truth is not lost in my research that this same university extracts real estate development profits from the unceded lands upon which it delivers educational services.

sustained years of participation include participatory action research, participant observer, performance autoethnography, experimental autoethnography, sensory autoethnography, and other critical ethnographic strategies. My work is also fed by years of sweatlodge ceremony, canoe paddling, tending ceremonial fires, standing facing police lines, sitting handcuffed in police vehicles, waiting in jail holding cells, marching in street protests, working on computers, using fax machines, editing on VHS decks, multitasking behind live radio station controls, engaging Elders walking arm-in-arm through the forest towards arrest, and, in strategy and educational discussions, huddled over tea and traditions. Bendix (2000, 41) argues “if we are to probe the contours of sensory perception and reception and seek to understand the transitions between the individual, cultural and transcultural dimensions . . . then research methods will be needed that are capable of grasping ‘the most profound type of knowledge [which] is not spoken of at all’ and thus inaccessible to ethnographic observation or interview (Bloch 1998:46). This is knowledge in the body, knowledge as sensory memories, knowledge that is not ideational at all. As I have carried along in my journey of engaged research, I have become accustomed to interpreting time and space as a decolonizing experience, integrating Coast Salish spiritual practices and beliefs and community customs and protocols.

My MA research work at SFU has been land-based, profoundly connected to the land and waters through a place-based framework. My experiences in this environment are seen through lenses which have been enabled to be viewed from both directions, with a hybrid perspective borrowing from cultural anthropology and human geography traditions. While a university institution such as SFU inculcates itself from criticism by self-declaring as “The most engaged university in Canada” (while simultaneously maintaining risk-averse research ethics policies and procedures), it occupies these unceded lands and these extreme contradictions are sustained through disconnection and spectacle. Performing ethics and giving nods to movements for justice, while leaving major issues unresolved, furthers the goals of “role detachment and uninvolvement” (Hayano, 1979, 102). I note this as a way to mark the fact that rather than seeing lived experience as a barrier to understanding for want of objectivity, Hayano highlighted that “others point to the feelings of empathy and emotions which insiders share from knowing their subjects on a deep, subtle level. These are emotions which outsiders cannot feel in the same way, or for the same things.” (Hayano, 101)

Later in this paper I will present how I bring together both autoethnographic and quantitative data on the role of accomplice work with local Indigenous and critical interventions in settler economic domination in the region. In this sense, my work follows Vancouver redress activist Stephanie Allen who argues, "Scholars in more recent times are engaging performative autoethnography as a vehicle by which to resist and challenge prevailing norms by situating themselves in the subject matter and reporting back on the experiences." (Allen, 5)

Circles of War and Trauma: Coast Salish, Canada, and Netherlands

Through identifying as a Dutch settler, I at once admonish claims Canada has to the unceded Coast Salish lands north of the 49th parallel, while forefronting my dual citizenship in the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Canada. My Dutch parents never became Canadians, but did purchase newly deforested land in North Vancouver after arriving in Canada in the late 1950s. Their ancestors were peat farmers, merchant sailors, and worked on the Amsterdam docks. With Dutch as my first language and maintaining strong roots in the Netherlands, my childhood was filled with WW2 stories about my father living underground and how he was rescued (near death from diphtheria) by liberating Canadian soldiers. My father would arrive in Canada after spending a year recovering in the hospital at the end of the war, then bicycling to Sweden to study horticulture, and working at Kew Gardens in England. Such training enabled him to secure a work permit for Canada, in 1953, to work as an apple picker. After various jobs, and returning to the Netherlands to marry my mother, by 1959 they would settle back in North Vancouver, with its rapidly growing white settler population surrounding the Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh (then Burrard Band) reserve lands. His education in horticulture school was sufficient for him to be hired as parks superintendent for the District of North Vancouver, where he would be selected to supervise six Italian gardeners and stonemasons (none of whom had attended higher schooling). During his first week, he covered over shell middens with soil and grass seed at *Whey-ah-Wichen* (Cates Park), which were being picked over by local treasure hunters. Within a decade he had hired carvers and installed (non-Coast Salish) totem poles in high profile public sites across North Vancouver, functioning (in his limited but prescient understanding) to honour the indigeneity of this place. From when he began in

1959 until his retirement in 1993, North Vancouver grew from having 7 parks workers to 100, and from a dozen parks to more than one hundred, with a respectful balance for wilderness and trails and groomed parks and sports fields.

Three decades later, following my father's example, I would begin a practice of redress and start my own relationship with Tsleil-Waututh community members. Together we have worked with five generations of Tsleil-Waututh members. In 1990, I visited Elder Bobby George, Lee Maracle's father, and requested his support for the founding of the Annual Under the Volcano Festival, which I produced at Whey-ah-Wichen. I would go on to co-produce twenty festivals at that site with settler crews, and five more festivals directly with the Tsleil-Waututh Nation. Also following my father's civic-engagement practice, I would go on to run the North Vancouver Arts Council as President and Executive Director (at the age of 25). A decade later, in 2004, I completed a post-graduate certificate in media arts at Capilano University. My graduation project was an examination of the settler artist and squatter history of the waterfront from *Whey-ah-Wichen* to Maplewood Flats, from 1949 to 1995. The project included a large university gallery exhibition containing photographic images of Tsleil-Waututh sourced from all local archives, of which there were very few—consistent with the erasure and denial of occupation by dominant North Vancouver culture. The exhibition also contained a series of triptychs featuring enlarged childhood photos of three children growing up on the shared lands of "North Vancouver" featuring Michelle Nahanee (Squamish), Damian George (Tsleil-Waututh), and myself (Dutch settler). The work was a deliberate attempt to confront the issue of colonialism and denial by confusing and seducing the viewer with romantic obfuscations of the broader contexts of these children's lives, aside from their likenesses captured during child's play by a camera. The images presented as the shared experiences of three children growing up in North Vancouver; but, unbeknownst to the viewer, was the distinctly different lived experiences ensured by the racially segregated and colonized geography.

Geography has played an essential role in developing my family's autoethnographic comprehension of connection to culture and place. In 2016, my daughter was the same age my father was in 1945. We travelled to the Netherlands and re-enacted my father's 200km walk to live underground. We documented the re-enactment and subsequently produced a media arts project and exhibition titled *Van Kijkduinstraat*, chronicling the walk using photography, video and social media,

accompanied by interviews with artists, authors and historians. Van Kijkduinstraat is so named because that is the street where my father, at age 16, made a choice to die in Amsterdam's Hunger Winter of 1945 (which claimed the lives of 20,000 of his neighbours) or risk arrest, embarking on a perilous journey during the last winter of war. My daughter and I met Latvian refugees who live in that Kijkduinstraat house today, connecting the stories of refugees in the Netherlands across the decades. Also in Amsterdam, at the *Verzetsmuseum Amsterdam* (Amsterdam Resistance Museum) we held a copy of the *De Waarheid* underground communist newspaper, which my grandfather distributed from their third-floor apartment, away from the peering eyes of the Nazi collaborators downstairs. In sharing this knowledge and family history with my daughter in the midst of the corporeal experience of a durational event, we honour family history and connect to memories and places which are intermingled sources of intergenerational trauma and sites of resistance. The result is an autoethnographic work that brings meaning to the family stories within a critical framework about white nationalism, memory, trauma, war and democracy. Artists Gisèle Trudel and Stéphane Claude call this practice of fusing media arts and non-fiction "experimental documentary" (Azoulay, 2019), a form of technological and social sciences investigation and remembrance.

My family's existence was, in some sense, the result of resistance. There is a tradition of humanist and socialist tendencies amongst the subsequent generations, and I follow in this tradition. In my life experiences I have worked in war zones and met peasants and revolutionaries in several countries who showed me the immense love communities have for the struggle for freedom, and a deep sense of comradeship required to achieve freedom. I have seen the world as it has always been, ruled by force and witnessed resistance by people struggling for freedom, all of which has taught me how to be a caring human being. In particular, with my father as a role model, his personal courage to survive and commit his life to community and civic duty gave me tools to see destruction and violence while building and networking with people working together for better outcomes. This is also the expression I carried as a father to my own daughter and stepson, where political work in community was a life choice and path to serve others.

May 5, 2020 is being prepared for as the 75th anniversary of Canada's role in the 'just war' of Europe and liberation of the Netherlands. A month earlier on April 13, 2020,

my father would have turned 92 years old, a staggering 75 years after being rescued and heroically delivered behind enemy lines to a hospital on his 17th birthday. Instead of reaching this anniversary marker, my father passed away peacefully in my arms on December 8, 2019 in North Vancouver. Fitting with the historical trajectory of his life, my father's memorial service included the singing of the Coast Salish Anthem, the "Chief Dan George Song," performed (for the first time ever in one of North Vancouver's older churches) by Squamish member T'uyt'tanat Cease Wyss. Also sung by the 250 people in attendance were old Dutch hymns performed on a pipe organ, representing the cultural span of my father's 91 years living on distinct lands, with equally rich histories.

I have remained a Dutch settler, and the contradictions of Dutch history define me and assist me in doing autoethnography with my eyes wide open. As such, the interconnectedness of white Canadian colonialism, Dutch imperialism, Indigenous struggles in Indonesia and in Canada is important for my research. "In the conduct of fieldwork, method and theory interests are so closely mixed with each other and with historically and contextualized relevancies that neutrality is hard to come by" (Katz, 285).

The dominant narrative of WW2 as the just war against evil neglects the role played by 3,000 Indigenous men who fought in Europe only to return as second-class citizens (unable to vote for 17 more years). Veterans surviving Europe returned to an efficient and brutal reservation system, one which would later inspire the apartheid system of South Africa with their shared "pass system" where Indigenous Peoples (or Blacks) would be required to have permission to leave the reservation or face punishment and imprisonment (Kahntineta, 2013). In a dizzying display of history repeating itself, this policy was also the same control device my family experienced in Holland during the Nazi occupation.

It took being away from Canada, and seeing the destruction overseas caused by US military policies and Canadian mining policies to confront my assumptions about Canada back at home. While I grew up as an activist, (pulling up developer's surveying stakes in the forested creek near my home at age 7, with a group I coined "The Hag Valley Gang") I would return to this land defense work in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples as a way to make practical a desire to witness and call out history for its unending abuse. Witnessing local Squamish Indigenous youth drop out of our high school, and later learning that the highest rates of youth drop outs were Indigenous and

Filipino, made me realize the impact of Canadian mining companies in the Philippines and the “modern day slavery” of Canada’s reliance on migrant labourers while denying them citizenship (Boti, 2000).

Through decades of punitive citizenship practices and Indian Act regulations by Canada, I saw the interconnectedness of this unaddressed system of containment back home. By doing practical cross-sector engagement work with the South African anti-Apartheid movement, supporting the creation of the Philippine Women’s Centre of BC in 1990, and practicing Indigenous solidarity, I could reflect on the profound effect solidarity work has. These experiences enabled me to witness deep forms of injustice and in turn brought me “home” to a place-based approach to make productive resistance to this entangled system of domination. The more Indigenous grassroots leaders I learned from, the more was revealed about how Indigenous injustice has been left unaddressed. The more I understood of global injustices, the more contradictions were exposed and a gap widened waiting to critically assess and respond to my own experience in Vancouver.

Learning reflexivity enabled me to think differently about my own home and dominant culture’s fallacies. This was brought home to me one day in 1988: I was working as a stringer for the Toronto Star in Nicaragua, and accompanied Brian Willson to meet Sandinista soldiers on the frontlines in their war with the US-backed Contras. Willson was a Vietnam war veteran and a giant in the international anti-war movement who had (just six months earlier) lost both legs to a train carrying US weapons bound for Central America. From this distant place at the frontlines of a war in northern Nicaragua, sharing a lift in a heavily fortified Russian helicopter, at the edges of the US empire, I would be taught that the frontlines were also at home. Willson suggested I could also go back to “the belly of the beast” and work against Empire from within North America.

Gradually, my work in 1990—photo documenting human rights abuses by Vancouver and Toronto-based Canadian mining companies in the Philippines led me to examine the same mining companies’ reach on reserve lands, unceded, and broken-treated lands in Canada. Each experience in far-flung spaces would continue revealing the interconnectedness of occupation, wealth extraction from exploited raw resources, military force, and Canada’s apparent tolerance and acceptance of all these policies. After shooting photography while embedded with the All Burma Students Democratic

Front student army in Burma (which had seen 10,000 students flee to the jungle after the military crackdown of 1988), I returned home to Vancouver in 1990. I co-coordinated a successful campaign to have (then-crown corporation) Petro-Canada divest their \$25M USD oil and gas operations in Burma which relied on slave labour and the ignorance of Canadians. The 1990 Oka Crisis was also underway, and I joined the occupation of Vancouver streets in solidarity with the armed resistance to Canadian military and Quebec police occupation of Mohawk lands. Conducting communications and solidarity work with Indigenous land struggle, doing community organising against white supremacists in Vancouver, helping build mutual aid infrastructure for migrants in Vancouver, building and running campaigns to confront Canadian companies overseas (in Burma, Philippines and Indonesia), fused together my criticism of the white supremacist roots of Canadian government policies (and their double standards) pertaining to immigrants of colour and Indigenous Peoples. The Oka Crisis would be followed by other solidarity frontlines resisting oil exploration on Lubicon lands and NATO cruise missile test flights over Innu lands.

Place-based and Intersectional Responses

With the whiteness of Canada's anarchist and Marxist left, a new formation, Roots of Resistance, would emerge in 1992. "Uniting the group was an anti-colonial and anti-capitalist critique, including support of First Nations sovereignty and opposition to global imperialism." (Wikipedia, 2018) I took up a position close to this group as it "frequently worked in coalition with white allies." (Wikipedia, 2018) For me, this analysis connecting third world alliances to Canadian parliamentary policies and colonialism, along with a critique of white fascist tendencies within Canada, effectively brought my own and my family's life experiences together. By 1995, I conducted urban liaison and media support work for *Ts'Peten* (Gustafsen Lake) defenders and confronted the mainstream media's cheerleading for the "largest paramilitary operation in Canadian history" (Warrior Publications, 1995). These lived experiences, amongst many others, reinforced, for me, the role of intergenerational and ongoing resistance to war and occupation, and gave me experiences with normalized colonial violence and genocide which Indigenous Peoples have endured.

Performing place-based work in Coast Salish lands has thus meant sustained grassroots organising work against failed public policy throughout the Vancouver area. A

devastating example of the importance of intersectional analysis on these issues was the murders of Indigenous women in my Downtown Eastside neighbourhood, recognizing this was not merely the work of one rogue man named Robert Pickton, but symptomatic of white supremacy, patriarchy, and colonialism. Being in domestic spaces and East Vancouver streets with the Coast Salish family of murdered women while the killings were still taking place (before there was a Feb 14 Memorial March) to confront the rampant Vancouver Police Department denial, again, enabled me to bear witness in the Coast Salish tradition (Thompson, 2002) to the genocide being committed here. Living and working in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver for three decades has exposed me to the concentration of colonial and neoliberal public policy failures and funnelling of victims (including disproportionately Indigenous women) into one geographic zone (Day, 2011). Here, local residents are criminalized, while being doled out an array of temporary charitable solutions in a place that has come to fashion itself as a global city. While Vancouver and Canada projected the beacon for truth-telling and as an international “honest broker,” I recognized that Indigenous communities were experiencing genocide at home. I had no choice but to confront the Canadian culture that denied Indigenous Peoples’ their lived experience by prioritizing the comfort of Canadians; for Canadian status quo “the better to salve the conscience and spare the soul” (Serwer, 2017).

The intended effect of my narrative is to convey a record of practice and analysis developed largely from engaged research, community-based cultural work, and journalism, shoulder-to-shoulder with resisters and survivors of dominant systems at the intersection of imperialism, colonialism, patriarchy, and capitalism. Through these engaged research experiences, mentorship from political elders, as well as autodidactic methods, my critical analysis of Canada’s colonial laws and policies emerged. In the words of James Baldwin who writes in the close of *No Name in the Street* of a crisis, of racism and colonialism that is not about to resolve itself soon. “An old world is dying,” Baldwin declares, and “the acceptance of responsibility contains the key to the necessarily evolving skill” in birthing the future. (Baldwin, 196)

My work in alliance with Indigenous media, arts, and culture continue, including co-creating W2 in 2008, the first large scale Canadian arts organisation with a redress mandate. Commencing in 2010, I mentored and coproduced the *Vancouver Indigenous Media Arts Festival*, and over several years (with Ronnie Dean Harris) built the largest

geographic fan base for the world's most popular Indigenous electronic act, *A Tribe Called Red*. My solidarity with Tsleil-Waututh would take a new turn in 2013, when I became employed by the Nation to job-share as comanager of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation Sacred Trust and advise on communications and campaign production in their efforts to protect their lands and waters from a proposed expansion of the Trans Mountain pipeline. The 1953 construction of this pipeline only required rubber stamp approval by federal bureaucrats who managed the affairs of the Tsleil-Waututh who Canada considered wards of the state, unable to defend or assert their rights in the colonial legal system. Now, sixty years later, with a proposed twinning of the 1100km pipeline, Indigenous communities—from the tar sands to the coast—would reject the Crown's National Energy Board assertion that their consent was (still) not required. The Athabasca Chipewyan, Beaver Lake Cree, and Lubicon Lake in Alberta, to the Secwepemc, and to the Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish in the Salish Sea would challenge Canada's business-as-usual strategy to promote more tar sands production for export markets. Over a four-year period, I supported the Sacred Trust and engage in a myriad of ways with the Tsleil-Waututh community. While over the preceding twenty-five years I had conducted various projects with and for members of the Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh, at this time the work involved a complex legal, cultural, and strategic analysis of issues related to stopping a multi-million-dollar pipeline trespassing on their unceded lands.

Shirley Roburn suggests “extraordinary experiences offer an example of what sensory ethnographers categorize as ‘disorienting experiences’ (Hahn 2006: 94 qtd, in Pink) in fieldwork that create a type of liminality in which researchers come to reflexive realizations that ‘jolt’ them to new understandings.” (Roburn, 74). I experienced this while walking through the lush forest of Burnaby Mountain arm-in-arm with Elder Ta'ah Amy George, daughter of Chief Dan George, trampling the underbrush on her unceded lands towards a proposed drill site for a tar sands pipeline. Being trusted by the family and community to protect her, accompanying her to be arrested by Canadian RCMP officers, is the type of experience Brian Willson foreshadowed to me when, in the Nicaraguan jungle at the frontiers of US Empire, he told me to go back to work in North America. I led Ta'ah towards the RCMP where she was arrested (along with Grand Chief Stewart Phillips) for defying the Crown and allegedly trespassing in her own lands. The arrest, a national news event, further exposed Canada's ongoing lip-service to

reconciliation and denial of fundamental land rights. These land-based actions “are both an analytic and an embodied process” (Roburn, 76) which connect me to the people who have been stewarding these lands (since time immemorial) where I was born. These durational and corporeal actions I experienced were inspired by Ta’ah’s request to the Tsleil-Waututh Nation (made public in 2014), to “Warrior Up!” (Morelli, 2014). That comment and Tsleil-Waututh’s refusal to back down to Canada, sparked one of the largest mobilizations of solidarity with Indigenous Peoples in the history of BC.

These experiences also inspired my efforts to complete an MA to document my analysis and exercise writing skills for the utility of promoting place-based settler redress in an era of reconciliation. Along with reflecting on frontline experiences, I prioritize assessing how my particular white privileged subject position exists within a colonialism society fraught with systemic racism and colonial denial, and how this influences my analysis. As Andrea Smith emphasizes, too often the confessional narrative of the privileged subject is performed in a way that reifies exactly the hierarchies it seeks to trouble. (Smith, 19) By gaining the trust of Tsleil-Waututh community members I am cognizant of my simultaneous roles as settler and trusted friend, oppressor and recognized community member of an oppressed class of people, but when I write about this, I am unable to adequately inform or empower the reader to understand my location at all times. My academic narratives risk individualizing problems that must be tackled systemically, and focus energy on the already-privileged confessor or narrator, further reinforcing power based on social identities and categories (Roburn, 76). When sharing intimately acquired knowledge, as a settler academic I am variously in the position of being the reflexive confessor or the academic validator of the confession, depending on the context.

Before commencing this MA, I sought the feedback of (the late) Leonard George, former Chief, and a mentor to me. Following protocol concerning my role as a settler autoethnographer, and seeking guidance and approval from Tsleil-Waututh leadership on the nature, focus, and position of my research reflects my understanding of ethical research standards and basic Coast Salish protocol. I proposed two positions from which I could write, and two readers for whom I could target. In proposing models for redress work I could write for settlers to better understand our role of being in the way, and measures we could take to get out of the way of Coast Salish sovereignty. To do this required me to confront and analyze the colonial systems blocking redress and

stalling equity opportunities for Coast Salish communities. Alternately, I could write a community cultural development plan for the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, and simply offer it up as a private internal document in the form of a roadmap for strategic engagement to increase Crown funding, and the production and presentation of Tsleil-Waututh cultural works and infrastructure. “This desire to ‘know’ the Native is itself part of the settler-colonial project to apprehend, contain and domesticate the potential power of indigenous peoples to subvert the settler state” (Smith, 2013). Colonial logics attempt to transform Indigenous Peoples who are producers of intellectual theory and political insight living on unceded lands, into populations to be known and hence managed as a mass of ethnic Canadians. Indigenous struggles then simply become a project of making their demands known so that their claims can be recognized by the settler state. The Tsleil-Waututh Nation has partially succeeded in avoiding this dynamic by shielding its affairs and information from outside prying, and conducted its economic and cultural resurgence, often without seeking acknowledgement by the colonial state (Coulthard, 2014), and scuttling attempts to be known, to be consumed and extracted by the Crown or academia. While Leonard George left the decision about my studies to me, it was the former approach and subject that I chose, with an eye to disrupting the status quo of incremental change and pushing for place-based redress policies within and amongst dominant settler society. Rather than understand Tsleil-Waututh, my work has been instead designed to understand the settler and to disrupt the privileged position we, as settlers, hold.

While academia can promote “role detachment and uninvolvement” (Hayano, 1979), for myself, it has instead strengthened my research and analysis by encouraging more integration of quantitative data analysis of my subjects with new autoethnographic methods to bring better analysis and meaning to this life’s work. The gift of witnessing a resurgent Tsleil-Waututh in these recent decades, and being able to listen to and be accountable to my neighbours is the greatest gift and honour I believe a settler on occupied lands can experience.

Through my selection of research topics that emphasize redressing settler cultural policy and place-based conservation decolonization, I have found that a combination of experimental and ethnographic research methods “offer greater internal validity for learning *what* the effects of a social program are, and ethnographic methods offer greater insight into *why* the effects were produced” (Sherman & Strang, 2004, 204).

As someone with a rich and diverse practice of cross-cultural, campaign and project management experience, I have appreciated learning how the prospects for achieving greater research success is made possible by relying on multiple approaches. For example, my analysis of colonial land use regulations or cultural funding policy and statistics, inside of a framework supported by deep understanding of contexts, supports “an integration of different research theories within social science to work together for the common goal of discovering truth” (Sherman & Strang, 2004, 204), This is especially meaningful as I combine a praxis of research and applied practise and reflexivity to this life lived on these Coast Salish lands and waters.

Accomplice and Conspiring Efforts

In this final section, I want to look at what role I take as a reflexive autoethnographer of cultural policy and work with Indigenous Peoples. The work of simply watching events unfold would seem to be the work of cowards. Unable to separate my family’s history from my Tsleil-Waututh neighbours’ history, I work with the tools and containers I have acquired and use them to advance sovereignty and work against Canada’s efforts to assimilate and erase Coast Salish rights and title. My praxis is that of an engaged researcher exercising “professional indifference to research methods, setting them aside in favour of immersion in the phenomenal field. In short, going and looking at the work being done and developing (my) competence in it” (Crabtree, 2012, p. 85). To do this, I cannot be a passive bystander waiting for a moment to be heroic. My role is rather to line up on one side of a frontline; not the side of dominant society, but on the side of these unceded lands, to work “in the belly of the beast” in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples whose lands and cultures have been occupied and criminalized. I have consistently chosen the path of disrupting and questioning the governmentality (Foucault, 2007) surrounding the model conduct of an assimilated second generation Canadian, and resisted the conventions instilled by my schooling in an educational system that treated Indigenous youth dropping out as disposable. I have often rejected the many privileges of power bestowed upon me from this 152 year old white Canadian state.

In rejecting the performance of resistance that reconciliation serves (as a type of national recalibration for a just and self-aware society), I chose to act in performance of sovereignty against Canada and reject the notion that Indigenous People must reconcile

with a colonial force it has never had a relationship with, other than being the victim of its genocidal policies and practices. In this era of resurgence, I ask: can I be of use as I walk with my Coast Salish sisters and brothers through this deep inequity, proposing that being of use is responding to that which I am meant to deny as a white Canadian?

I reject the offer to be an ally, too, as to be an ally infers I position myself as a member of the oppressor Canadian state and that I am disrupting my Canadian identity to negotiate an alliance. Far from being a Canadian oppressor, or building bridges and dialogue from the side of Canada, I am an accomplice in rebelling against Canada. “Self-proclaimed allies have no intention to abolish the entitlement that compelled them to impose their relationship upon those they claim to ally with. Accomplices are traitors to their (rich/elite/upper/middle) class, (white) race, (male) gender. Accomplices are realized through mutual consent. An accomplice as academic will seek ways to betray their institution” (Benally, 2014).

Conclusion

This knowledge accumulation and reflexivity concerning my positionality with Coast Salish Peoples has been bolstered through the comradery I have shared with my Indigenous mentors from various regions across Turtle Island and locally from the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh. I have been afforded privileged access to many key figures in Indigenous sovereignty movements because of my decades of work. Co-producing and co-hosting an annual gathering of sovereigntists with the Under the Volcano Festival, and working in alternative radio and media, and for land defense, has afforded me privileged access to many key figures in Indigenous sovereignty movements.

On other occasions, knowledge was exchanged with me through traditional practices of witnessing, “an example of the cornerstone of the Longhouse tradition. The Witness ceremony creates the oral history that we can pass on” (Thompson, 2002). Through attending dozens of Witness ceremonies, I have acquired a deeper knowledge of public-facing Coast Salish protocols, traditions, and cultural practices. This learning from Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish has included hereditary, elected, spiritual, and protocol leaders, and has occurred when the community wishes to acknowledge important community events. Witnessing is an ancient form of knowledge mobilisation

that gives agency to a witness to carry knowledge forward, to share it, and be accountable for holding it. Being immersed in this work has enabled me to gain an understanding of complex community issues as well as celebrations and honouring events. I deepened my understanding of witnessing, and communications protocols when I served in a support role for the *Ut'sam* (Witness) Project of the Squamish Nation and Vancouver's Roundhouse Community Centre. The program operated for a decade (commencing in 1996), bringing 10,000 Vancouver residents (largely settlers and migrants) to the headwaters of Squamish Nation lands for weekend gatherings involving witness ceremonies.

Witnessing is not a choice, but a responsibility and an honour, and is connected to my role as an accomplice to my Coast Salish relations who seek justice and autonomy in their affairs. By understanding the hegemony and denial at play with settler culture, and understanding the quality of resistance and autonomy practiced by Coast Salish, I know when to “get out of the way” of its resurgence, in favour of advancing Coast Salish sovereignty. At times, however, one must be visible or risk making mistakes to appropriate and repurpose colonial resources and break settler codes of conduct to access infrastructure that can be of tactical assistance towards sovereigntist agendas. As Lee Maracle once cautioned me, only by making an effort can we make mistakes, and thus it is better to act despite inevitably producing mistakes. There is no looking away and no turning back, there is only negotiations, discomfort, and joy. Relations are assessed and weaponized to maximum effect in defense of unceded lands and against state power, and inculcated civilians doing the bidding of colonialism to perform reconciliation and other forms of state-hijacked detournement.

If there were a higher honour, it might be to apply to be naturalized as a Coast Salish citizen on these unceded lands claimed by Canada. Perhaps this is what Joseph Boyden desired after all, to forego and shake free from his white privilege and hide amongst the Indigenous communities he studied for his best-selling books. The people who have invited me to paddle in their canoe in these waters have given me a profound sensibility to the lands and their culture, and humbled me in my own home and community of this past half-century. I understand better my role and position as a Dutch settler, and while grateful and loving of my Coast Salish relations, emphasize that my work is to participate in the dismantling of settler colonialism and to call into question gestures and performances that give the appearance of reconciliation and redress—

those which are structurally limited as to avoid any real difficulty for white settler Canada. As Pam Palmater states, “real reconciliation is about the return of land and recognition of jurisdiction and our access to resources and fundamentally changing all of the wrongs that have happened” (Palmater, 2016). With Canada marking its 150-year sesquicentennial in 2017, with a half-billion-dollar celebration, I question the understandings of Canadian settler culture and its ability to do right for the survivors of genocidal policies. When I position my analysis to consider Canada’s intentions with regards to reconciliation and the furtherance of settler colonialism, I need not wander far to discover the harmful underpinnings of an intact colonial system still prioritizing extractive economics over the original inhabitants of this unceded land which I humbly call home.

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Essay 2:
The Spectacle of Reconciliation

Introduction to the Spectacle of Reconciliation and Canada's Assimilation Agenda

As the Royal Canadian Mounted Police crossed the snow-covered Morice River Bridge in Wet'suwet'en Nation on February 10, 2020, they sought to arrest Chief Howilhat (Freda Huson) matriarch of the Unist'ot'en for disobeying a Canadian court injunction in support of the construction of a \$6.1 billion pipeline. Dressed in green camouflage and carrying assault weapons, the police wrote a new chapter in Canada's 153-year history of settler occupation and colonial rule. To make it across the bridge, the police action required dismantling a wooden fence that had been constructed to slow the path of trespassers. As they tore down the blockade, unbeknownst to them, but visible to the sole embedded photojournalist on the other side, the word "RECONCILIATION" had been strategically painted on the other side. As they tore down the barrier, with their assault rifles in hand, they climbed through it and onto a stage with the very word left in pieces for the world to see. Federal agents walked directly into the very media spectacle (Debord, 1967) which Canada has invested heavily to craft in recent years. Within days, Indigenous People and their allies across Canada shared the viral response to this police action proclaiming #ReconciliationIsDead.

This paper starts with the events on that wintery bridge thousands of kilometres away from Canada's corporate and political elites, then goes back in time to explore how and why Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau emphasized the hyperreality and spectacle of reconciliation. While supporting global capital's resource extraction interests, Canada has offered scant change in policies for Indigenous land rights. This disconnect inevitably caught up with Canada through the media event on the Morice River bridge, steeped in symbolism, and the resulting viral counter protests and rail blockades. Not lost on Indigenous Peoples was that this was not just a police action enforcing an injunction to enable pipeline construction through an ancient trading route (Morin, 2020) but these were the same colonial forces that had removed children for residential schools, jailed Indigenous People for practicing their culture, and terrorized people for defending their lands for decades. Tearing down the very sign of hope that Canada had polished, suggested to critics that Canada was essentially incapable or unwilling to deliver on its promise of a new relationship and triggered counter actions and economic disruption by Indigenous Peoples and allies across Canada. The

construction of Canada's reconciliation efforts warrants further analysis into reconciliation discourse and underlying Canadian policies towards Indigenous Peoples.

A little more than one decade has passed since Prime Minister Stephen Harper's 2008 apology to Indigenous Peoples for the systemic abuse they suffered from government-sanctioned residential schools. Throughout that decade, white settler society was invited to transcend its guilt and denial of Canada's colonial past, and step forward to participate in reconciliation. In forthcoming sections, I explore the integrity of that invitation, especially pronounced during Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017, with its half-billion dollar-budget (Hannay, 2017) for elaborate spectacles and performative gestures of inclusion. Reconciliation was heralded as a liberal democratic instrument to deliver rights and repair settler and Indigenous relations. This uniquely Canadian version of a national reconciliation effort, relied largely on the labour of Indigenous Peoples to prop up the apparatus and to infer the Crown Indigenous relationship were transforming. Canada used hopes for a new relationship and weaponized it against the very individuals and communities meant to benefit from this acknowledgement of past harms. After only five years of federal government media events and public engagement strategies, the events at Wet'suwet'en reveal that reconciliation was squandered and merely used as a cloaking device to hide ongoing economic and assimilationist policies of Canada.

This paper is punctuated by words and analysis from my Indigenous scholar and activist colleagues sourced through my praxis of engaged research, personal correspondence, and media production work. Two themes distinguish themselves in three decades of my work as a Dutch settler on unceded Coast Salish lands: the use of spectacle in contested public policy; resilience of Indigenous sovereignty movements. To understand the efficacy of spectacle in advancing colonial capitalism, I look back to Guy Debord's instrumental theories which have influenced my own cultural production work producing creative interventions in public space, and media events emphasizing Indigenous rights, sovereignty, and place-based redress. Working side-by-side with Indigenous People exposing fraught relations with the Crown has placed me in a front-row position to witness the advent of reconciliation and its relationship to Crown policies. Living and working on Coast Salish lands and waters for my entire life, I have witnessed the evolution of opposition to Canada's claims of jurisdiction where Coast Salish

Indigenous Peoples have lived upon since time immemorial—most of which never ceded to Canada, British Columbia or local municipal governments.

The story of Canada's reconciliation efforts is a contiguous progression of federal iterations of top-down public policy to terminate Indigenous rights while maintaining access to their raw resources. The policy current has flowed uninterrupted through the decades from the 1876 Indian Act, the 1969 White Paper, two generations of Trudeau Prime Ministers, 2006 Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, the 2008-2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), and Canada 150. Canada's colonial program is presented here to be examined using research methods which are historical tools to perpetuate or which are blind to white European authority, including Canadian communications theory, cultural policy studies, and political economy analysis. Confronting Canada from the academy's ivory tower has its shortcomings as the most impactful analysis work is responsive and accountable to social movements, and in this digital era, complex concepts are often illustrated through memes and hashtags, generated with new technologies and disseminated at a feverish pace. Knowledge production from within Indigenous movements will be highlighted as it provokes and seeks accountability from dominant settler society. And as a Dutch settler critiquing an exercise which advocates truth, reconciliation and healing, (and for which many of my Indigenous and settler friends and colleagues are fiercely interested in) also has its pitfalls. Writing about reconciliation as spectacle is not to shame TRC participants, "it's about attacking a government that used that moment of vulnerability to bolster its global image. I do not blame our older generation for being hopeful about a more peaceful future." (Tawinikay, 2020). These words from Tawinikay, a Metis land defender and sovereigntist, highlight the importance of conducting social science research which questions the veracity of Canada's stated intentions for reconciliation. For the Wet'suwet'en blockading the Morice River Bridge from incursions by colonial forces, reconciliation symbols and platitudes about shared Canadian wealth and progress have been cast aside for a higher truth. "It is the responsibility of those younger generations to stand up and say that what is being offered is not good enough. It is up to us to say that we would rather another hundred years of struggle than to accept the gentle assimilation being offered." (Tawinikay, 2020).

The Spectacle of Reconciliation

As many Canadians sought justice and fairness as a remedy to colonialism, Canada usurped public desires by strategically delivering a version of reconciliation that was expedited and superficial in its transformation of the Canadian body politic. For comparison, the Truth & Reconciliation Commission in South Africa involved an entire nation in a durational effort involving nationally-televised hearings involving both whites and blacks concluding with deep wounds identified and persons sent to prison for crimes. As contrast, Canada's TRC process was designed without a justice component and built with cascading images of healing, inclusion, and change. Taking place before and during the 2015 federal election, reconciliation across Canada was interwoven with media events as Canadians voted in the Liberal Party of Canada after a decade of rule by the Conservative Party of Canada under Prime Minister Harper. With a redux of Trudeamania, images and objects were deliberately transmitted to suggest a transformation of Canada's soul, not merely a change of government.

This spectacle of change was followed with notable images such as the appointment of the first Indigenous Justice Minister, in Jody Wilson-Raybould. And once the new government was in power, Canada's 150th birthday loomed, in 2017, increasingly a problematic celebration given the increasing daylighting of Canada's history of genocide through its residential schools, and connivance with decades of murdered and missing Indigenous women. To refocus attention away from Ottawa's ongoing complicity and laws disproportionately harming Indigenous wards of the state, the Liberal government would spend massively on birthday celebrations to bring about a post-colonial hyperreality (Baudrillard, 1994). The sesquicentennial celebrations would highlight a (yet another) new relationship with Indigenous Peoples, signalling the evolution of the country as a post-colonial nation. These objects represented a spectacle of reconciliation that Canada and its proxies (provincial and regional governments, civil society, the media, and private sector) could circulate, while avoiding spending on repairing structural problems or overturning policies. While the elaborate hoax was shared across broadcast networks, newspapers, and social media platforms, Canada was simultaneously colluding to advance Canada's Indigenous assimilation and rights termination policy agenda to extinguish unfettered land rights that predated Canada's (self-declared) nationhood in 1867.

Guy Debord described spectacle in 1967 in his seminal book 'Society of the Spectacle,' in which he sees social life between people as being mediated by images that reflect or represent the actual experience of living. This is not a mere concept, but a system that governs how people experience ideas circulated by government, by corporations and media, with repercussions for what people consume for meaning and ideas, and their relationship to each other. The spectacle is not merely a blanket term for the mass media present in capitalist society; it also refers to the various technical and institutional systems of capitalism, such as the political, military, and educational institutions (Best, 1994, p. 47). While colonialism requires a carceral system, Canada's version of reconciliation could be delivered as a performance and circulation of images to Indigenous and settler and migrant Canadians alike. According to Debord, overt force is not required when individual, family unit and community cultural infrastructures have been breached enabling the spectacle to function largely hidden. The spectacle is a tool of pacification and social subjects end up functioning without a full grasp of their own complicity in their own distraction and the erosion of otherwise resilient communitarianism (Ward, 2015, p. 37). Further, it increases commoditization of previously non-colonized sectors of social life and permits the extension of bureaucratic control (Best, 1994, p. 47). The policies of government, be it a conservative or liberal one, could remain intact while the publics consumed images of a historic sweeping change despite market forces fueling resource extraction, governmental regulation, and social control remaining status quo in Canada.

Building on this idea of a grand public charade, Jean Baudrillard defined aspects of this as hyperreality in his book 'Simulacra and Simulation.' Analysing the circulation of ideas, and the start and stop between material reality of life and the virtual construction of life suggested to Baudrillard that a hyperreality was at work. In this era of post-truth these critical theories have become popular media analyses as the U.S. presidency is a 24/7 media event. "Trump is a simulacrum, a symbolic representation of something that never existed in the first place. Trump understood that politics had been entirely subsumed by pop culture." (O'Hehir, 2018, 8). Many Canadians might believe this to be aberrations to democracy found south of the border, trusting that Canadian communications policy, regulation, and trust in civil society and public institutions all function as antidotes to the blinding effects of images circulated by state and market interests. Trudeaumania's promise of classic liberalism, the allure of change, hand-over-

heart gestures, and notions of authenticity by Justin Trudeau, all combined to distribute images, recirculated and shared for maximum effect. For Canada, the possibility of entering post-colonialism without dismantling genocidal programs and repairing relations is made possible through its own post-truth communications apparatus. Debord's account of spectacle and Baudrillard's account of hyperreality both argue meaning is socially constructed and they are "most cohesive when considered together." (Ward, 2015, p i) While Debord argued that authentic social life is replaced by mere representation through spectacle, and is to be understood as a commodity or currency, Baudrillard argued that society has been done with and simply replaced by signs and symbols.

Spectacle was a timely instrument which the Trudeau Liberals used to maximum effect as they swept to power affirming the assessment that the Harper government was insensitive to Indigenous rights (Doxtater, 2008) and out of touch with the winds of change sought by contemporary Canadians. Reconciliation enabled a redefinition of Canadian values and rebranding of whole areas of government activities and relations between Canadians and Indigenous Peoples. Enticed by images of sincerity, hope, change and a residential school apology, it was as if the entire country was experiencing a social transformation that could leave no stone unturned and no Canadian unaffected. Liberalism acted as a guarantor that reconciliation was authentic, affirming that it was a symptom of a change in government that now publicly championed liberal democracy, while maintaining status quo conservative economic policies which favoured market access to Indigenous lands and People.

Canada's dominant white settler society is distracted by decades of cultural denial and economic privilege with fantasies of entitlement to perpetual economic growth, which is rooted in the narratives of Canada's history. A nation forged from the wilderness through pioneer grit and one that welcomes hardworking immigrants to a peace-loving, multicultural country at peace with itself. In previous decades, Canada's annual July 1st birthday celebrations relied on tropes of white settlers welcoming immigrants from across the globe, federalism, bilingualism, universal healthcare, a peaceful nation on the world stage, and cultural differentiation from the United States to keep the home fires burning. How can Canadians know what they see, when their desires are sold back to them in these images? There had been change taking place in Canada, but it was not in its relation to Quebec or the United States, but at the heart of

Canada, on the reserves and with urban Indigenous Peoples, through legal victories affirming ancient rights, and the Idle No More movement of 2012 igniting youth voices for justice. Canada had success with hiding colonialism in plain sight, but after 150 years, and increasing dissent to this narrative, the spectacle of reconciliation would become the latest device used to continue Canada's access and control over Indigenous lands and waters for centralised economic growth and multinational extraction companies. With a persistent prosperity gap between settlers and Indigenous People, and other social science indicators such as disproportionately high incarceration rates for Indigenous People, reconciliation was deployed as an instrument to overcome Canadian's guilt and culpability for colonial policies which othered Indigenous.

Spectacle is the highest stage of this capitalist expansion which has turned need for distraction against authentic life. Debord and Baudrillard differ regarding the role of the participant in being able to perceive their authentic reality, and much of this can be predicated on their material conditions at the time of each author's work. For my purposes, Debord's understanding is helpful. For Debord, the spectacle is an ideological weapon exposing the essence of all ideological systems: the impoverishment, servitude and negation of real life. (Debord, 1967, 215) Tools and resources are used against the oppressed, and in the context of Canada 150, the media and the white establishment's fascination with the spectacle of reconciliation represents a grand appropriation of Debord's ideas for the purpose of societal control and transformation to a hyperreality of post-colonial Canada, where grievances do not exist and equality is promised.

From within communities fighting for justice, not easily captured by the spectacle, however, their desire is not to live within a peaceful hyperreality but to struggle for real change, justice, and autonomy from the Canadian state. The old adage of "The Emperor wears no clothes" comes to mind in the way the hypocrisy and deceit of reconciliation creates openings for oppressed Peoples to disrupt it, and show its disconnection from reality. The success of Wet'suwet'en land defenders in mobilizing support from Indigenous and allies in the winter of 2020, is instructive in their use of media products and discourse to disrupt and distribute an alternative spectacle to that of Canada's, one which empowers through participation. Canada's spectacle is materially "the expression of the separation and estrangement between man and man... a new power of fraud" (Debord, 1967, 215) concentrated at the base of the spectacle.

While Canada was fighting repeated Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decisions which directed different federal governments to equitably fund Indigenous children's welfare across Canada, (Stueck & Zilio, 2017) it was also staging counter moments to colonialism through Canada 150 events. Federal funding for 2017 birthday festivals enabled a string of pearls to be laid out across the country, often nationally-broadcast, delivering choreographed celebrations of pan-Indigenous culture. These events included The Drum is Calling Festival, produced by the City of Vancouver, which is presented further in this paper as a case study examining the operation of spectacle in this context. Spectacle functioned as a disruptive theatrical moment with daily live festival events and cordoned-off Vancouver streets upon which citizens could re-enact symbolic performances of walking for reconciliation. The hyperreality of Canada 150 events involved thousands of Canadians participating in dissonant events, which suggested that the colonial was over in Canada, birthing a new paradigm as Canadians and Indigenous figuratively walked as respected equals. Ending in 2014, Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings were held across the country mobilizing participatory subjects seeking healing and justice that set the stage for reconciliation to be legitimated by the captured participation of Indigenous Peoples. In the same way that during Pierre Trudeau's era, Indigenous Peoples were solicited to participate in dominant Canadian society with performances of folkloric inclusion, by the time Justin Trudeau was in power, nationalist mega events reflected "Indigenous Canadian" culture as selfsame to Canadian culture, enacting a reconciliation hyperreality.

Canada 150 as an object, spawned various images of reconciliation euphoria and forged a complementary tripartite of spectacle, participation and hyperreality. Without participation, objects would not be consumed and spectacle unwitnessed, and the hyperreality of Canada—an evolved and inclusive nation in the global family—a fantasy never secured. Understanding how spectacle delivers consumable experience, with heightened effectiveness in this digital and selfie-crazed period, we can expand on Marx's analysis of commodity fetishism (Marx, 1867). Rather than an abstract value, Debord informs reconciliation as an idea or social force with "the domination of society by 'intangible as well as tangible things,' which reaches its absolute fulfillment in the spectacle, where the tangible world is replaced by a selection of images which exist above it, and which simultaneously impose themselves as the tangible par excellence. (Debord, 1967, no. 36).

As Indigenous and settler individuals alike offer labour as participatory subjects, does the state succeed to implicate, in particular those who demand it? Participation it seems is a condition that is constitutive of the engaged spectacle itself. And with so much at stake by trusting that the state has good intentions, participation becomes a sort of “painful pleasure” (Derrida, 1981, p. 99) and a pharmakon of sorts, “both a poison and a remedy, a benefit and a problem, a promise of emancipation as well as a form of subjection with strong compatibility with neoliberalism as a political economy.” (Barney, Coleman, Ross, Sterne, Tembeck, 2016, p x) Participating with reconciliation spectacle is best done with a certain discipline so that engaging goes past the state’s desire for short-term and dependent activities consumed and re-imagined into critical subjectivity. (Stiegler, 2010). Public engagement and circulation of images delivers the legitimation at the heart of reconciliation, an act of violence matched only by the aggressiveness of its coercive objectives. Settlers Canadians see inevitable progress, but these are in fact acts of endlessly repeating gestures and ideas framed as shifts delivering progress. Reconciliation is an ideal candidate for spectacle performing social action. The spectacle is something akin to the “opiate” that Marx thought religion was for the masses, only it is spread through the economics of conspicuous consumption and what Baudrillard would call sign logic. With millions of Canadians clambering for reconciliation, (but without any agreement on what it meant) colonialism as social control could persist based on consensus rather than force, as a cultural hegemony attained through the transformation of commodity society into the “society of the spectacle” (Best, p. 46-47). In this society, individuals consume reconciliation fabricated by others, rather than producing one of their own (Best, p. 47). It is best to think of the society of the spectacle as a more abstract commodity society, comprised of vast institutional systems that work (without outside force), to regulate human subjects to the critical and creative margins of society, and to obscure the nature and effects of its distorting power (Best, p. 47).

The spectacle is a crucial apparatus to dominate and control through non-violent systems, as well as to distract and satisfy opposition. Overt control and racism were initial choices for Canada, with less emphasis on indoctrination or rendering passive. The chronology of Canada’s hegemony through administrative deceit was achieved through a mix of carceral and dependency systems that has shapeshifted through a pageantry of new studies, reports, royal commissions, inquiries, tables, working groups, and consultations. Federal multiculturalism policies had been effective policies of

inclusion for a previous generation, and now reconciliation would operate in a similar vein in a country marked by white supremacy in its DNA, but which found it necessary to project an inclusive soul-searching amongst Canadian liberal society (Stanley, 2015). The spectacle of reconciliation would become a coercive device by the federal government to perpetuate power over Indigenous Peoples, and like with Trudeau senior's multiculturalism device, Canada would leverage the discourse of inclusivity to obfuscate its assimilation policies. To maintain hegemony, the federal government would project a constant narrative of compassion and inclusion to nourish Canadian's sense of identity and belonging. While not absolute, Canada is perpetually reinventing itself as an honest caretaker of Indigenous interests, and so there remains always a possibility of disruption, as capitalist forces are potent but not absolute. The Wet'suwet'en push-back in February 2020, in the fierce cold winter of the north, represents another spectacle, that of a reconciliation rebellion to Canada's colonial cavalcade which had become habituated to top-down approaches to resolving "the native problem." By livestreaming disruptions to Canadian reconciliation and extraction economy agendas, a new reconciliation narrative, positing Indigenous versus militarized state actors, turned upside down the previous decade's images of peaceful coexistence and mutuality. From Canada's 2008 apology for its residential schools' program, through Canada 150 festivities, to the winter 2020 declaration that "reconciliation is dead," the hyperreality cracked as thousands of competing messages were circulated. The spectacle of reconciliation was itself reappropriated and reconstructed reflecting the resilience of Indigenous Peoples to the duration of Canada's deceit.

Birthday for colonialism

The historical framework of Canada's colonial systems relies on concurrent mechanisms of Canadian government hostility and indifference. Examining the mechanics of federal reconciliation apparatus requires contextualizing their functionality amidst ongoing efforts at placating and undermining Indigenous Peoples, while these resilient survivors of Canadian genocide are offered iterations of structural dependency. This paper chronicles the struggles between these agendas, examining the role spectacle played in marking Canada 150, arguing that the underlying purpose was to continue subjugating participant subjects to deliver Canada's extractive capitalist economic model dependent on Indigenous lands and resources. From the language

used for residential school apology, to Canada's 150 birthday, to the Wet'suwet'en defense of their lands from invading RCMP forces, the lifting up and tearing down of reconciliation can be seen as a site of conflict for the public's imagination and Canadian public policy. On February 17, 2020, Canada's Official Opposition leader, Andrew Scheer reacted to Wet'suwet'en land defense efforts demanding "the rule of law" be enforced instead of the "weakest response to a national crisis in Canadian history" and one that lacked a "clear denunciation" of the illegal actions of "radical activists." (Raj, Lum, 2020). Posturing that the Crown or Canada has a monopoly on laws, truths and force, goes back to the very foundation of Canada when white men subjugated the ancestors of Indigenous Peoples conducting economic disruption and land defense today. While Scheer's federal Conservatives make pronouncements akin to the proclamation by US President George Bush during the Gulf War II, "either you are with us or with the terrorists," (Bush, 2001, 48) the truth is not so black and white. As Canadians debate their righteousness or collective mistakes as a country, what becomes clearer is the lack of agreement and the nature of active struggle for definitions and historical understanding.

By looking back at sesquicentennial celebrations, my intent is to describe and analyse the mechanics of the spectacle within the struggle for land and jurisdiction. During recent years of reconciliation, all the while Canada's economic policies further encroached on petrol state status (Livesey, 2018) following a decade of increased influence by the oil and gas industry into Canadian public policy. With reconciliation a social and ideological force involving Indigenous Peoples and settlers, its execution and integration with Canadian economic strategies is key to understanding reconciliation's ultimate goal. To tackle the question of reconciliation as spectacle without addressing the underlying issue of colonialism and land jurisdiction can render the investigator complicit in the very deceit Canada protracts. Canada's DNA is derived from centuries' old terra nullius thinking that asserts its rights subsume all Indigenous claims to sovereignty.

For settlers, the emergence of Canada as a modern nation-state was predicated on struggles for federalism and cultural differentiation with its southern neighbour, but for Indigenous it has always been about occupation through monopoly of force and a carceral state ensuring access to unceded lands and resources. Much of Canada's success in guaranteeing access to lands can be credited to oppressing Indigenous

organizing and rebellion through administrative systems. “The disciplinary role of legal-carceral regimes within wider colonial project, support not only ‘the management of public order’” (van Rossum, 2019, 65), but also extractive capitalism, displacement, and other genocidal systems. The British Royal Proclamation of 1763 decreed that Indian land was to be surrendered to the Crown through a treaty process (UBC, 2009), and yet 256 years later almost all lands claimed for British Columbia deliberately remain without treaties. In this state of abeyance, Canada opportunistically required those Indigenous populations who survived waves of genocide in the intervening time to either be wholly assimilated or live as wards of the state.

Early Canadian communications theorists, with their class and race privilege, enabled Canadian cultural institutions to promulgate stereotypes of Canadians as tolerant, inclusive and welcoming of others, and failed to prioritize or support remedies for the amoral displacement required by colonial capitalist expansionism. These beliefs accommodated the Canadian settler economy’s rapacious access to raw resources on 99.8% of land claimed by Canada. Arthur Manuel calls this the “0.2 per cent economy” (Pasternak, 2017, 5) representing the constrained total land base left by Canada for Indian reserves with more than 600 First Nations across the expanse claimed by Canada. Glen Coulthard suggests that the question of land and Indigenous Peoples’ relationship to the land has always been central in Canada’s primitive accumulation and the prime objective of separating the land from the People. “Indoctrinating the Indigenous population to the principles of private property, possessive individualism, and menial wage work (were) features of Canadian Indian policy.” (Coulthard, 2014, 12). As the commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1890 wrote, “the work of subdividing reserves has begun in earnest. The policy of destroying the tribal or communist system is assailed in every possible way and every effort (has been) made to implant a spirit of individual responsibility instead.” (Canada, 1890).

Both the Liberal Party of Canada and Conservative Party of Canada continuously operated an almost identical regulatory and policy framework to facilitate capital’s extraction of natural resources. Gradually, however, Canada would face challenges from within, and in 1997, the Supreme Court of Canada delivered the Delgamuukw Decision, stating that Aboriginal Title existed in Canada. In 2014, the Court’s Tsilhqot’in decision declared Indigenous rights and jurisdiction to traditional lands beyond their federal reserves. Each Indigenous court victory seemingly building on the previous and yet

Canada maintains a hostile posture and robust legal teams towards litigant First Nations seeking justice, what Squamish Nation leader, Khelsilem, describes as “there is no honour from the Crown” (personal communication, June 7, 2019). The largest purchaser of legal services in the Government of Canada has been (the routinely renamed and now restructured) Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. While land claims are complex and costly, billions of taxpayer dollars have been spent to perpetuate “the Crown’s failure to properly and/or meaningfully fulfill its duty to consult obligations owed to First Nations” (Ritchie, 2013). First Nations seeking their rights to be acknowledged and a fair share of economic rights from extractive industries on their lands are almost always likely to face the federal government in court as Canada responds with disrespect to the series of Supreme Court rulings and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) requirements for free prior and informed consent. This sociopathic approach of appearing to engage but simultaneously disrupting meaningful progress is hidden from view behind the hyperreality of images and desires for progress. While Canada spoke with great confidence in its public pronouncements, in internal documents, it recognizes it was playing with fire by ignoring rights. Former Indian and Northern Affairs Minister Jim Prentice in the Conservative government admitted as much: “the reality on the ground is that the constitutional and legal position of the first nations is very strong.” (Dembicki, 2011, 8). An FOI request from Trent University’s Shiri Pasternak exposed this internal discussion within his ministry: “There is a risk that the legal landscape can undermine the ability of the department to move forward in its policy agenda. There is a tension between the rights-based agenda of Aboriginal groups and the non-rights-based policy approaches of government. The Conservative government is planning in the next ten years to attract \$650B investment to mining, forestry, gas and oil projects, much of it on or near traditional aboriginal lands. Critics say the government is determined to evade Supreme Court rulings that recognize aboriginal peoples’ rights to a decision-making role in, even in some cases jurisdiction over, resource development in large areas of the country.” (Pasternak, Lukacs, 2014).

The track record of defiant First Nations challenging and winning is impressive: “Natives have racked up the most impressive legal winning streak in Canadian history with well over 150 wins challenging Canada” (Gallagher, 2012). As Canada faced a mounting track record of legal losses in courts weakening its unfettered access to lands,

the device of reconciliation was increasingly prioritized, and participatory and media events masked the weaker position of Canada suggesting genuine change was taking place. Genuine reconciliation and redress with the return of lands and the implementation of an international agreement such as UNDRIP threaten the status quo of international capital's right to Indigenous lands and resources. For Indigenous nations to challenge the assumptions of access by the Crown and multinational corporations is to defy the presumptions around Canada's right to exist and capital's right to move and occupy. Those who fight back are the modern heretics to unquestioned capitalism.

Canada's deployment of an array of administrative instruments and cultural projects should be considered within this historical framework and context, and recognized as images within spectacle intended to betray the truth for Indigenous populations. While the case study of Canada 150 will be examined in detail in the forthcoming pages, as a way of summarizing this section, it should be emphasized how the spectacle as strategy is inextricably interwoven with Canada's attempts to construct colonialism as an "Indian problem" and not a "settler problem" (Regan, 2010). In this way, the record of Canada towards Indigenous Peoples continues on from Pierre Trudeau's 1969 White Paper described by Joseph Cardinal as a "thinly disguised programme of extermination through assimilation" (Petten, 2017) to the Justin Trudeau's 2018 (Orwellian titled) Rights Recognition Framework. These reports and inquiries include: Government Apology to Former Students of Indian Residential Schools (2008); the TRC process (2008-2015); Interim Policy on Renewing the Comprehensive Claims Policy (2014); Murdered & Missing Indigenous Women and Children Public Inquiry (MMIW Inquiry) (2015-2019); appointment of Jody Wilson-Raybould as Canada's first Indigenous Minister of Justice (2015-19); the Auditor-General Report on Specific Claims (2016); the sesquicentennial Canada 150 celebrations (2017); the Standing Committee Report on Indigenous Affairs Report on Indigenous Land Rights (2018). Throughout these various iterations of federal policies, the foundational ideas and expectations of the Crown remain, that Indigenous Peoples will be subsumed by Canada as "Indigenous Canadians." Canada's inquiries into various mistaken policies functioned as acknowledgement that Canada is essentially good, notwithstanding some "bad apple" policies of a bygone era which need to be addressed, but leaving intact underlying colonial structures.

The Sunny Ways of Canada 150

With the Conservative government's apology for residential schools performed, and cross-Canada testimonials from residential school survivors collected from the TRC process, it would be a Liberal government's turn. On October 20, 2015, Trudeau's post-election speech promised "sunny ways," with a nod to an 1896 election victory by Wilfred Laurier in which he promised calm decorum to bring people together (CBC News, 2015). Aesop's 'The Wind and the Sun' fable are the roots of the parable, which reflects on the end of a decade of Conservative Party rule and the hope for Liberals ushering in change: "kindness effects more than severity" (Aesop's Fable). Emblematic of notions of change, the new government stated its commitment to deliver reconciliation and the (then recently published) TRC Final Report and 94 Calls to Action. The three federal paths to reconciliation were to explore new ways to work together at Recognition of Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination Discussion tables, negotiate modern treaties and self-government, and resolve specific claims by First Nations. Away from the media spotlight, the government continued with its decades-long attempts to realize the policy changes as set out in the Pierre Trudeau administration's 'White Paper,' described by Harold Cardinal in 1969 as a "thinly disguised programme of extermination through assimilation" (Petten, 2017, 7).

Justin Trudeau's lieutenant on many of these files was Jodi Wilson-Raybould who had served as regional chief of the BC AFN from 2009–2015, and co-authored a toolkit for self-governance with over 800 pages of methodically researched guidelines for Indigenous governance (Ducklow & Hyslop, 2019). Former Liberal Prime Minister Paul Martin had promoted her star candidacy to Justin Trudeau for the 2015 election. "The Liberals found in her someone who wanted to make change from inside the system, despite the mistrust many Indigenous people harbour for the federal government." (Forrest, 2019, 1). Wilson-Raybould described meeting Justin Trudeau in 2013, "we talked about the future of Canada and his convictions with respect to Indigenous peoples (sic). I came to see formal political participation as a chance to be part of a government whose leader made a solemn commitment to fundamental change with a vision for true reconciliation with Indigenous peoples." (Forrest, 2019, 6). As if to contradict her own image within the spectacle, Wilson-Raybould added: "I'm not convinced of the merits of working from within a system that's historically been one of the main perpetrators of

violations of our rights.” (Forrest, 2019, 13). On files pertaining to Indigenous sovereignty and the complicated and often misrepresented colonial apparatus of Canada’s relationship to Indigenous Peoples, as described in the preceding pages, Raybould-Wilson’s vision is a type of cultural sovereignty, not political sovereignty, with assimilation and Indigenous rights built on the underlining assumption that title belongs to the Crown, thus relying on the Doctrine of Discovery. This Canadian interpretation of UNDRIP requires Indigenous Peoples exchange their sovereignty and unextinguished rights for a more stripped-down fourth-tier of government, below that of municipal governments. Arthur Manuel exposed this communicative tactic of Canada: “The Department of Indian Affairs put together a group known as the SWAT (Special Words and Tactics) team, whose task was to twist the language of Aboriginal title and inherent right to self-government into the delegated municipal authority that was being offered—essentially the opposite of these terms’ accepted meanings— and try to sell to our people a wolf in sheep’s clothing.” (Manuel, Arthur, et al. 2015).

With the Rights Recognition Framework delivering the termination agenda and reconciliation as the spectacle, a competition for the hearts and minds of Canadians and Indigenous ensued. Neskonlith Chief Judy Wilson and Mohawk scholar Russ Diabo were key organisers of the resistance against Canada’s Rights Recognition Framework agenda, touring Indigenous communities throughout 2018-2019 delivering popular education and media briefings. Due to the Indigenous resistance their efforts galvanized, the federal government failed to implement the Rights Framework into law (as they had intended to) prior to the federal election of 2019. Wilson stated: “Canada’s interest in these processes is a blatant conflict of interest.” (Diabo, 2018, 31:30). As Canada came face-to-face with its 150th birthday as a nation, it sought to escape its past, moving forward to celebrate a new relationship. By moving towards extinguishing rights, instead of “nation to nation,” Canada hoped to admonish itself from its own colonial past by forcing Indigenous jurisdictions to fall under federal and provincial control and “vulnerable to ...governments’ voracious extraction and development appetites.” (Palmer, 2019). The reconciliation spectacle therefore played a pivotal role at a key moment to distract the Canadian public to trust in the hyperreality which heralded a transformative new relation and posited grievances as historicized and minimized artifacts of a previous reality. The ‘sunny ways’ performance was just the opening, with Canada promising to finally follow the global communities’ adoption of UNDRIP, while

Canada poured extraordinary financial resources into all things “reconciliation” with \$500 million for a birthday party for Canada planned for a year hence. (Hannay, 2017).

Canada 150: Vancouver’s Drum is Calling

The City of Vancouver declared itself “The City of Reconciliation,” in 2014, and its website stated it intended to “align the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) call to actions with our work” including “recognition of Vancouver’s situation on unceded Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh traditional territory.” Such declarations might contribute to incremental policy changes for off-reserve and urban Indigenous Peoples, however they risk masking the reality that municipal-level governments have little authority over the ongoing structures of colonialism. In anticipation of Canada’s 150th birthday, on January 19, 2016, Vancouver City Council directed City staff “to use the opportunity of Canada’s 150 anniversary celebration as a time for Indigenous recognition and celebration with all Vancouverites.” (Specht, 2017). In spite of its stated mission to work in collaboration with the three local First Nation governments (Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh), the City unilaterally approached Canada for funding for its Canada 150 plans. The City devised a three-pronged celebration including a celebration of seagoing canoe culture (in partnership with Pulling Together canoe journey coproduced with local police agencies), a redux of the City’s 2012 Walk for Reconciliation, and a 10-day aboriginal cultural tourism festival (City of Vancouver, n.d.). Canada’s 150th birthday would be marked by a reconciliation-themed Drum Is Calling Festival pitched to celebrate Vancouver as the Aboriginal tourism capital of Canada. The festival featured nightly celebrations in downtown Vancouver at Larwell Park, a parking lot turned “live site” for the 2010 Olympic Games and 2014 FIFA Women’s World Cup, (and site of burning police cars during Vancouver’s Hockey Riot.) (Larwell Park, n.d.).

Uncomfortable with appearing to explicitly celebrate Canada’s birthday, members of the Mayor’s Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committee worked with Vancouver City Councillor Andrea Reimer (personal communications, 2015) to add a plus sign in Canada 150+ to symbolize “that we were commemorating our Indigenous cultural heritage before confederation, acknowledged our journey over the past 150 years, and celebrated what’s to come as we embraced, ‘Moving forward together.’” (City of Vancouver, n.d.)

Encouraging local Indigenous governments to collaborate with the City was not new, in fact to secure the 2010 Olympics mega event required agreement so the City's Olympic Bid would not be blocked by local nations. To secure their participation, the Games delivered them procurement opportunities, the building of cultural centres, financial payments, and return of 50 acres of land held by the Crown. This was achieved through the creation of the Four Host First Nations (FHFN) acting as a mechanism by which local Indigenous governments could collaborate on joint interests and have a common negotiating instrument with Canada. Throughout the 2010 planning process, the question of unceded land title was never on the table, and unfettered rights was equally kept away from the settler population by Olympic sponsoring media business. For the Olympics, both settler and First Nation governments both had a strategic interest to appear as peaceful citizens in front of the global media to gain from the deal.

In telling the story of revising historical colonial truths, as CEO of the FHFN, Tewanee Joseph describes to a TEDx audience how he “spearheaded the largest re-brand of Aboriginal people in Canadian history” (Joseph, 2016). In Joseph's eyes, the 2010 project brought substantial financial and cultural benefits to First Nations across Canada and advanced their place in Canadian society.

Fast-forward from the Olympic Bid period of 2002–2004 to 2016 when the City of Vancouver chose to host another marquee event, this time celebrating Canada's birthday. The City's first Indigenous contractor for Canada 150 was again, Tewanee Joseph, hired to advise on protocol and strategy. A notable difference to the Olympics spectacle, was that local Nations were never involved in the project's development, and had very little incentive to join on after the City and federal governments conceived of the project. Notably, Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh Nation Councils only agreed to sign on much later into 2017, just weeks before the events. The initiative received a \$2.3-million grant from the federal government (Smith, 2016) with another \$2.4 million from the City of Vancouver, and was operated out of the City Manager's Office (the same City department which led the neoliberal Olympic Bid management for the City). Instead of issuing a request for proposals or delivering the outcomes with a peer-juried process (standard in the publicly-funded culture sector), or directing the money directly to the three local Coast Salish nations and their artists, or downloading the funding so that (in the spirit of reconciliation) Coast Salish communities could self-determine their own priorities for Canada 150, the City Manager's office controlled the mega event. The

City Manager's Office contracted production to BrandLIVE, a high-profile corporate event production company with no role in Indigenous arts and culture in the region, but with a business model creating audiences as commodities (Smythe, 1981) "connecting people with brands + ideas through authentic and unforgettable live experiences." (BrandLive, n.d.)

While the federal funding was secured by the City promising a celebration of Indigenous culture for Vancouver's tourist market, the events largely attracted local urban Indigenous populations to the summer folk festival-style events, with highlight act (Hawaii-based) Buffy St. Marie performing with her (Canadian-based) band in the open air in downtown Vancouver on a summer night. The experience for urban Indigenous community members was gratefully received. This was a common format as Canada 150 featured multiple identical coast-to-coast-to-coast broadcast events with Buffy St. Marie and A Tribe Called Red on stage from Ottawa for three nationally televised events on April 1 for the JUNO Awards, June 21 National Indigenous Day, and July 1 Canada Day. Vancouver's events perpetuated the status quo, with the bulk of federal funding going to white settler production companies and mainstream entertainment industry suppliers across Canada. On any other day, these production suppliers would be rigging a dentist convention, bank-sponsored marathon or cancer fundraiser. The political economy of the production in this way funded settler-owned and staffed companies instead of building capacity for Indigenous owned companies and communities. Curating was tightly controlled by cultural managers whose sympathies lay in promoting City objectives, multiculturalism and pan-nativism, further obstructing place-based expressions of Coast Salish cultural revitalization. The vast majority of contracted and participating Canada 150+ curators and arts organisations were not Coast Salish. Worth noting, also, none of the participating organisations had internal Coast Salish cultural policies (beyond practicing territorial acknowledgements), and almost none had Coast Salish staff or Board members. The minimal amount of Coast Salish cultural participation, direction and ownership is revealing given the entire affair was initiated by the City of Vancouver. In summary, almost all of the professional labour producing the Indigenous-themed festival was from non-Coast Salish planners, curators, and consultants.

Exemplary of the skewed economy of Vancouver's Drum is Calling Festival was the Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week program, which second only to Buffy St

Marie's mainstage performance, was the most well-attended event of the festival. The multi-day activity drew the largest crowds to witness Indigenous fashion designers, and young Indigenous women models from East Vancouver's "urban reservation," all volunteers who contributed hours of their time. The project was initially offered \$1800 to participate, representing 0.07% of the Festival's budget, while a project of that scale costs \$200,000 to produce (or 8.6% of the festival's budget.) (Mitton, 2019). The considerable unpaid labour effort was provided for free to the City of Vancouver by dozens of Indigenous women, including many survivors of the foster care system and other vulnerable members of society. Despite the lack of payment to these women from the festival, in documentation noting the success of the federal investment in the City produced spectacle, the Indigenous women were prominently highlighted. The Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week example from The Drum is Calling Festival shows how Indigenous women's labour which received the most public attention was not economically valued in the same way white male labourers were valued with union-scale production wages. With regards to cultural development principles, the City might have invested in developing marginalized artists careers and cultural productions rather than funding the status quo.

The stages would feature artists like Buffy St. Marie alongside a majority Indigenous migrants to Coast Salish lands, including Cree, Haida, Anishnaabeg, Metis, and others reflecting a diversity of Indigenous from across Canada. Pan-nativism in this way benefits Canadian colonialism promoting inclusivity and humanism at the core of the Canada brand, while overwhelming Indigenous from 'Vancouver' who have their own regional (Coast Salish) cultural representation distinct from far-off Indigenous populations. Voices for Indigenous self-government and anti-colonial resistance are constrained and excluded by presentation formats and dictum of the occasion. Quantitative data analysis leading up to Canada 150, revealing the state of Coast Salish culture and representation, as well as Canada Council funding levels, presented a Coast Salish cultural sector underdeveloped when compared to both the settler cultural industry and migrant Indigenous artist populations. Compared to the arts sector as a whole operating in Vancouver, Coast Salish artists receiving funding from any Canada Council program in 2014/15 was an abysmal 0.02% of Canada Council spending in Metro Vancouver. (Low, 2016) An observer might expect equity and targeted Canada Council funding for Indigenous artists in Metro Vancouver in 2014/2015 to be much

better than, but only 3% of Indigenous artists or arts groups receiving funding were Coast Salish. With 97% of funding going to migrant or non-Coast Salish artists, Indigenous artists inadvertently advance the colonial goal of liberal pan-nativism and Coast Salish erasure by taking up public space through arts festivals and venues that have no Coast Salish cultural policies.

While marquee events such as the Olympics delivered the legacy of cultural facilities and investments, it is unclear if the greater net benefit does not accrue to the settler colonial governments and the greater Canadian society as a whole. How then can a structurally disadvantaged community actually influence mass society? Through the Olympics or Canada 150+ initiatives, is mainstream Canada willing to absorb and improve, or simply accommodate Indigenous People's needs and realities? (McLaughlin, 1993, 599). Instead of prioritizing Coast Salish culture's growth and survival, the City of Vancouver participated in an exploitative and colonial exercise. As the City (and Canada) produced Canada 150+, they both benefited from the absence of cultural planning frameworks which could be set out by the Coast Salish cultural sector when solicited for mega events. Without power being exchanged (such as was negotiated for the 2020 Olympics) governments reinforce tokenistic relationships, instead of investing proactively and sharing appropriate cultural planning strategies so that investments can emphasize development and legacy for each participating First Nations partner. By using the absence or limited cultural infrastructure and policies from First Nations, the City reinforced a paternalistic and infantilized relationship led by brokers and gatekeepers, many well-intentioned, but nonetheless with an almost complete absence of Coast Salish leadership and accountability. Instead of investing in multi-year reconciliation and redress cultural funding to address the gaps in Coast Salish access and participation in the regional cultural sector, the City proposed a "melting pot" of multiculturalism, and pan-native identity politics in direct competition to the nascent Coast Salish nationhood movement.

When it is not blended with Indigenous culture from across Canada, the Coast Salish cultural resurgence is therefore hyper-commodified, fetishized and packaged for the notion of aboriginal cultural tourism. This takes place at the arrival gates of the Vancouver International Airport, to the 2010 Olympics artwork, and Canada 150+ celebrations. Coast Salish culture receives little structural and ongoing funding, yet is being used disproportionately, as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was used

for, to present the notion that all is well and “business as usual.” But there is an extreme disconnect between the health and presentation of Coast Salish culture and the number of Coast Salish artists actually employed full-time in their craft, compared to the city as a multi-billion dollar economic zone.

Throughout the branding for Vancouver’s celebration of Canada’s 150th birthday, Coast Salish and migrant Indigenous Peoples are marketed as a reconciliation device consistent with recent City efforts to promote good relations with the three local First Nation governments. “The modern City of Vancouver was founded on the traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations and that these territories were never ceded through treaty, war or surrender” (City of Vancouver, 2014). While a City recognition of Indigenous rights has no legal or jurisdictional basis it does promote the liberal insinuation of a shared partnership with other governments, although the true reality of the relationship is one of obfuscating historical facts and contradictions and marred with complex and competing interests. Many of these are kept from the public as the governments jockey and posture through this so-called reconciliation era.

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The motivation to the settler state of Canada to pressure First Nation governments’ complicity in reconciliation-themed marquee events can be construed as a structure to scatter opposition. Glen Coulthard states “what is treated in the Canadian discourse of reconciliation as an unhealthy and debilitating incapacity to forgive and move on is actually a sign of critical consciousness, of our sense of injustice, and of our awareness of and unwillingness to reconcile” (Coulthard, 2014, x). At its own peril, the colonial state avoids surrendering Crown lands, and so coerces under-resourced Indigenous communities to accept monies to participate in these elaborate performances of masking and postponing genuine reconciliation. Is there an ability for Coast Salish culture to retain an element of counter-public sphere (McLaughlin, 1993, 355) within a

colonial public sphere? By revising the colonial sphere with the goal of delegitimizing or strengthening Coast Salish First Nation governments, the situation reflects what Glen Coulthard (2014) describes as Indigenous self-government defined by the Canadian state.

While appearing to promote Indigenous cultural resurgence, settler cultural practices instead cherry-pick when and how they use Coast Salish culture to adorn its festivals and events. If Canadian cultural institutions and governments were to invest in Coast Salish culture and language – as is done propping up regional cultural interests in Quebec – the assimilation agenda of the federal governments would be less advanced, but the quality of authentic inclusion would be higher. Settlers hold complex and contradictory beliefs about the nature of their Canadian society, but regardless of intentions, denying Coast Salish culture its rightful place in occupied Coast Salish Territory ensures it will continue to be undermined in the landscape, the schools, museums, arts spaces and places of power. Coast Salish culture instead will be marginalized by dominant society, used as an adornment by institutions, and stand as a symbol of the hypocrisy of the generosity of Canadian multiculturalism.

Coast Salish themselves will be used by settlers to deny accountability for a past marred by genocide, and one which is only in the recent era working through the intergenerational experience of violence, trauma, and criminalization. Until landmarks are returned to their rightful Coast Salish place-names, and settler society moves beyond the liberal instrument of territorial acknowledgements, and colonial governments work for genuine reconciliation and redress, and the Coast Salish are held up by dominant culture as the legitimate cultural heroes of their unceded lands and waters, this place shall be merely the forever colonial wild west.

“We’re a country based on immigration going right back to our quote indigenous people unquote, who were immigrants as well, 10, 12, 14,000 years ago,” stated Governor-General David Johnston, on June 16, 2017. (Pedwell, 2017). Just two weeks before the crescendo of Canada 150, the country’s official sesquicentennial celebrations on which the Federal Government was spending a half billion dollars, the head of state made this flippant remark. Johnston later walked back and apologized for the turn-of-phrase, but it was nevertheless revealing of the colonial mentality at the heart of the Canadian settler-colonial project. The notion of First Nations as ‘immigrants like the rest

of us' is one of the rhetorical strategies for denying the fundamental contradictions facing the Canadian establishment: Indigenous sovereignty, rights, and title. Johnston's remarks were awkward for the powers-that-be, because these days the government practices are more sophisticated strategy for denying and obfuscating Indigenous rights.

Assessing the political economy of participants' labour in delivering desired outcomes for elites is useful in understanding the function of Vancouver's reconciliation spectacle. Dallas Smythe describes how value is gained while a disproportionate exchange takes place through his audience commodity theory (Smythe, 1981). Smythe's analysis is instructive to emphasize the political economy as colonial governments fund and produce free participatory events for Indigenous Peoples on Canada's 150th birthday. The City benefited from the output of participants' labour with thousands of social media 'likes' and posts circulating affirming peoples' participation in reconciliation. The City's events featured low attendance numbers, few unique daily visitors, and the bulk of the audiences were disproportionately off-reserve Indigenous Peoples enjoying the free Indigenous performances. The actual cost of the free events would have represented a public subsidy of more than \$100 per attendee, begging the question if more benefits would have accrued to the Indigenous participants if they were paid to stay home and used a direct payment of \$100 for groceries or rent. The participatory labour of the spectacle, notably Indigenous People's self-broadcasting reconciliation, also provided cover for dominant society (notably white settlers) who largely did not contribute their own labour towards reconciliation in any public process. For the curious settler public, and the Indigenous participants, how would they know what they see, when their desires are sold back to them in these images, when Canada's economic agenda for continuous economic growth simply takes place, and reconciliation delivers distraction and denial. "Many Canadians are obviously delighted by this sort of meaningless, no-strings-attached reconciliation. For them, it is having your cake and eating it too. You not only get to keep the stolen land, you are forgiven for the theft and you can emotionally reconcile all this with our leaders (who you have, in fact, hired for that purpose)." (Manuel, Derrickson, 2017).

The collective fictions that Canada 150 are structured by, projects a view of Canada's capitalist economy that is deeply concerned with the empowering of colonized cultures, but the reality that we all know to be the case by virtue of our lived experience is, in fact, the opposite, increased poverty among colonized subjects.

“Capitalism’s rapacity depends upon various forms of sheathing.” (Fisher, 2009, 46). The basic contradiction of celebrating 150 years of growth and prosperity is the need for antiproduction, the ideological sheathing through PR, branding and advertising. Canada’s version of reconciliation and its string of media reproductions and participatory mega events all served to seduce participants to suspend criticality and believe they were not just witnessing historic events, bringing that change to life through their engagement with this new soft power. Hammering home the message of inclusion and change, Canada 150 celebrations presented the opportunity to stage a spontaneous Indigenizing of public space and civic theatres, typically structurally marginalized from “Indigenous Canadians” who would temporarily share the (figurative) stage with other Canadians. Hakim Bey describes these produced moments as Temporary Autonomous Zones, where subjects resist alienation or ideologies and people “already know ourselves as free beings” (Bey, 1985, 131). “The apparatus of Control — the “State” — must (or so we must assume) continue to deliquesce and petrify simultaneously, must progress on its present course in which hysterical rigidity comes more and more to mask a vacuity, an abyss of power. As power ‘disappears,’ our will to power must be disappearance” (Bey, 1985, 131).

Conducting the action of celebrating a system designed to annihilate Indigenous culture, languages, and economies require tightly-crafted messaging and unpacking. Over the bombastic noise of anniversary fireworks, and self-congratulatory speeches by settler politicians, the language of denial seeps into all of the forcibly vacated spaces and the growing population of settler immigrants is assured that the business of occupation is confirmed with a unified plan set to be followed. Celebrations direct the public’s gaze to pomp and circumstance instilled with liberal “good intentions” of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau with his hand-over-the-heart theatrics (Hopper, 2015). If the celebration were one of exposing the raw ugliness of domination then the public would become alienated from the charade. Instead, it is made beautiful, and the Indigenous People themselves are invited to perform to fellow Canadians. By constructing reconciliation as an act performed by Indigenous, settlers escape with their labour and benefit from alleviating settler shame, a “self-directed emotion that seeks to be discharged through reconciliatory processes that are dependent on liberal recognition.” (Kizuk, 2020, 1) Reconciliation therefore remains a “mere optics of justice wedded to settler ignorance.” (Kizuk, 2020, 1)

With dominant society's fixation on dates and anniversaries to justify its occupation, citizens rely on placeholder anchors of history such as a moment when a whisky bar and township were established (concurrent in Vancouver's case), and ignore the continued and ongoing occupation and use of the lands and waters by the Coast Salish. "Cultural repression becomes part of consensual reality: blind spots, shared illusions and zones of tacitly denied information. Collective memory is pressed into shape by being repressed (Cohen, 2001, p. 137). Colonial festivals and anniversaries serve the role of reformatting the collective hard drive, to use a contemporary analogy. Vancouver's Canada 150+ programs are just one example of how cultural events and celebrations are subtly weaponized to help reaffirm notions of Canada as consensual project, presenting "our Indigenous peoples" as equal partners – the better to deny their fundamental rights to the land.

Conclusion

Far from the cameras, or Ottawa, the ugly reality of the relationship in recent decades is characterized by the many legal hostilities outlined previously, and the hundreds of millions in legal bills (Ritchie, 2013) accrued by far away band councils asserting their legal rights as the resource economy runs roughshod through their unceded or treated lands. Like the Wet'suwet'en land defense of winter 2020 revealed, if their opposition is rooted in sovereigntist understandings, then on top of any legal filings by corporations or the Crown they will face immediate criminalization for their defensive actions. In these circumstances, mainstream media, the Crown and conservative lobbyists characterize these land defenders as protesters or a special interest group. Such is the discursive struggle confronted within this carceral system whereby families protecting trap lines, or traditional foraging or transportation corridors are most often faced with no voice within dialectics of mainstream media's reportage. When Indigenous are not threatened at this stage and persist to assert their rights, then Canadian history shows occasional threatened or open armed conflict will result. This evident conflict and contradiction vis-a-vis asserting established legal rights is reduced and derailed by a state of hyperreality, in turn, sustained by mainstream media and public institutions projecting Canada as a place governed by liberal good intentions and the promise of social progress for all. Disputes are therefore minimized as aberrations

not simply symptomatic of the root cause of colonialism and its rapacious extractive capitalism where honour is saved for shareholders.

This has been the story of Canada over 150 years, and 2017 perhaps its peak moment with sesquicentennial birthday celebrations and reconciliation promising ambiguous outcomes for the critical observer. For survivors of residential schools who experienced these conflicted, but liberatory Canada 150 moments, the colonial state mounted temporary conditions of reconciliation, “the festal aspect of the moment. However brief. It was ‘epiphanic’—a peak experience on the social as well as individual scale.” (Bey, 1985, p. 132). With the arrival of “sunny ways,” the spectacle of reconciliation appeared genuine, which can also be thought of as brief aberrations from decades of overt domination and manipulation of Indigenous Peoples. Canada appropriated and commodified the desire for freedom, and challenged Indigenous Peoples who may have foreseen the perils of temporary peak experiences with their festival-like performances and notions of universal coming together. Instead of Coast Salish Nations being funded to create their own response to Canada 150, the social function of culture, “instead of being founded on ritual, is based on a different practice: politics” (Benjamin, 2018, 106). The spectacle is a distracting event allowing the masses to participate and celebrate while trivialized the existing and (largely) unexamined issues of ongoing colonialism. Canada 150 and Canada 150+ represent choosing to sugarcoat the ugly reality, portraying instead pomp and gesture signaling an inclusive society in touch with its inner demons. “The public is an examiner, but an absent-minded one”. (Robinson, 2013, 6).

At risk of offending Indigenous Persons who chose to share their difficult stories with the Truth & Reconciliation Commission hearings, and who chose to participate in Canada 150 (despite the contradictions) I make the argument that the events and symbols of reconciliation are not just to address history but in fact to bury it. A red-washed consensual arrival at post-colonialism refurbishes the exploitative relationships between capital and oppressed people. With the need to reassure markets and predictably provide industrial access to lands, which are increasingly being legally defended by Indigenous governments, reconciliation provided a timely correction to a historical wrong through generating a facade of reckoning and redress. Performing a confrontation to colonialism, but in reality, merely daylighting a small fraction of the overall colonial enterprise, Canada enclosed only those policies it wished to place on the

table, for negotiations or expose. Large parts of the colonial infrastructure could remain, and in this way it is a neocolonial mechanism to reset and reoccupy while requiring only slight adjustments to the colonial settler economy and culture. Addressing Canada's genocide, equitable funding for Indigenous housing, welfare and job creation, returns of lands and other repairs would not be asked by the settler body public, in spite of a large mobilisation of 6,500 Indigenous TRC witnesses revealing the horrors of the residential school system.

Reconciliation and Canadian nationalism used well-trodden models of exhibitions and social organisation to promote reason and progress. These mega events and spectacles provide legitimacy for "rationally organizing space and time, consolidating new ways of understanding the world, new urban and national spaces, new forms of social association, and new initiatives for educating and governing people" (Gruneau, 2017, 102). Canada placed major public events at the core of the reconciliation model, bookended by the Harper apology and Canada's 150th birthday, to herald its accomplishments and to declare itself post-colonial. This reconciling of social antagonisms through the free circulation of ideas (Gruneau, 2017, 112) created the spectacle of a national reckoning, and used instruments of education (such as Reconciliation Canada) and dialogue to assuage white settler guilt and brought structure to a hitherto myriad of confusion regarding history and settler complicity. This tension and daylighting of complex historical issues functioned to disrupt the status quo and contributed to the "multidimensional" character of spectacles of modernity (Roche, 2000, p. 8).

Hijacking of these issues by Canada, and the "reconciliation lite" foisted upon Indigenous Peoples (as a one-size fits all remedy) is deliberately designed to obscure class-based strategies and crosscultural alliances. Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair of the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) serving from 2009 until 2015, and then appointed a Senator in Ottawa ironically presents an examination of reconciliation with a fulsome retrospective ability. Recently he has decried the lack of progress on reconciliation pointing to provincial conservative governments halting progress on Indigenous education. He also acknowledged to APTN that the risk of reconciliation failing "risks creating a population of young Indigenous people who will be prone to thinking about acting out violently against society" (Nation to Nation, 2019). Sinclair quoted Frantz Fanon (who wrote in 1948) "that

a colonized people, who have been oppressed by one society, will eventually take out their violence on the oppressor, then you'll have a rebellion." Missing out doing genuine reconciliation and redress, the work of addressing and dismantling colonialism in Canada has largely been punted ahead to a younger generation, or to be continually fended off until that explosion of angst as Fanon predicted.

If Canada truly wanted to end colonialism it would be quickly disrupted by international capital who enjoy decades of low-cost access to land for extractive industries. So in that light, can Justin Trudeau or Stephen Harper's governments be blamed for attempting to use apology and spectacle when real reconciliation and redress would impact economic growth and redistribute economic power away from financial markets and into Indigenous communities connected to the very land which has made Canada wealthy? Reconciliation was therefore weaponized as a cloaking device to enable this settler extractive economy to operate with minimal restraint despite the years of deteriorating relations with Indigenous. Real change was never part of the agenda and "the latest wave of Trudeaumania was a slick status-quo political machine, backed by a cast of corporate elites and lobbyists who expected a pay-off from Liberal rule in Ottawa. A reconciliation industry masking the ongoing theft of Indigenous lands. Trudeau's much hyped new politics was in fact an Instagram-era spin on an old Liberal approach: playing to people's desire for far-reaching change in order to ward off a backlash against the Canadian elite." (Lukacs, 2019) As reconciliation was celebrated, Canada acted on assimilation, effectively masking the true consequences of its policies. Discarding this past abusive relation wholesale delivers assimilation under the guise of freedom. "If binding decisions are legitimate, that is, if they can be made independently of the concrete exercise of force and of the manifest threat of sanctions, and can be regularly implemented even against the interests of those affected, they must be considered as the fulfillment of recognized norms." (Habermas, 1975, p. 101).

While Indigenous scholarship and the next generation of Indigenous resistance will guide future resolutions, settlers and migrants can also better understand and undermine their own culture and dominant systems that harass and postpone the inevitable unravelling of Canada. This paper, as a conversation amongst settlers and observers, has simply attempted to expose the myth of Canada as an egalitarian and tolerant society which masks the persistently privileged position of whiteness and its possession of the nation which simultaneously disavows Indigenous sovereignty.

(*Moreton-Robinson, 2015. p5*). The mechanics and discourse of media events celebrating Canada's reconciling 150 years of colonialism can be easier to understand by understanding the settler and European critics who contributed to unravelling and debunking the very settler construction of Canada's myths and white nationalist DNA. The struggle against colonialism and for self-determination persists, and examiners of history can be productive by understanding reconciliation and its contradictions this past decade.

With the brevity of this paper a container for tackling the spectacle of reconciliation, a question for further study concerns redress efforts outside of Canada's control, through citizen direct actions and redress work between settlers, migrants, and Indigenous communities to bypass the multicultural and liberal legacies that tie-up genuine change. As the hypocrisy of federal multicultural and reconciliation policies are exposed, what are the relationship potentials between Indigenous and other racialized communities? Further comparative research on counter-narratives might show how a genuine reconciliation process would be constructed with Indigenous grassroots communities and democratically elected leaders truly resolving Canadian colonialism. Something modelled more on The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa after the end of apartheid with its court-like restorative justice apparatus, instead of fast-tracking the "Canada 2.0" performance which I have critiqued here. Removing justice and culpability from the TRC process further ensured Canada and its religious institutional partners would emerge unscathed.

Deliberately engaging Indigenous artists and audiences to manifest a performance of soul-searching, thereby avoided legitimate and actual conflict. To emphasize residential schools and leave alone the issue of genocide and colonialism serves both Canada and its dominant subjects. The objective then is to push the spectacle to capture as many subjects as cost efficient, and the balance will be disposable within neoliberal and colonial social policy. Canada has sought to rethink colonialism as a psychological exercise of healing emotional wounds and designed spectacle with neoliberal partners in the City of Vancouver's The Drum is Calling Festival and Reconciliation Canada, so that the structure of colonialism could go undetected. The issues not resolved through reconciliation remain constantly pushed out of the centre of everyday life and survive at the margins. While some accommodations have been won through residential survivors' settlement agreements, overall as witnessed on the snowy

Morice River Bridge in Wet'suwet'en, Canada continues to demand a monopoly on force and power. To deny a remedy to colonialism through the spectacle of reconciliation is more cost efficient for Canada.

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