

**Starting from now, learning to see:
Introducing pre-service teachers to the process of Indigenous
education through a phenomenological art inquiry**

**by
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Abstract

This thesis explores how a practice in phenomenological art inquiry might help pre-service teachers begin the process of decolonizing themselves so they are better prepared to include Indigenous education in their lessons in sensitive and culturally relevant ways. Drawing on a review of literature in the areas of critical pedagogy, Indigenous education, and phenomenology, two central questions drive this research: 1) how might student teacher engagement in phenomenological art inquiry, informed by Ann Curry-Stevens' framework for transformative education for privileged learners (2007), impact on student teachers' perceptions of Indigenous peoples and education and help them enact more holistic approaches to Indigenous education that avoid replicating colonial stereotypes? and 2) how might art precipitate the kind of ontological uncertainty necessary for transformative education to ensue?

To address these questions, a pre-service teacher education program called *Starting from Now, Learning to See* was developed to assist participants in acquiring the dispositions and strategies necessary to deliver effective and inclusive Indigenous education to their students. The program exposed student teachers to several examples of political- and identity-based contemporary Aboriginal art with the aim of disrupting their perceptions of Indigenous peoples, while at the same time providing alternate, and arguably more inclusive, versions of the Canadian narrative. In particular, students were asked to undertake a process of phenomenological art inquiry in relation to the art works presented. This process asked them to become aware of their own reactions and responses not only to the aesthetics of each work, but also to the discourses each work introduced, such as the impact of colonization on Indigenous peoples, misrepresentation, and erasure. The program was implemented with a cohort of 30 pre-service teachers in the Professional Development Program (PDP) at Simon Fraser University during five sessions over a 4-month period. A qualitative study using thematic analysis explored participants' written reflections and a multimodal social semiotic discourse analysis was used to examine participants' phenomenological inquiry into Indigenous artwork.

The findings indicated that learning to engage with art in a dialogic and phenomenological fashion is highly effective in helping student teachers detect and correct gaps in their knowledge by offering them a point of entry into Indigenous teaching and learning that is both contemporary and relevant. There was also considerable evidence of on-going resistance to the inclusion of Indigenous education in schools both from participants, from Faculty Associates and others at the school sites in which their practicums were set, which points to the need for post-secondary institutions to increase their efforts to improve the depth and degree to which they support Indigenous education. In particular, more needs to be done to provide careful instruction, ideally from Indigenous mentors, and ample time for student teachers to absorb and internalise the concepts associated with Indigenous education, especially given that the current structure of PDP embeds this aspect of instruction within larger pedagogical discourses. The study also revealed a pressing need for improved Indigenous education in our K-12 systems, as many students arrived in the PDP with significant self-identified deficits in their knowledge and understanding of Indigenous peoples.

Keywords: Indigenous education, decolonizing education, transformative education, phenomenological art inquiry, arts education

Dedication

I wish to dedicate this book to my mother, Eileen Leddy, and to my son, Benjamin Knudsen, who know better than anyone how intense this process has been at times, and who have loved me anyway. Your unconditional support, tolerance, and encouragement has meant the world to me, and always will. You *are* my heart.

To all of my ancestors, Indigenous and Settler, whose efforts while alive have allowed me to be where I am now, thank you, merci, and kinaniskomitin. I owe you much and will not let you down.

And for the late Dr. Cheryl Mezaros, whose legacy of strong academic work in Arts Education, and unwavering faith in me during the years we were able to walk this plane together, remain a central source of inspiration. Thank you.

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List of Acronyms

| | |
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| SFU | Simon Fraser University |
| PDP | Professional Development Program |
| FA | Faculty Associate |
| FM | Faculty Member |
| ST | Student Teacher |

Chapter 1.

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Because of the nature of the work presented here, it is very important to introduce myself in a way that is traditional to these lands, by giving my family connections. I am originally from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, which is treaty Six territory, homeland to the Cree, Saultaux, and Métis people. Today, I live on the unceded territory of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-watuth peoples. On my Father's side, I am Métis, with links to both the Red River community in Manitoba, and St. Louis, a well-known Métis settlement in Saskatchewan. I am also, through my paternal grandmother, 13th generation French Canadian. On my mother's side, I am a second generation Settler, of Irish and Scottish descent. As many of us do, I sometimes struggle with my identity, especially in light of the work I feel called to do, knowing that from one standpoint, I have only a small foothold on the landscape of Indigeneity. But identity is comprised of more than mere genetics; it involves family and community connections, values acquired through formal and informal learning, community acceptance, and the commitment to work towards community improvement and well-being. In this chapter, I set the stage for my research by exploring the personal and professional forces that have led me to this work.

In many ways, this research is a response to questions that first arose for me while I was an elementary school student. I recall very clearly the moment in a grade six social studies class when a teacher began to address the question of Canadian identity. After Pierre Trudeau's 1971 declaration that Canada would adopt an official policy of multiculturalism, which came to fruition in 1982 with the repatriation of our constitution, there was a lot of discussion of what that would mean for Canada, and for our future. While on the surface, this shift in public policy fit well within our growing international reputation as a peaceful and welcoming country, it also threw into question the notion of what it might mean to be Canadian. Without realising it, we, students and teachers alike, were already primed with the notion that Canada was a largely white European

influenced country, our conventions and traditions drawn from our British and French forebears. In our consideration of Canadian identity during that school year, there was no discussion at all of Indigenous influence in the makeup of our national narratives; nor did any of my classmates raise this omission as an issue, even though there were several Indigenous students in the class at the time (it should be noted that while I was accepted by my Indigenous classmates, I did not identify as Indigenous at the time, but felt strong loyalty towards them and concern for their well-being). Our teacher simply said that Canadian identity was hard to define, that our culture was hard to pin down because it was so heavily rooted in our ties to Britain. That troubled me in a way I could not then fully articulate, and I carried the question of Canadian identity with me all through my schooling, and through my explorations of my own hybrid identity as it emerged.

1.2. Family Context and Early Relationships

It was not until I was thirty-years-old, with a newborn son, that I was finally able to name the nation to which I belonged. Raised by my mother, I grew up knowing that I was just a little different from the rest of my family. I made many friends amongst the Indigenous kids in my neighbourhood and at school, and formed bonds and relationships that persist to this day. When I was out in the world of our small prairie city, I often encountered older Indigenous men and women who would greet me with a clear look in the eye and a nod. I'd nod back, thinking how friendly they were, and wondering why people complained about Aboriginal people as they did.

During my undergraduate years at the University of Saskatchewan (U of S), I had several close groups of friends, one of which consisted of several young people, who, like myself, were trying to find where they belonged. Two were half Cree and half Swedish, and two were Aboriginal adoptees, part of what is now called the Sixties Sweep, which saw thousands of Indigenous infants and children removed from their mothers on reserve to be adopted by Settler families, often to disastrous effect. I already felt drawn to Indigenous subject matter, and under the influence of my friendship group, continually found avenues to pursue this interest through both my academic studies and personal experiences—attending feasts, powwows, and round dances, and engaging in all manner of discussions about the effects of colonization and the persistence of Indigenous wisdom and culture.

Then, in about 1992, when I was taking a class in 19th Century Art History that focussed quite a bit on the roots of colonial thinking, I was surprised when a classmate pointed out that Linda, the only obviously Indigenous student in the class, didn't speak to anyone but me. I had not picked up on that, and thought it couldn't be true. I liked Linda very much, and thought she was a very wise and kind person, but after observing her for the next few classes, I got the impression that the classmate may have been right. One day, in a fit of youthful abandon, I asked Linda why she didn't talk to anyone in the class but me. Without blinking an eye, Linda responded, "Well, it's because you're an Indian." Something in her words hit me with the impact that only a deep truth can have. I suspect now that Linda knew that I was unsure and searching and that her words would be powerful. I am eternally grateful to her, wherever she is now, for that gift. I threw myself even more deeply into studying Indigenous culture and art through both anthropology and art history, my two majors at the time, and made Indigenous art the focus of my master's thesis while studying at UBC just a few years later.

In 2001, a few months after the death of my maternal Grandfather, I realised that if I wanted to know anything about this part of where I come from, I'd have to meet my biological father's family. As I have come to know them over the intervening years (and there are a lot of them – my father was the oldest of 11 children), I have been fascinated by the journeys towards self-discovery that each of them have undertaken. As with many people of his generation, my paternal Grandfather, John Kane, whose mother was Métis and whose father was Irish, played down his Indigenous roots. He was born to Mabel Monkman in St. Louis, Saskatchewan, a Métis settlement quite close to the James Smith Cree First Nation and to Prince Albert, and the home of both the celebrated Métis writer Maria Campbell, author of *Halfbreed* (1973), and Howard Adams, who was a noted Métis academic and political activist. My grandfather was not made to attend residential school, and so was easily able to blend in to the mainstream Canadian world, leaving his Indigenous ancestry behind. But when his children began to wonder about their origins, they collectively returned the Métis identity to the family, and many, including my cousin, the poet Cara Lyn Morgan, have found it to be central to their work. For many in my family, myself included, there is a strong sense of insider/outsider identity, a sense of being not entirely white, but not entirely Indigenous either. They, like me, each have many Indigenous friends and acquaintances, along with other family

members, and often find themselves in the position of having to correct stereotyped thinking in casual conversations and encounters.

1.3. Journey into Education

Perhaps when I was about five years old, I wanted to be a teacher. My mother was studying education at the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) at the time, and I recall that we had a tiny blackboard on a frame in our basement, and an old school desk as well, where I would often teach classes to my imaginary students, laboriously writing letters and numbers with white chalk on the black surface of the board. But as I grew older, I abandoned such fantasies in deference to other interests, and began to view teaching (which my mother never did take up as a career) as a rather lesser pursuit in the academic world. But in 2004, at a point in time when I was searching for a career that would render my early education truly useful, I decided that teaching might be the best bet, and made an application to study education at the University of British Columbia (UBC), focussing on visual art and social studies. Almost instantly, I could see how wrong I had been about education – it was exactly the place I needed to be.

Indigenous education in mainstream teacher education was still peripheral at the time, so I found myself approaching subjects and lessons from a distinctly pro-Indigenous perspective that did not seem to be available to my colleagues. Fellow students did not appear to be overtly prejudiced against Indigenous people; they were just apathetic about the whole notion of teaching about them. Although I found this concerning, I recognized that I could only control my own practice, and determined that I would always place Indigenous pedagogies, histories and concerns at the heart of my practice, regardless of what others might think or do.

To that end, I developed a fairly innovative unit as part of my teacher education in social studies. I was assigned to teach a unit on Aboriginal people in Canada as part of the Grade 9 curriculum (2004/5). I knew that most Canadians at the time were only marginally aware of Aboriginal people, if they were aware at all. Aside from the prescribed learning outcomes in the curriculum, my personal goal for students was that they come away with an understanding of Aboriginal people that was not confined to a distant pre-contact and earlier colonial past, but that Indigenous people are also vital and vibrant participants in our shared present. Therefore, I began the unit with the present

by showing students contemporary Indigenous art from each of the five nations we were assigned to study. Over the ensuing weeks of the unit we built a picture together of how contemporary Indigenous realities were connected to their past, and to the political history of Canada. And in fact, the unit was so engaging to students my supervising School Associate asked me to extend it by an additional week so that we could really settle in to unpacking the issues it presented us.

Within a few years, I was teaching full-time with the Vancouver School District. I met many wonderful colleagues over the years as I worked in various social studies, art, and English departments across the city. But often, I noted, when conversations about curriculum and teaching came around to Indigenous content, the same apathy and ambivalence I noted in colleagues during my BEd emerged. Certainly, there were then, and are a growing number now, of teachers who were deeply concerned with Indigenous education, predictably mainly those in the humanities, but there were many more who simply did not see Indigenous peoples and education as relevant to their work. Worse, they were really resistant to conversational suggestions that they might be wrong. If it is true that you can't teach an old dog new tricks, then I was going to have to find some younger dogs to work with.

1.4. Journey into Teacher Education

In 2010 I applied to become a seconded Faculty Associate (FA) with the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University (SFU). It was a heady two years, and I think I learned more about teaching during that period than I had in all of my preceding years of experience. I was assigned to work with the Global Communities module, which was focused largely on environmental and place-based education (in the following year it became the SEEDs module). As often as I could, I tried to make connections for student teachers (STs) to Indigenous ways of thinking and knowing, to the impacts of colonization on Indigenous peoples, and to the importance of Indigenous considerations in their own teaching practices. Fortunately, around that time, the province was actively undertaking changes to its mandates regarding Indigenous education and there was a growing awareness of its importance amongst my colleagues at SFU.

It was during my second year as an FA that Dr. Dolores van der Wey brought a guest speaker into our program (a time for FAs to discuss teaching and learning in the

context of teacher education, working together to improve ST experiences and outcomes). Dr. Verna St. Denis came and spoke with us at length about her work in Indigenous teacher education, and in anti-racist education at the University of Saskatchewan. Through studies she'd conducted as part of her own doctoral research, Dr. St. Denis confirmed all of the feelings I'd had about my colleagues over the years. The majority of Settler Canadian teacher candidates were well-intentioned people who had simply never been asked to think about Indigenous peoples outside of the colonial context offered in school curriculum. The grand narratives about Canada offered in schools, the very ones to which I was exposed to as well, are often built on what Paulette Regan (2010) calls the peace maker mythos, in which Canada is characterised as a good, just, and fair nation, land rich, and full of opportunities for those who work hard. We pride ourselves on our official policy of multiculturalism, and our human rights and social justice accomplishments. When folks arrive to teacher education full of enthusiasm to spread the same grand narratives to their own students, they are often shocked and upset to discover that they may not be helping students by doing this. As disappointed as I was to hear her study results and observations, I was elated to know that someone was doing work in this area, and that there was a need for much more work to be done.

It was clear from the ensuing discussions that many of my FA colleagues struggled with this content. As we did an activity to assess our own relationships with Indigenous peoples, led by Dr. Van der Wey, many of my colleagues were driven to tears in the unpacking of our reflections. They were coming face to face for the first time with the fact that many of them had no relationship to Aboriginal people, culture, or thought at all, and the implications of that were unwieldy. Fortunately, this work was being carried out in a warm and supportive environment, with nurturing guidance from Dr. Van der Wey, Dr. Vicki Kelly, and Kau'i Kellipio, just a few of the Indigenous faculty and staff who were working to improve Indigenous education delivery at SFU. But my heart went out to those of my colleagues who were struggling. Would it have made a difference, I wondered, if these folks had received this exposure, this opportunity to explore and rebuild their relationships with Indigenous peoples and content, earlier in their lives? I became determined to seek an answer to that question.

Around the same time, I was invited to present at the British Columbia Teacher's Federation (BCTF) New Teacher's Conference in 2011, and in light of the learning I had

received through Dr. St. Denis, I began with the question “Are we teaching about First Nations backwards?” Using the same strategy of presenting contemporary works of often challenging identity-based Aboriginal art as I had done with high school students, I discovered that this evoked jarring reactions in participants, and many times over the ensuing iterations of this presentation, there were discussions of how unexpected the art was. That is, when participants thought about Indigenous art previous to our time together, they often thought of dream catchers, totem poles, soapstone sculptures, and beadwork. The cognitive dissonance that resulted from this new exposure created a great starting place to begin unpacking where those previous and limiting ideas of Indigenous art and peoples came from.

I was then able to include my presentation as part of the work in our module at SFU, guiding student teachers through an inquiry into their own education by beginning with the question “what do you remember learning about Indigenous people in your K-12 education?” Most often, the responses shared the commonality that much of their instruction about Indigenous people, where it was present at all, was rooted in the distant past. People recalled snippets of information about the fur trade, tipis, igloos, and longhouses, and maybe something about buffalo or salmon. There were a few who’d grown up close to native communities, or who had really engaged teachers, and whose education in this area was comparatively rich, including field trips, carving experiences, and visits from elders and story tellers. But these folks were sadly, and by far, the minority.

1.5. Journey into Research

In 2013 I entered the Doctoral Program in Arts Education at SFU. I knew that what I was grappling with was the role that art had played in the growing awareness and changed thinking I had noted in the reactions of both students in my classroom, and workshop participants. I was sure that part of the answer had to do with the contemporary nature of the art I was exposing people to, knowing that so much school curriculum has constructed Indigenous peoples as peoples of the past, especially in the area of social studies. If textbooks only ever revealed to students a picture of Indigenous people rooted firmly in the golden past of pre-contact and early colonial times, it was little wonder that those who did not have any contact with contemporary native people did not realize that they share the same modern reality.

As I worked through various required and elective courses during the first few terms of my doctoral work, I began to understand that there was, in fact, much more at play than I had initially realised. In particular, I found a course in anti-racist education taught by Dr. Van der Wey to be highly instructive in learning how systemic racism manifests and reifies itself both in curriculum and in teacher education. I began to merge the ideas I had about art and phenomenology gleaned from my background and other course work with the discourses of anti-racist curricular planning and pedagogies. I could see that exposure to art, even through guided inquiry, was not enough on its own to bring about the changes I was working towards with student teachers. I also needed to give consideration to how their ideas and assumptions were constructed in the first place.

In 2014, I had the opportunity to present my workshop to a class of undergraduate and a class of graduate students at SFU, and conduct a small initial study of the impact of this methodology. It was clear that a short primer over the span of a few hours could indeed have a significant impact on participants' thinking, so it was tantalizing to consider what more could be done if the time available was increased. Finally, in the term before my formal study was slated to start, I was given the opportunity to teach a course in Indigenous education as a sessional lecturer. Each week I introduced students to a new piece of art work that was selected to link with readings for the week, and supported their learning in class with short lectures on nomenclature, truth and reconciliation, governance regarding Indigenous peoples, and the impact of colonial thinking on curriculum. Many students in the class, as predicted by my earlier incursions into this work, were completely unfamiliar with Indigenous peoples and history in Canada, so the learning curve was steep. But I was careful to create as many co-learning opportunities as possible for students, including a sharing circle at the beginning of each class, during which participants were encouraged to share any news stories, or examples of media representations, that they had encountered during the week. In addition to the assignment of academic articles, I also asked students to choose one of two novels by Richard Wagamese (*A Quality of Light*, 1997, and *Indian Horse*, 2012), and gave them time during several classes to work in study groups on connecting the narratives in the novels to the material we were learning in the course. In the end, I found that students were transforming their views of

Indigenous people and of themselves, and they articulated their enjoyment and satisfaction with the process in their course evaluations.

Slowly, through all of this work, it was beginning to dawn on me that identity, how we see ourselves and our sense of ourselves in relation to others, was a key part of the interplay of ideas here, and the application of anti-racist pedagogy and Indigenous pedagogy was a key part of what made meaningful transformations possible. I wanted to create a program that could help pre-service teachers do some of the decolonization that is necessary to deliver Indigenous education in meaningful ways, while also offering them some tools and strategies they could incorporate into their own teaching practices. The literature reviewed in this dissertation informed my thinking and the development of two key questions that have guided my thesis research: 1) how might student teacher engagement in phenomenological art inquiry, informed by Ann Curry-Stevens' framework for transformative education for privileged learners (2007), impact on student teachers' perceptions of Indigenous peoples and education and help them enact more holistic approaches to Indigenous education that avoid replicating colonial stereotypes? and 2) how might art precipitate the kind of ontological uncertainty necessary for transformative education to ensue?

1.6. Structure of this Thesis

In Chapter 2, I review literature from a variety of discourses that have informed my thinking about this work, beginning with how I have come to frame identity formation as an ontological problem in teacher education. I suggest, supported by my reading of Lowman and Barker (2015) and Little Bear (2000), that the individualism that is emphasised in Settler identity formation is fundamentally at odds with the relational discourses that form Indigenous identities, and that unpacking these differences is a very important part of the work required for Indigenous education to flourish. Next, the history of Aboriginal education in Canada is explored with a particular eye to how Aboriginal scholars and researchers have been naming and addressing issues that arise for them in their teaching practices. Also included is some discussion of the tensions that exists between multicultural education and Indigenous education, and the resistance towards Indigenous education that is often present in this work. As a tonic to these tensions, I then look at anti-racist and decolonizing education. Chapter 2 also explores the politics of art and representation in an Indigenous educational context, looking

towards phenomenology as a way of teasing meaning out of art. Next, I examine transformative education, and the theories, frameworks and strategies that support and inform it, looking in particular at the work of Ann Curry-Stevens' framework for a pedagogy of the privileged (2007). Finally, in summarizing the literature that informs my work, I also introduce a few key concepts from Aboriginal scholarship that have been important to me throughout this journey.

In Chapter 3, I outline the program portion of the study itself, noting the structure of each of the five sessions I engaged in with the study group, and the educational context of the research and participants. I also offer several images of the art we worked with during the study so the reader can get a better sense of what is meant by contemporary political and identity based Indigenous art. In Chapter 4 an analysis of the various bodies of data gathered over the course of the study is offered, using both thematic analysis and multimodal social semiotic discourse analysis. As themes emerged from participants' conversations and written responses, I began to see that in addition to the participant generated themes, there was also a meta-theme emerging that was directly tied to some of the finding of other researchers in this area. Therefore, Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the several forms of resistance to decolonizing education that took place during the study, and their implications for continued work in Indigenous education. In Chapter 6, I offer some concluding thoughts based on my findings, including a focus on the particular evidence that addresses the two questions that guide this research. Finally, I offer some practical implications for teacher education, and areas for future research.

1.7. A Note on Terminology

Already in this introductory chapter, I have used the words Indigenous, Aboriginal, Native, and Settler, and I would like to offer a rationale for the use of this terminology before proceeding further. The word Indigenous is generally used to refer to any group or groups of Aboriginal peoples in a global context, and is used by the United Nations in establishing policies and programs that support the preservation of Aboriginal cultures in various parts of the world. The term Aboriginal is often used in the Canadian context, and refers to Inuit, First Nations, and Métis peoples, and is the term enshrined within the Canadian constitution. Because the term First Nations generally excludes Inuit and Métis peoples, I have tended towards the use of Aboriginal and Indigenous

within this thesis, often using them interchangeably. On occasion, I have also used the word Native (as well as the names of specific nations, such as the Cree), as there is still some currency in this word for Indigenous peoples, and also because nation names evoke a certain place-based sensibility.

My use of the term Settler has also been carefully considered, and I draw upon the work of Lowman and Barker (2015) to support this choice. For them, the word Settler “voices relationships to structures and processes in Canada today, to the histories of our peoples on this land, to Indigenous peoples, and to our own day-to-day choices and actions,” and “turns us toward uncomfortable realizations, difficult subjects, and potential complicity in systems of dispossession and violence” (p. 2). Essentially, Settler refers to all non-Indigenous Canadians, both new arrivals, and what former Prime Minister Stephen Harper once infamously referred to as old-stock Canadians, and evokes the fundamental relationship such citizens have to both this land and its original peoples. Its implications as both a subject position, and as a marker of the need to consider the responsibility this entails, have informed my choice of language use, especially in light of the research presented here. Personally, as suggested in the opening paragraphs to this chapter, I identify as both Settler and Indigenous, and hope that both terms offer not offense, but a fundamental structure for considering who we are, and what is required of us.

Chapter 2.

Literature Review

Over the course of this research, the concept of identity has emerged again and again as an undercurrent beneath the broad areas of Indigenous Education and Arts Education. Identity is associated with an ontological problem: Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians experience different ways of being in the world — relational and individualistic, respectively. Identity may also be associated with internal turmoil, which often occurs within pre-service and in-service teachers when their sense of being fair and open-minded is challenged by the realities that they are confronted with through the practice of decolonizing one's self. Taking the time to examine the ways in which exclusionary curricula have formed understandings of Indigenous people (or lack thereof) is often a disruptive and destabilizing process. And yet, Aboriginal educators and community leaders argue for the necessity of decolonizing one's self if fair and accurate reflections of Indigenous history and cultures are to exist within the school curriculum (Battiste, 2000, 2013; Dion, 2009; St. Denis, 2011). Identity is also important in the work of artists, whose radical acts of self-expression proclaim their presence and their concerns. Finally, exploring conceptions of identity is central to the process of engaging in phenomenological dialogue with art. In this research, each of these identity conceptions constituted a complex web of experiences as non-Aboriginal pre-service teachers were invited to examine their own beliefs and narratives to come to a 'third space' way of thinking about themselves and conventionally conceived Others — Aboriginal peoples. In this chapter, I will discuss each of the ways in which identity became a central foil in the development of my work. I then finish with a brief discussion of a few key ideas articulated by Indigenous scholars that frame my consideration of this research.

2.1. Identity as an Ontological Problem

Central to an Indigenous worldview is a relational perspective; that is, as Cajete (2015) puts it, "because Indigenous views of the nature of reality build on relationships — reality is wholly interrelated — knowledge emanating from an Indigenous worldview has to be understood relationally. Nothing exists in isolation or can be understood apart from

all its relationships” (p. 207). This is in contrast to an individualistic perspective, which is closely associated with Settler identity. Kincheloe (2003) suggests a connection to both Christianity and Descartes in the formation of an individualistic perspective: “European Christianmodernism transformed the individual from a connected participant in the drama of nature to a detached objective, depersonalized observer” (p. 49). Holding an individualistic perspective, therefore, necessarily limits one’s ability to see things relationally. This ontological disconnection is described not only in Cajete’s work, but is pointed to by Battiste (2013), Kovach (2009), Little Bear (2000), St. Denis (2007), and Yazzie (2000), each author describing the problem as it presents itself in relation to their particular research interests. The very fact that this struggle is represented frequently in the work of Indigenous scholars and rarely recognized by non-Indigenous scholars points to the urgency of the need to continue to address this gap.

In this section, I will explore identity as an ontological problem by considering the formation and role of identity conceptions in two ways: 1) by reviewing the work of authors who address the formation of national and personal identities from both Indigenous and Settler perspectives, and 2) by examining the role of identity in teacher education and transformative education. My aim is to clarify the ontological problem that is associated with these different conceptions of identity before considering the impact this has on curriculum and teacher education.

Canada, writ large, tends to view itself as a good and just country, founded on principles of equity and opportunity for all (Lowman and Baker, 2015; Regan, 2010). Indeed, in the year of this writing, we are enduring the self-congratulatory fervour of Canada’s 150th celebration of confederation. The story told about Canada through these celebrations focuses on the natural glory of the land we sit upon, the inclusiveness of our multicultural policy, our international peacekeeping efforts, and the safety of the social welfare network, as indications of how great Canada is. National media in all formats has been filled with adverts that feature success narratives of Settlers and new immigrants, touting the rewards of living in a land filled with opportunities for those who work hard enough to earn them. But this is only one side of the story; one telling of it that purposefully ignores the contemporary repercussions experienced by those who have another side of the story to share. It is in the tension between these two narratives that our ontological problem begins.

2.2. The concept of identity

The concept of identity, what makes us who we are and our sense of self, has been taken up in a number of academic discourses including, but not limited to, psychology, sociology, anthropology, social psychology and philosophy. Since a deep exploration of the myriad and ever-evolving discussions on identity is beyond the scope of this work, I will limit my discussion to considerations of social identity and personal identity, based on the structure provided by psychologist Erik Erikson (1994). In this framework, social identity refers to the various social roles one might occupy, contingent upon the larger structure of the culture or nation in which one exists, and how this contributes to one's sense of self. I will explore this concept in relation to Indigenous and Settler identity. Personal identity refers to the attributes and idiosyncrasies that distinguish us from one another. Since personal identity is a vastly complex subject, I will limit the discussion further by focusing only on those authors who consider personal identity in relation to aspects of teacher education.

2.3. Non-Indigenous Identity in Teacher Education

Martin J. Cannon (2013) gets to the heart of how national narratives inform the social identities of teacher candidates by pointing to the turmoil that ensues in “upsetting people’s everyday investment in seeing Canada as a fair, generous and tolerant nation” (p. 21). So engrained are these notions of goodness and fairness in our collective Canadian psyche, that challenging them in an education setting is treated as tantamount to treason, often causing reactions of indignation (Schick & St. Denis, 2003, 2005). In fact, according to research conducted by Kelly and Brandes (2001), many young people enter teacher education with the notion that in discussing social and ethical issues within social studies curriculum, historically the only site of Indigenous education in Canadian schools, “they can remain above the fray and either be neutral purveyors of ‘facts’ or referees of competing perspectives” (p. 439). In other words, they have internalized the Canadian narrative of fairness and tolerance into their own identities, without considering the degree to which such a position is really true of Canada, or even possible within themselves as educators.

One aspect of internalised national narratives has to do with the presumed normativity of Settler culture, and in particular, the presumed normativity of whiteness.

Acclaimed American anti-racist educator Gloria Ladson-Billings (2006) illustrates how that translates into classroom practice as she describes the reactions of her largely white middle-class teacher education students when asked to consider their own culture. She reports of her students that “they are stymied. They describe themselves as having ‘no culture’ or being ‘just regular’ or ‘just normal’” (p. 107). Such unexamined notions of social identity as neutral become highly problematic in the task of delivering education to future generations, especially in the Canadian context of delivering Indigenous education. As Ladson-Billings points out to her students, the problem with their self-characterization implies that those unlike themselves are then necessarily constructed as not regular or not normal. In a similar vein, Schick and St. Denis (2005) point out that the normativity of whiteness “depends on marginalized identities against which the norm can be compared” (p. 299). Since, as they suggest earlier on in their paper, “the identifications of all students and teachers are invariably produced through the curriculum” (p. 297), the notion of normativity and what constitutes it becomes a central question. As such, the troubling of those identities and the implications of normativity, especially within a colonial context, are a crucial focus for transformative education. The risk to those who undertake this examination, however, is that it disrupts our construction of “an egalitarian, not racist, national self-image” (p. 302), potentially creating a temporarily destabilized sense of self.

A failure to examine the issues incumbent in this dialogue leads to another kind of national identity narrative. Susan Dion (2007) refers to this as the position of the “perfect stranger” (p. 330), in which not knowing Indigenous peoples, or anything about Indigenous culture or history, is a normal part of being Canadian. In this self-rationalizing aspect of identity construction, the claim of perfect stranger is informed by “what teachers know, what they do not know, and what they refuse to know. It is, for many, a response to recognizing that what they know is premised on a range of experiences with stereotypical representations” (p. 331). Here we find an intersection between Settler and Indigenous identity. Students entering teacher education, like most Canadians, arrive with internalised ideas of not only their own identity as Canadians (presumed neutrality, founded on national discourses of acceptance and fairness), and with preconceived notions of Indigenous peoples as well (Lowman & Barker, 2015). Before moving on to discuss the intra-cultural formation of Indigenous identity, I’d like to

introduce a few more examples of how colonial Settler societies construct Indigenous peoples.

Malezer and Sim (2002), in writing about Indigenous education in the Australian context, address a common mode of the Settler construction of Indigenous identity akin to Dion's (2007) notion of the perfect stranger:

“The Australian public appears to have its strongest opinions about Indigenous Australians...through a period of time where contact with Aboriginal people was minimal. Most Aboriginal people therefore have been affected by public perceptions and today the strong nature attached to the construction of Aboriginality invokes resistance, antagonism, and welfare dependence...” (p. 9).

What the authors are suggesting is that familiarity with Aboriginal Australians is less a matter of personal relationships and experience, and more about the transmission of stereotypes that tacitly support an unequal status quo. Canadian educators Anderson and Pohl (2002) and researchers Lowman and Barker (2015) point to a similar phenomenon in the Canadian educational landscape, in which totalizing narratives about Indigenous peoples, even where they are rooted in experience or fact, produce stereotypes about Indigenous peoples, casting them as outside of normative Canadian narratives. Unexamined, these stereotypes not only impose a distorted identity on Indigenous peoples, they also act as a rationale for insisting that Indigenous peoples remain marginal to Settler concerns. Taking up a critical examination of Indigenous stereotypes can provoke “feelings of guilt, shame, anger and outrage, or fear and despair” (Lowman and Barker, 2015, p. 21). It is within the difficulty of engaging in critical examinations of the relationships between Settlers and Indigenous others, which currently produces and maintains difference, that the roots of resistance to decolonizing work are located; acknowledging one's own complicity in this matrix of issues, whether tacit or overt, looms menacingly over deeply internalized national narratives about the fundamental goodness of Canada and Canadians. Resisting such examinations, despite the obvious negative impacts on Indigenous and Settler relations, offers a measure of self-protection that appeases Settler guilt and rationalizes the perpetuation of colonial thought.

In exploring the issue of identity within teacher education, researchers have found that national narratives, once internalised, are expressed through the normativity

of whiteness, and through a national self-image characterised, at least in part, by tolerance, the absence of racism, and egalitarianism. But far from defining only Settler society, national narratives have also defined Indigenous peoples externally as marginal others, often characterised by substance abuse, reliance on welfare, and generalised abject poverty, immaterial to the development of Canada in much the same way that landscaping is ultimately immaterial to the structure and sturdiness of a house (Cardinal, 1969; Dion, 2008).

Of course, not all grand narratives of Canada play out this way. In fact Canadian philosopher and essayist John Ralston Saul, in his 2008 treatise on Canada, *A Fair Country*, begins his discussion of the formation of our national identity by asserting that “we are a Métis civilization” (p. 3). His account goes on to discuss the many ways in which Indigenous peoples have contributed to the fabric of our modern nation, using the twinned identity of the Métis nation as a foil, even invoking the influence of Indigenous thought as the true genesis of our much beloved federal policy of official multiculturalism. As flattering to Indigenous sensibilities and pride as Saul's book may be, it is still an external imposition of identity on Aboriginal people. This begs the question, of course, of how Indigenous peoples see and understand themselves.

2.4. Indigenous Identity Formation as Relational

Acclaimed Indigenous Canadian scholar Marie Battiste, whose academic focus is on defining, refining, and deploying modes of Indigenous education aimed at the improvements of educational experiences and outcomes for Indigenous students, drew together several powerful voices in the field in her 2000 publication, *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision*. She, along with the collective voices in this volume, sets the stage for why such reclamation is important by showing how absence of such voice and vision creates experiences of alienation and erasure for Indigenous students. Further, she directly links the production of curriculum to the interests of the colonial state, by the mechanism of governmental oversight. In effect, she suggests that this is another means of reifying colonial values that at once exclude Indigenous voices, while simultaneously enacting upon Indigenous peoples a form of “cognitive imperialism” (Battiste, 2000, p. 193). This produces and secures their collective identity, and the identities of all non-white others, through that lens.

In combating colonial cognitive imperialism, she and several others, including Leroy Little Bear (2000), Gregory Cajete (2000), and Robert Yazzie (2000), seek to redefine Indigenous identity. For Battiste (2000), one important aspect of a self-determined identity is rooted in the way in which Aboriginal societies tend to reflect the patterns of the natural world in which they are situated. In other words, Indigenous identity is not only about an individual sense of self-hood, but about a self-hood that exists in relation to its context in the natural world. This epistemological underpinning of Indigenous identity plays an important role in reconceiving effective Indigenous education, for as she says:

“to deny that tribal epistemology exists and serves a lasting purpose is to deprive Aboriginal children of their inheritance, as well as to perpetuate the belief that different cultures have nothing to offer but exotic food and dance...” (p. 202).

Robert Yazzie (2000), a Navajo legal scholar and Chief Justice Emeritus of the Navajo nation, suggests that Indigenous communication might also be considered an aspect of Indigenous identity, especially given his characterization of it as “based on respect, using respectful language and discourse” (p. 46). This is an important distinction, especially given the calibre of many informal characterizations of Indigenous peoples over the years that are peppered with unflattering and downright vile monikers. This is not to say that Indigenous peoples never say unflattering things about non-Indigenous people, but implies that if Indigenous ethics were more prevalent, there could potentially have developed far fewer opportunities for hostility-charged exchanges in general.

Leroy Little Bear (2000), a noted scholar and member of the Blackfoot Confederacy, places Aboriginal values at the centre of his discussion of the collision of Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews, a major component of the formation of identity. For Little Bear the values of wholeness, sharing, honesty, and kindness characterize Indigenous sensibilities and, notably, each bespeaks the importance of relationality in the construction of Indigenous identity. One cannot consider the importance of sharing if one is alone, the importance of honesty if there is no one at risk of being deceived, and the importance of kindness if there is no one to receive it. Wholeness itself, relates to the consideration of all of creation over its individual manifestations, such as each human. Here again we see the emergence of the

ontological problem of identity, which this worldview creates. While sharing, honesty and kindness are values shared by many cultures, including Settler culture in Canada, in the colonial context where individualism is most highly prized and considered, the embodiment of these values is enacted more as an affirmation of one's personal sense of goodness. From a relational Indigenous perspective, they are considered important aspects of the goodness of everything working together. Further, in Plains cultures wholeness is manifested in a social organization that posits the extended family as its locus as opposed to the immediate family as is often the case in Settler culture. If a teacher, for example, cannot grasp this as an ontological difference between Indigenous and non-Indigenous identity, then she is likely to cast this aspect of identity as an indication of tribal inferiority and may subsequently treat any pupils living within a relational paradigm as also inferior.

Little Bear (2000) goes on to articulate that the ideal personality of an Indigenous community member is one showing physical and spiritual strength, generosity and local knowledge linked to survival and wellbeing. Further, the ideal personality suppresses anger and negativity, putting the needs of the group ahead of personal needs, displaying bravery, hardiness and adaptability in doing so. While there is an argument that Settlers share these values as well, and perhaps that is a potential point of reconstituting Indigenous and non-Indigenous identities, this characterization of the ideal personality, especially in an educational context, can also lead to misperceptions. Those who work in public school settings have possibly encountered this ideal Aboriginal personality in action, and been confused by its manifestations of silence in the face of personal history and challenges, absence in the face of familial responsibilities, and reluctance to seek help in the face of academic difficulties. Thus, the appropriate enactment of Indigenous identity, viewed through the lens of normative Settler identity, can appear as a failure of personal advocacy, lack of trusting relationships, and a general ambivalence towards education. The tensions set up by these misperceptions is at the centre of the ontological problem of identity and the difficulties it can create in Canadian society.

2.5. Tensions between Indigenous and Settler Identities

Paulette Regan, in her 2010 book, *Unsettling the Settler Within*, gets to the heart of this tension in her discussion of how one official counter-narrative produced by the 2008 Truth and Reconciliation Commission can serve as a marker for the beginning of

Settler decolonization. Her purpose, she states, is “to make visible the dominant-culture mythos – the underlying pattern of violent behaviour and denial of Indigenous history, law and peacemaking practices – that runs through...the settlement story” (p. 88). Calling upon a diverse array of authors, such as Canadian historian Jack Granatstein, Regan traces the arc of the Canadian story through colonial eyes to locate the ways in which national narratives form both Settler and Indigenous societies. But Regan is also aware that simply introducing Indigenous narratives that recount such traumatic aspects of Canadian history as the impact of Indian Residential Schools may also garner resistance amongst Settlers, manifesting itself as either a backlash or as an impotent form of benevolent empathy. Regan addresses the ways in which the tides of counter-narratives sometimes send non-Aboriginal Canadians running back towards the comfortable shores of entrenched narratives of essential national goodness. When faced with stories of genocide, political marginalization and the usurpation of traditional lands, territories and resources, Canadians retreat to what Reagan refers to as the “peacemaker myth” (p. 106), which contains the notion of national identity formed in innocence of the “profound extent to which we have erased an Indigenous presence from the consciousness of mainstream North America” (p. 106). While asserting that there are those contemporary Canadians whose understanding of Canada accepts the historical realities offered through the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives on history, they often do so with the caveat that these events occurred in the remote past, failing to examine the ways in which their current place within Canadian society, complete with all of the benefits of Settler normativity, still function to reinforce the inequities that are the legacy of colonization.

Political scientist Glen Coulthard (2014) also suggests a reframing of the way in which we approach Settler and Aboriginal narratives to focus on the colonial relation as a means of drawing attention to the historic genesis of current inequities on both political and material fronts. That is, we need to continue to revisit our ideas of progress and nation building in order to pinpoint and root out the assumptions and distortions on which it rests. This is not merely the project of Indigenous peoples, however. Regan (2010) points out that “claiming ignorance is a colonial strategy – a way of proclaiming our ignorance because ‘we did not know’” (p. 41). The examination of how identities are produced through curriculum build to the raising of a call by the scholars discussed earlier in this section, such as Battiste (2000), Madden (2017), and St. Denis (2007), to

examine the ways in which Indigenous voices have been excluded, and to work towards their active and meaningful inclusion. Further, we need to keep at the forefront of our thinking in this area the ways in which “whiteness and Eurocentrism shape the construction of Aboriginality both in terms of discursive processes and resulting linguistic products” (Madden, 2017, p. 654). This applies not only to Indigenous educators, but to non-Aboriginal teachers and the work that is required of them as well. And there is evidence that this call is being heard, since another crucial aspect articulated by Regan (2010) is the need for Aboriginal people to tell their own stories about their culture, histories, and experiences of colonization. She calls for a turning of the tables by pulling back from the dominance of colonial voices and mores that have for so long represented their version of Aboriginal people, and instead making equal space for Aboriginal people to speak for themselves.

In viewing identity as an ontological problem between Indigenous and Settler Canadians, it is Regan’s (2010) articulation of the disconnection between contemporary identity and the most disgraceful elements of Canadian history as they relate to Indigenous peoples that informs the next section of this literature review on the role of identity in approaches to education. If part of normative Canadian identity insists on seeing Indigenous peoples and problems as issues of the past, rather than as active informants of the present, thereby ignoring the being and conditions of Aboriginal existence, I suggest that this problem rests squarely in the court of how Aboriginal education is delivered, both to K-12 students, and to pre-service teachers.

2.6. Aboriginal Education

In the previous section it was noted, through the work of Schick and St. Denis (2005) that identity is produced, at least in part, through curriculum. But beyond curricular experiences, there are also formative influences that occur through the hidden curriculum, peer relationships, teacher/student relationships, community mentorship, and so on. In this section, I will briefly outline some of the most important concepts and work in Aboriginal education in Canada, from both western and Indigenous perspectives.

Jan Hare (2011), in analyzing why Aboriginal education is of crucial importance for Aboriginal students, conducted a study chronicling the educational experiences of 39 First Nations youths from two different Northern Ontario reserves. The youths, between

the ages of 16-20, were asked about their experiences in both reserve schools and public schools. Many told stories of race based exclusions on the part of both students and teachers. Hare used the metaphor of the warrior to describe how these students remained true to their own identities, drawing on family support and their own determination to succeed in spite of facing counterproductive circumstances on their educational journeys. In looking at just a portion of the scholarship on Aboriginal education in Canada, stories of prejudice, exclusion, and distortion emerge again and again. But what also emerges is a clear call for increased attention and consideration of the project of reframing Aboriginal education so that it transcends previously held colonial mores.

Most of the literature about Aboriginal education (Battiste, 2000; Battiste, 2013; Dion, 2009; Hare, 2011; Kanu, 2005; Ledoux, 2006) defines the practice as one aimed at the inclusion of Indigenous pedagogy and epistemology in the public school curriculum to ensure success for Aboriginal learners equal to that of their non-Aboriginal classmates. The central philosophy behind this practice is that there are Aboriginal ways of teaching and knowing that are often at odds with how curriculum is delivered in schools — another ontological problem. This usage is also applied to educational curriculum and pedagogy delivered in First Nations schools and Aboriginal focus schools.

In many ways, the surge of scholarship in this area began in response to the Hawthorn Report of 1967, after which Jean Chretien, then Minister of Indian Affairs, released his government's White Paper in 1969, outlining a vision of their future that Aboriginal people quickly rejected. In fact, Harold Cardinal's response, initially delivered under the title of the Red Paper (1969), formed the backbone of his book, *The Unjust Society* (1969), and became a key rallying point for Indigenous peoples across the country. One of the primary concerns was the issue of Indian Control of Indian Education, as articulated in the eponymous paper submitted in December of 1972 by the then National Indian Brotherhood (now Assembly of First Nations) to Trudeau's Liberal parliament. The paper was given official recognition by Chretien in February of 1973, and marks the beginning in Canada of a rise in Aboriginal intellectuals working towards the realization of the principles agreed to therein (Kirkness, 1999). *The Unjust Society* was also key in the government's retraction of the White Paper, which was a significant victory for Indigenous peoples. However, despite a re-visitation of the issues facing

them in the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, that confirmed what Aboriginal people had been saying about systemic racism and social inequity all along, it was not until 2004 that the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, acted to make Aboriginal education a priority (Battiste, 2013). In short, we've been walking this trail a long time, but the going is slow.

In recent years, a number of strategies have emerged to address the problem of how to deliver Indigenous education effectively. Concepts such as Two-Eyed seeing have emerged, in which Indigenous and Settler epistemologies are given commensurate consideration (Bartlett, Marshall, & Marshall, 2012). Culturally relevant/responsive pedagogy, in which story-telling and place-based knowledge feature prominently, is another approach that seeks to draw students in through consideration of their cultural frameworks and learning needs (Archibald, 2008; Marin & Bang, 2015; Nicol, Archibald, & Baker, 2013). While both approaches seek to honour Indigenous epistemologies and sensibilities, they may be difficult to access in practice for those who have not undergone the necessary exploration of their own, and Indigenous, identity formation. Madden (2015), in undertaking an analysis of 23 studies in Indigenous educational research, suggests that in addition to the two approaches described above, there are four pedagogical pathways that teacher educators often use to approach Indigenous education: "Learning from Indigenous traditional models of teaching, Pedagogy for decolonization, Indigenous and antiracist education, and Indigenous and place-based education" (p. 13). While there are arguably many interconnections between the approaches outlined in Madden's schema, it is worth noting that each approach is also distinct, both in its antecedent ideas, and in its potential impact. Madden warns, for example, that while the traditional Indigenous model approach may bring us closest to Indigenous sensibilities, it can also off non-Indigenous teachers an out, as some "may reason that they are not responsible for Indigenous education because they identify as non-Indigenous and/or they 'do not teach' Indigenous students" (p. 7-8). So while this model may work best for those who teach within Indigenous communities, whether rural or urban, pathways that address decolonization, antiracism, and place-based sensibilities are likely to have a broader appeal and be far more effective as factors in transformative education.

Since the advent of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Canada, reconciliation education has emerged as a major discourse in Indigenous education as

well, focussed at it is on the realities and legacy of the Indian Residential School system (Regan, 2010). I would argue that while this strategy often does an excellent job of illuminating this disastrous chapter in Settler/Indigenous relations, it is less effective in affirming the ongoing presence of Indigenous peoples and the legacy of that traumatic period. Treaty education, less widely applicable to the BC context because of the number of Nations who live on unceded territory, is perhaps a better approach in this light, but is also nascent in its development as a common entry point to decolonizing practice (Kovachs, 2013; Tupper, 2015).

Critiques of current efforts to include Aboriginal content in school curriculum are focussed on the ways in which colonial narratives dominate the intellectual space of the classroom and function to hold Aboriginal people in an ethnographic past. As a tonic for this condition, Battiste (2013) calls for creating ethical space within education, which involves a re-examination of how we deliver curriculum by looking for silences, biases and erasures in both ourselves and in the classroom resources we use. In effect, what is sought is a merging of both ontologies and epistemologies through what Battiste refers to as a trans-systemic evaluation of Indigenous and Euro-centric knowledges in a new third space understanding of how to be together in this country. In order for the collaborative hybridity of the third space to begin, Battiste points out that issues of race, power, hierarchy and normativity require consideration as we evaluate and develop curriculum. Keeping those concerns at the forefront further requires us to ask whose voices are being included, whose knowledges, and what the basis for such decision-making is. To phrase it in terms of identity, it is about who gets to define whom, and on what authority.

2.7. Aboriginal Teachers and Researchers

In discussing the role that Aboriginal people play in education, Battiste (2013) points out that for the most part, Settler folks who have been reared through our current educational system lack the skills and sensitivities to engage with and meaningfully include Aboriginal content in their classes. Often, their tendency is to rely upon Aboriginal colleagues to fill in the blanks. What this means, however, is that an assumption is made that Indigenous peoples can function as cultural ambassadors, and that they should, in fact, do so. But not only are Indigenous teachers not necessarily cultural experts, the assumption that they are puts the onus for Aboriginal awareness

and knowledge back onto Indigenous peoples, rather than placing the responsibility squarely on the shoulders of Settlers to do their own research, and to make meaning for themselves (Lowman and Barker, 2015; Regan, 2010).

Ultimately, Battiste (2013) keeps the call for the inclusion of Aboriginal content alive by defining the parameters for further research in this area: “While several provinces and territories have attempted to articulate standards for teaching Indigenous heritage in the classroom, few have articulated standards for teaching Indigenous knowledge” (p. 169). What Battiste proposes is the massive project of refocusing curriculum to break apart Eurocentric limitations in order to create space for Indigenous ways of thinking and knowing. And that project is a crucial one if we are to genuinely begin to address systemic racism built on colonial mores; it is, at least, a place from which to start. As suggested in the opening sections of this chapter, this is where identity emerges as a serious ontological divide, and where the thoughtful unpacking of identity formation is key to the success of such a project.

Susan Dion (2009) has emerged as another powerful voice in the call for meaningful and sensitive Aboriginal content in schools. In considering the experience of sending her own children to Ontario public schools, Dion noted the ways in which curriculum about Aboriginal people is focussed on historic aspects of life, and rooted in ideas of difference. She points out that this approach to Aboriginal education reifies the perception of European superiority and legitimates a Eurocentric and pro-colonial version of the Canadian story: “How and what teachers communicate on Aboriginal people is not based on an arbitrary decision but is established on a long history of how Aboriginal people are positioned in relation to non-Aboriginal people” (p. 64). By continuing to deliver social studies curriculum through an ethnographic lens, whereby clothing, shelter, religious beliefs, food and dance become the focus of an acquired practice of “cultural dissection” (p. 73), we fail to make room for the complexities of contemporary Aboriginal identity and agency, and instead reproduce and perpetuate colonial stereotypes through a monocular view of the Canadian story.

One of the strategies Dion (2009) suggests would be a helpful intervention into the current curricular discourse entails a shift from focussing on learning *about* Indigenous peoples to a focus on learning *from* Indigenous peoples. Old curricular approaches construct Aboriginal people as “romanticized, mythical, victimized, or militant

Others” (p. 179), which, in the process of evaluating their relationship to Aboriginal people, has allowed non-Aboriginal Canadians to construct themselves as innocent bystanders, and even admirers. Dion asserts, however, that a shift in the way we approach Aboriginal content can also affect a shift in our perceptions: “Learning from the events of colonization is “made more fragile” than learning about them because it involves *difficult knowledge*” (p. 58, emphasis added). It is precisely this difficult knowledge, however—defined by Britzman in Dion’s work as the study of the residual trauma of racism, genocide and other forms of social violence—that is required for us to make changes (Britzman, 1998). Unless we can be brought to see the nature of the problem, we are unlikely to work towards the changes necessary to solve it.

Dion (2009) also describes the course work she does with students for a graduate class called “Teaching and Learning from Indigenous Ways of Knowing” (p. 180). Through course readings by Aboriginal scholars addressing a range of issues from art to identity, students are invited into a dialogue of sorts with what Dion refers to as a community of artists. While her impetus for structuring the course in this way honours, in part, her sensibilities around how Aboriginal knowledge is passed and carried, she is also considering the needs of students in introducing content in sensitive and engaging ways. In the end, Dion concludes that “Engaging with the work of Aboriginal artists provides a decolonizing practice - challenging the ahistorical memories of Canada’s colonial past, it offers a way to challenge the hegemony of Western regimes of knowledge and representation” (p. 182). In many ways, it is in Dion’s work with teachers as graduate students that I find the strongest rationale for my own work with pre-service teachers. It offers a means by which to respond to Battiste’s call for the development of better inclusionary practices within Aboriginal education, without taxing Aboriginal teachers and cultural workers, by placing the onus on Settler learners to deeply engage with Indigenous sensibilities and positioning through artistic expression.

2.8. Multicultural Education and Resistance

Multicultural education is a complex subject in Canadian education. At one time seen as largely the superficial inclusion of the four Ds (dance, dress, dialect and dinner), the efforts of scholars and practitioners to move beyond these material confines has produced a variety of new discourses and strategies, not the least of which is the inclusion of anti-racist education, which will be discussed further in the next section.

Enid Lee (2014) offers a framework for considering how multicultural education has evolved in stages, beginning with the surface stage, which is the expression of the four Ds listed above, as an additive aspect of curriculum. In the second, or transitional stage, this practice develops into units of study that may offer short curricular disruptions through the inclusion of previously omitted discussion of various cultural others. In the third stage, the stage of integration, units of meaning and information about the worldviews of non-white others are woven across curriculum, offering more time for the genuine consideration of how multiple perspectives inform understanding. In the fourth stage, the social change stage, inclusive curricula becomes externalised into community action that actively seeks to change how diverse others connect and support one another. The latter two stages are generally characterised by their employment of critical pedagogical strategies that enable teachers and students to move away from surface and material considerations of the other into more meaningful explorations of precisely how differences are constructed, and of how to ameliorate those constructions through engaged dialogue that considers the self as constructed as well.

An essential consideration in the delivery of multicultural education has to do with the very notion of difference itself. Susan O'Neill (2009), points out that the construction of cultural diversity in our social imagination rests primarily on the idea of difference. In a social justice sense, diversity, the foundation of multiculturalism, is an expression of the value that we each have the right to be different. This is an inclusive value, but it also has a divisive aspect, in the sense that "we no longer think of people in terms of shared universals; rather, we think of people based on their categorical membership to particular sociocultural groups" (p. 76). While, on the one hand, multicultural education seeks to acknowledge and respect difference, it can also run the risk of essentializing those who are framed as different through the reification of unexamined discourses. As suggested later in my work, one way to avoid this pitfall is to employ strategies that allow for self-representation, and could expand dialogues around radical difference. This notion will be returned to in a later section of this chapter.

Multicultural education, especially as a practice of critical pedagogy, often depends upon the same underpinnings as anti-racist education. It opposes the additive approach of multiculturalism in school curriculum, with its focus on difference via the lens of cultural trappings (Sensoy et al., 2010). Instead, critical multicultural education is seeking the sort of movement described below:

“towards anti-oppression oriented, transformative approaches that unsettle normative mainstream curriculum. From this standpoint, the curriculum is organized in ways that encourage students to raise critical questions about the political nature of the content and method of the curriculum and connect these problems to the conditions of their lived experiences” (p. 4).

Here we find the same sensibilities about disrupting normativity that are found in Aboriginal education. However, the notion of multiculturalism itself also presents complications for Aboriginal education. As St. Denis (2011) points out, “multiculturalism is dependent on colonial structures because it assumes the legitimacy of the current colonial Canadian government. As multiculturalism ignores ongoing colonization, the result is a trivializing and erasing of Aboriginal sovereignty” (p. 311). So, while the methods of multicultural education and Aboriginal education are very similar in the sense that they are both positioned to some degree positioned as aspects of decolonizing education and are rooted in social justice concerns, there remain some tensions in their overarching discourses.

Verna St. Denis (2011) also suggests that to some degree the persistence of systemic racism in schools has been affected by the mechanism of multiculturalism. In discussing multicultural policy within schools, the author elaborates on the way in which that policy is used as a fulcrum for dismissing Indigenous concerns. In particular, she calls attention to the comment, “Aboriginal people are not the only people here,” (p. 306). The implication of this comment is that Aboriginal people represent just one of the many minority voices seeking recognition within schools and education. Ultimately, however, it presents a perpetuation of precisely the types of colonial narratives that fail to recognize the primacy of First Nations thinking and knowing on this land. In fact, St. Denis offers five mechanisms through which multiculturalism subverts anticolonial analysis, both politically and pedagogically. First, multiculturalism acts as a divisive force because it secures difference within newcomer identities, creating the conditions for separation and competition. Second, multiculturalism ignores the need to work towards resolving social inequities through the tacit encouragement of uncritical pluralism. Third, it limits the participation of non-mainstream (often non-white) others in collaborative national identity building by maintaining a focus on celebratory markers of difference, such as food, clothing, and dress. This point particularly reflects Bhabha’s assertion that “multiculturalism must be seen to be done, as noisily and publicly as possible” (p. 232, 233). Finally, multiculturalism is not effective in addressing the

conflicting claims of minority groups, again because of its tendency to uncritical pluralism, which celebrates and cements difference while ignoring its social implication.

Essentially, these objections to multiculturalism point to the notion that despite claiming the appearance of welcoming newcomers to this land by ensuring they can remain within a zone of cultural comfort, it is still a colonial device that maintains the status quo of normative whiteness, and enables the separation of groups of others while simultaneously lumping together all non-white others, including Indigenous peoples, into the nationally understood binary of us and them. In total, this provides a convenient distraction from addressing the horrors of colonial fall-out for Indigenous peoples, including the consideration of land usurpation and genocide, by suggesting that all non-white others are legally, politically, and socially on the same plane. The effect of this, St. Denis (2011) suggests, is that when Aboriginal teachers, administrators, and cultural workers seek to address issues of colonialism and reconciliation in schools, they are often met with “resistance, suspicion, and even resentment” (p. 312) as they are seen to deny the principles of fairness and acceptance that multiculturalism purports to carry. The message sent by those who resist decolonization efforts by Indigenous teachers falls very much in line with the notion that only certain kinds of difference can be addressed in curriculum, and only in limited ways. This resistance, especially framed as multicultural tolerance, allows non-Indigenous teachers and students to remain in what Dion (2008) refers to as perfect stranger positioning; including Indigenous material culture content in curriculum, such as food and dance, allows teachers to give the appearance of addressing Indigenous educational concerns without engaging in what it means to live in a colonial context. In many ways, this problem is another indication of the ontological differences between Western and Indigenous ways of thinking, in which the western tendency towards identification, separation, and classification overrides the relational perspectives of Indigenous thought by continuing to divide us, rather than inviting us to explore the implications of our interrelatedness.

In an earlier work, and in a related vein, Schick and St. Denis (2005), suggest another element that can foment resistance in education, which also has to do with the normativity of white Canadian identities. The offer that:

“examining the constructed nature of whiteness allows us to demonstrate that racial identities – including whiteness – are neither monolithic nor stable. Rather, racial identities are sets of multifaceted relations produced

through social class, ethnicity, language, geographic location, history, politics, and so forth” (p. 298).

Multiculturalism, however, does not, as St. Denis (2011) points out above, make space for these considerations in curriculum, preferring to interpret this trope of education as an opportunity for the celebration of surface differences. Rather, because of its focus on allowing cultural others to maintain their distinctive identities, it actually sets out conditions that assist in the maintenance of white privilege. The authors point out that this happens in two distinct ways: first in the sense that “dominant cultural practices are always ‘on,’ always the standard fall back position for ‘the way things are done’” (Schick & St. Denis, 2005, p. 300); and second, because assuming that these practices are indeed the norm for everyone, the fact that “one’s achievements may be at the expense of others is often an invisible reality for privileged groups” (p. 300). Neither one of these positions makes space to explore the constructed nature of identity, whether internally generated or externally applied, so any discussion of imbalanced power relations can be avoided in deference to an entrenched status quo. Such assumptions about the nature of whiteness also allow white students to continue to see themselves as cultureless in the face of multicultural incursions, and from this position they can cast themselves as helpers to Indigenous peoples and newcomers, never having to interrogate the differences between the two positionalities, and the implications therein vis-à-vis colonialism.

In fairness, the adoption of multiculturalism as a formal federal policy by Trudeau's Liberal government in 1971 was a very important step when one considers the government of Canada's historic relations with non-white immigrants. In fact, in the late 19th century measures were taken specifically to ensure difficulty for those of Asian descent to journey here, especially once the need for manual labour was diminished by the completion of the railroad. In 1885, the Canadian Government passed the now well-known Chinese Immigration Act, imposing a \$50 fee for Chinese nationals seeking new opportunities in Canada. By 1904, the tax was raised to \$500, further inhibiting the ability of Chinese nationals to emigrate, and of those already in Canada to bring family members to join them here. A related restriction applied to immigrants from India, imposed by the Continuous Passage Act of 1908, which made it difficult for Indians to come to Canada, as a single ticket passage from India was virtually impossible to arrange. During the very same period, however, the government was also making life

miserable, if not entirely impossible, for Aboriginal people with policies that banned cultural practices (but provided thousands of culturally significant artefacts to museums around the world), forced Aboriginal populations into tiny sections of their former territories, and removed Aboriginal children from their homes, placing them into assimilationist schools and families, destroying birth families and lives in the process.

In the modern milieu, it has been to Canada's benefit to open the doors wider, repealing earlier acts, as it seems to make the label of systemic racism less adhesive. With more and more people in this country occupying the position of other, competition to be heard increases, and so do government opportunities to save face by providing services to some while holding others in place. On the surface, Canada can still claim the position of gracious benefactor to her people; but what does it mean when a country has both an Indian Act and a Multicultural Act, in addition to having a Charter of Rights enshrined within our Constitution? For Indigenous peoples, multiculturalist approaches to education have not served to enhance Aboriginal education but rather have allowed "schools to assume that Aboriginal people, history, and culture are available as mere sources of 'enrichment'" (St. Denis, 2011, p. 314), equating Indigenous peoples with all other non-white others. Despite the potential of multicultural education as a place to begin talking about on-going colonialism and its implications for Indigenous peoples, the opportunity never seems to be taken up in practice. St. Denis suggests that "multiculturalism helps to erase, diminish, trivialize, and deflect from acknowledging Aboriginal sovereignty and the need to redress Aboriginal rights" as well as being "dependant on the deep structures of colonial discourse" (p. 309). While approaches in multicultural education are often framed as supporting Indigenous education, they can also be used as a foil for suppressing Indigenous concerns by trying to create a discourse of equality amongst Indigenous and Settler others, diverting attention away from the underlying colonial narratives that dominate both discourses. The good and inclusive feelings that multicultural education seeks to nurture may in fact alienate the very educational subjects it seeks to inform (Ahmed, 2008).

2.9. Decolonizing Education and Anti-Racist Education

Decolonizing education calls for the rooting out of assumptions inherent in curriculum, in the formation of social hierarchies, and in the way pedagogical initiatives play out in the classroom, as well as in the context of research about Indigenous peoples

and knowledges. As Maori scholar Linda Smith (1999) points out: “the significance of travelers’ tales and adventurers’ adventures is that they represented the Other to a general audience back in Europe which became fixed in the milieu of cultural ideas” (p. 8). Indeed, as with Dion’s (2009) description of Ontario school curriculum, much of the British Columbia social studies curriculum is still connected to contact and conquest, even despite recent updates, which means that the narratives it delivers are built almost exclusively from Settler/colonial perspectives. The same stories that were carried back to Europe, focussing on difference and alterity, still inform our educational practices, fixing Aboriginal people in the past and paving the way for notions of European cultural and intellectual superiority, which, without intervention, remain unexamined and therefore continue undisturbed.

Decolonizing as a strategy for the meaningful inclusion of Aboriginal content is not merely a matter of finding the bugs within the system and fixing them. Rather, as Dolores van der Wey (2007) points out: “those of us who teach for social change must begin with how we know. Epistemology has to enter into our pedagogy and we have to know the limits of our knowing based on our subject positions” (p. 997). That is, we must engender a reflexivity about our own positionality in order to understand how we have co-created notions about our selves and others in Canada, particularly with regard to Aboriginal peoples. But in order to do this, we need to first learn to see Aboriginal people as peers located in the present, to hear the stories of Aboriginal people, and really listen to them, in ways that disrupt those colonial stereotypes.

In this vein, the work of several scholars has been key in opening up understanding and practice in this area. While Dwayne Donald (2009, 2012) rejects the notion of the third space, citing its placelessness as problematic to both Indigenous identity and epistemology, and suggesting that it furthers the fetishization of Indigenous people, he remains “convinced that the task of decolonizing...can only occur when Aboriginal peoples and Canadians face each other across historic divides” (2012, p. 535). He advocates instead for a kind of reconstruction of Settler and Indigenous identity through a process of Indigenous Métissage, aimed at decolonizing the colonial construction offered by historic forts as heritage sites. The inside/outside and civilized/savage narratives that are most often offered as part of many historic trading fort programs, such as Ft. St. James, Alberta, in Donald’s example, or Ft. Langley in the context of the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, tend to match traditional school

curriculum in their reifications of normative whiteness, colonial superiority, and Indigenous inferiority. By seeking Indigenous versions of settlement narratives, the fractures in colonial identity construction, of both self and other, are quickly exposed.

Celia Haig-Brown (2010) discusses some of the pitfalls that a practice in decolonizing education can entail, and warns against Indigenous thought appropriation as a central concern. She posits Indigenous education for Settlers as learning a secondary cultural discourse, the taking up of which can evoke profound changes in personal identity, but can also lead to a false-sense of deep knowing, and an overextension of familiarity and privilege. In my research so far, one of the best tonics to such an overextension can be found in the discourses of anti-racist education and critical race theory. Through these discourses, learners are exposed to key considerations in the learning and adoption of secondary discourses so they are better able to navigate towards a hybrid way of critically encompassing both their primary and secondary discourses.

With its roots in the field of law, Critical Race Theory (CRT) has had a far-reaching impact in numerous fields since its early development in the United States in the 1970s (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). This discourse has been taken up by educational theorists in most Commonwealth countries (including Australia, Canada and New Zealand) where much of the most recent work in decolonizing education is situated, as a mechanism central to anti-racist education. Verna St. Denis (2007) asserts that a practice of critical race analysis, a strategy of CRT, would be of benefit to all those who work in education. She points out that in addition to assisting non-Aboriginal people see themselves as advantaged by race, while others are disadvantaged by it, it could also draw attention to the intra-cultural issues that sometimes arise between Aboriginal people about just who belongs and who does not. St. Denis also sees the possibility of coalition building through critical race analysis. Once the concept that we are all positioned based on racialization, whether for better or worse, is grasped, it becomes easier to work toward the common goal of social justice.

While much has been written on the impacts of public schooling at the K-12 level for Indigenous students, including discussions of intergenerational trauma linked to the families of residential school survivors, until recently little had been written about the impact of colonized classrooms on post-secondary students. Sheila Cote-Meek (2014)

has contributed significantly in this area, through the publication of her study on the experiences of Indigenous students and academics in university settings. Even in the context of addressing Indigeneity in post-secondary classrooms, participants reported some disappointingly common themes and problems, such as struggling with their own reactions to listening to colonial narratives and the inherent violence therein. In addition, the onus of representing Indigenous identity and thought in mixed classrooms, navigating racisms that go largely unnoticed and uncorrected by instructors, and the characterization of both Aboriginal studies programs and Aboriginal academics as less serious and rigorous than other faculties and academics, were also frequently reported. In analyzing her findings, Cote-Meek also relies upon St. Denis (2002) to evoke the call for CRT in pedagogical development, as it becomes clear that unexamined colonial positioning continues to enact violence upon Indigenous students. What is crucial about Cote-Meek's work is that it illuminates very clearly the fact that when Indigenous education is delivered without consideration of the implications of racialization, and the legacy of intergenerational trauma and identity suppression, the results can reproduce precisely the kinds of marginalization that they often seek to ameliorate. CRT, as a practice of anti-racist education, then, becomes an important aspect of the ground-setting work that must be done first.

While troubling assumptions is one of the main goals of anti-racist education, DeCastell (2004) points out that it is difficult to imagine doing the job of uncovering racism and its legacies within the context of the very institutions that were used to perpetuate it in the first place. DiAngelo and Sensoy (2010) point out that the first step is to understand racism as a set of power relations, and then to understand how these relations have informed and played out in our own thinking. It is a practice in consciousness-raising. The goal is to disrupt notions of our own neutrality (Dei, 1996).

Jeanette Armstrong (2005), in discussing what we mean when we talk about race and racism in Canada, offers the following thought provoking questions:

“What is appalling is that nobody thinks its racism when a native person stands up and speaks his or her language and no one understands a single word. Who decided that my language isn't valuable? Who decided that my language has no place here, on this land, when for thousands of years our people and every other First Nation in this country took care of these lands?” (p. 33).

What Armstrong points to here is the fact that we are still in denial in this country about the ways in which racism, the silencing and oppression of the other, is still felt on a daily basis, often as much through inaction as through action. Her questions beg yet another: how is it that we can continue to gloss over what is clearly a massive and on-going source of injustice in Canada?

Several authors writing in this area have made use of the word trauma in association with the practice of anti-racist education (Berlak, 2004; Erickson, 2004; Schick & St. Denis, 2005), which was what initially caught my attention when I first began to read on the subject. In describing her own practice as an anti-racist educator, building on the work of Jane Elliott, Ingrid Erickson (2004) writes that “diversity training inevitably involves trauma, as participants’ beliefs and views are challenged and their sense of themselves as moral beings is unsettled by an encounter with the workings of power and privilege” (p. 147). In further support of the necessity of trauma to antiracist education, Erickson offers that “it seems clear that little learning about privilege and discrimination takes place in an environment that is free of trauma, and also that a lapse into moral relativism is an unacceptable alternative” (p. 147). Schick and St. Denis (2005) also refer to the notion that trauma is inherent in an anti-racist education practice, saying, “it is from student resistance and trauma that we see the extent of what is at stake for them in learning about the implications of being a white teacher” (p. 312). My initial reaction to the use of the word trauma was intense. If, for example, we use the word trauma to describe the experiences of those who attended Residential Schools or those who experienced the Holocaust, how could it make sense to use that word in the context of an education practice? And especially in light of Cote-Meeks (2014) discussion of the trauma experienced by Indigenous students in post-secondary school settings, it is especially difficult to reconcile the use of this word with the experiences of non-Indigenous students.

In recounting a particularly transformative teaching experience within her teacher education classroom at San Francisco State University in the late 1990s, Ann Berlak (2004) offers a nuanced version of necessary trauma in antiracist education. After inviting a former student and practicing teacher in as a guest speaker to shed light on her own lived black experience within education with Berlak’s class of predominantly white students, the author was stunned at the conflict and fury that ensued amongst her students in reaction to what they largely felt was a traumatizing experience. In

unpacking the fallout with her class in the following weeks, Berlak identified that while she had long been engaged in teaching courses in antiracism, and felt successful in doing so, the short sharp shock her students received through their encounter with the rage and outrage of their guest speaker moved the students in this particular class far beyond what she'd ever been able to accomplish in previous iterations of the course. Although students' initial reaction to the session was one of strong resistance, manifested through what Berlak refers to as "defensive anger" (p. 137) in a mode of self-protection, through offering opportunities for recursive reflection on the experience, both through written reflection and class discussion, Berlak was able to help her students break through their defensive positioning, transforming it into the moral outrage at the occurrence of racism and their own implication in its perpetuation that she had been after all along. Through encountering the racial trauma experienced by the guest speaker, expressed as rage in her presentation, Berlak's students were forced to face the legacy of trauma that their own inculcation into the racial hierarchies that characterize colonial states has produced; to understand the speaker's trauma, they had to come face to face with their own. Through the experience of making space to explore student trauma so that they could move into state of being receptive to witnessing the legacy of racial trauma in others, Berlak concludes that "if a major purpose of teaching is the promotion of students' abilities to receive information that is dissonant, not just congruent, with what they have learned before, then confrontation with its attendant trauma is necessary" (p. 141).

Ladson-Billings and Donner (2005) offer the notion that there is a moral activist role within CRT scholarship and practice, and describe their practice as being a battle against "liberals who presume the moral high ground and have situated themselves as 'saviours' of the oppressed while maintaining their White skin privilege" (p. 68), echoing McIntosh (1988) before them. Perhaps the trauma aspect of anti-racist education, then, is effective not when it comes from aggressive methodologies, as is the case with Elliott, but more from the internal destabilization of white identity that is necessary for real CRT theory and work to occur. Robin DiAngelo (2011) characterizes this trauma in the context of white fragility, in which resistance, defensiveness, and confusion is activated by the mere mention of privilege. She concludes her exploration of white fragility with the assertion that the greatest gains can be made in addressing these discourses at the micro level, the level of the personal, the level of identity formation. Although both CRT

and antiracist education will emerge again later in this chapter, let us leave them here for now, with the summative notion that all of this is pretty tricky business to undertake in practice, which requires courage, skill and attentiveness to address. And key to this tricky business, is learning how to come face to face with the worldview of the other.

2.10. Art and Self-Representation

Before embarking on an exploration of how art works in the context of decolonizing practices in education, it is important to establish a definition of art, a theory, perhaps, of Indigenous art in particular, which can properly serve the discussion. As my study reveals, many Canadians conceive of Indigenous art in very limited terms, evoking images of masks, totem poles, beadwork, and perhaps ledger drawings. When invited to look at thematically complex contemporary Indigenous art, those prior notions are disrupted, creating more of the ontological uncertainty discussed earlier. Somewhere between these two conceptual polarities, perhaps definable as traditional and modern (or perhaps not) lies a cohesive definition of Indigenous art. But to get to it takes some work.

The idea of authenticity is deeply entangled with the question of Indigenous art. But, in many ways, the idea of authenticity is also colonial in nature. As Clifford (1988) tells it: “the ‘authenticity’ accorded to both human groups and their artistic work is shown to proceed from specific assumptions about temporality, wholeness, and continuity” (p. 215). In essence, this means that the stories told through museums about Aboriginal people were (and generally still are) told in ways that reflected Eurocentric values. Clifford described the factors involved as being at play in an art-culture matrix. In one aspect of this schema, the objects collected by early explorers and anthropologists are transformed through display practices so that in some cases, aesthetic considerations replace utilitarian ones. Objects, such as masks and house poles, collected initially as examples of material culture, were transformed into something like art by virtue of the conditions of their display, usually within a museum setting. In effect, Clifford describes precisely the kind of external identity construction that Aboriginal peoples, amongst others, have subsequently had to contend with ever since. Ideas of authenticity, therefore, are really about authority in much the same way that Carol Duncan (1997) suggested in her work on museums and national narratives. Although another aspect of the art-culture matrix uses the notion of authenticity to distinguish between items that are

one-of-a-kind-hand-crafted items and those that are mass-produced, it is worthwhile knowing that the idea of authenticity has as much power to distort as it has to clarify, especially when use in the colonial sense (see also Hendry, 2005).

In the context of Indigenous art history, the art-culture matrix is often discussed, as anthropologists, art historians, and curators make its discernment their life's work. Curator Lee-Ann Martin (2005), along with other Indigenous artists and curators, addressed this issue in a 2003 conference at the Banff Centre for the arts that sought to address Indigenous voices in Indigenous art display practices. Their work and writing addressed both historic and contemporary works, making clear that a definition of Indigenous art is not easy to achieve even within Indigenous communities. Recently, Charlotte Townsend-Gault, Jennifer Kramer and Ki-Ke-In (Richard Hamilton) (2013) edited a massive volume on *Native Art of the Northwest Coast*, in which art historians, artists, and anthropologists grappled with both how to define and how to produce Indigenous art. Several authors in that volume, including Kramer (2013), Townsend-Gault (2013), and Miller (2013) chart the path of Indigenous cultural production from its ceremonial/utilitarian origins through to the modern art market, illuminating the range of perspectives this path has produced. One of the most interesting summations of art that emerged from that text was Marianne Nicolson's (2013) assertion that "while modern western European canons of art production have been imbedded within the glorified notion of individual ingenuity, traditional Pacific Northwest Coast Native canons are embedded within notions of continuity and the maintenance of norms and standards" (p. 531). This gets us a little bit closer to a definition of Indigenous art in that it implies that Indigenous artists (and I extrapolate to include those artists from other regions in North America as well), create in a mode that both connects to and reflects their community traditions and values, and often some of the tensions those values might raise in contemporary existence. It represents, as Campbell (2013) concludes both personal and national identities in a way that western art often does not.

Perhaps the loveliest definition of art I read while on the journey to define it was offered by author and playwright Drew Hayden Taylor (2015):

"Art is universal. You cannot be a people or a culture without art. It shows who we are, and what is important to us. It also shows how we think, and how we express ourselves. The beauty of art is its breadth of expression" (p. 1).

Despite its ambiguity, it is this definition that I have settled on, with the caveat that my work is specifically focussed on art that is less ceremonial, and more about contemporary identity politics, created in non-traditional modes of production. What I am looking for when I choose art to share with my students is work that will reveal and challenge preconceived notions about Indigenous art and peoples. The aim is to help viewers connect to the voices and concerns of Indigenous peoples in meaningful ways. I want to create a space for dialogue, contact zones, as Pratt (1991), might phrase it, in which viewers can begin to explore both the formation of their own identity, and the formation of the identities of their perceived others.

It seems clear that art holds a certain power. But what is it that art does to render it so powerful as to train our thinking, and yet have the ability to shift and retrain it as well? According to Dewey (1938), art presents one half of a dialogue that begins when it is encountered. It is experiential and transformative, its effects extending well beyond the temporality of the encounter. It is a dance, an engagement, a communion that succeeds and excites beyond the bounds of mere language. Truly, “if all meaning could be adequately expressed by words, the arts of painting and music would not exist” (p. 77). Rather than indicating meaning, meaning is contained within objects encountered as art. Through a dialogic exchange with the object the viewer gains access to that meaning for her- or himself. But Dewey points out further that despite its transcendence of other modes of communication, such as speech, the language of art must also be acquired. The acquisition of this language is rooted in the very experience of art. It is the very work of art itself that invites our reaction and interaction and the language we need to be conversant with the experience is acquired as we merge with it. For Dewey, “the power of music in particular to merge different individualities in a common surrender, loyalty and inspiration, a power utilized in religion and warfare alike, testifies to the relative universality of the language of art” (p. 349). That is, art has the power to move and transform us.

Dewey (1938) was very focused on the idea of experience in his work, seeing it as the precursor to all understanding, especially with regard to education. He noted that, “every experience is a moving force. Its value can be judged only on the ground of what it moves toward and into” (p. 38). Further, he noted that every experience is really an interaction, stating:

“...interaction is going on between an individual and objects and other persons. The conceptions of *situation* and of *interaction* are inseparable from each other. An experience is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between an individual and what, at the time, constitutes his environment, whether the latter consists of persons with whom he is talking about some topic or event...the toys with which he is playing...the book he is reading...” (pp. 43-4).

In many ways, what Dewey describes constitutes a phenomenology of art. It is the very nature of the experience to which we must attend in the process of meaning making.

Ciaran Benson (2001) is also interested in how art functions in society to create meaning, and to define culture and identity. In doing so, he builds on Dewey's (1931, 1938) ideas of experience. He suggests that perhaps, in the matrix of experience, it is the space between the maker and the viewer in which meaning or sense is made. Further, he suggests that rather than thinking about experience as a matter of merging ideas of self and other through the dialogic encounter, we think of it as an emerging understanding of how self and other are created. He describes this process as being “rather like two streams of consciousness intersecting, interweaving, only to subsequently diverge again” (p. 190). But this merging and diverging is not temporally confined. Rather, it is resonant in that, as Benson describes it, art is rather like a mirror. It both *is* an image and *produces* an image. In so doing, it can also reflect the self in the action of viewing the image. It seems clear that there is something happening when we look at art, something that is dialogic and transformative, intransigent temporally perhaps, but none-the-less resonant.

In her 1995 book, *Releasing the Imagination*, Maxine Greene also takes up the issue of just how it is that art works upon us, through the lens of using art in education. Greene describes the role of the teacher in the following way: “we teachers must so emphasize the importance of persons becoming reflective enough to think about their own thinking and become conscious of their own consciousness” (p. 65). Although not speaking specifically of anti-racist education, Greene's background in philosophy is evident in her work, as the basis of her project in art education is to shake students out of entrenched ways of thinking to critically engage in the world around them, a conceptual alliance with the thinking that underlies anti-racist education. She joins the chorus of others, including Dewey (1934), Dion (2007, 2009), Freire (1970), and Mezirow (2003), in pointing out that reflexivity is an important component in the making

of meaning. By asking students to think, really *think*, about their relationship with the world, when they undertake an encounter with the other through artistic expression, with what it means to be the other, and about their own positionality in relation to the other, then real meaning and understanding can be affected.

For Greene (1995), these encounters and ensuing dialogues are best engendered through the arts. In support of her argument, she offers: “Jean-Paul Sartre reminded readers that, when confronted with a fiction, they have to create what is disclosed when they read—they have to give it life” (p. 77). Here, the suggestion is that any encounter with art is necessarily transformative because in order to access the content of a novel, for example, the reader must actively engage with it. The work exists not only in the intent of the author, but in the participation of the reader as well. For her, and for this argument too, the sort of fiction that Sartre refers to can also include other artistic productions. As Greene says, “Meaning *happens* in and by means of an encounter with a painting, with a text, with a dance performance” (p. 139, emphasis in original). That is to say that a novel, a painting, a piece of music, a play or any other form of art, necessitates a demand for the participation of the audience (the reader, the viewer, the listener, etc.). It is precisely within the dialogic relationship between the artist and the audience that meaning is negotiated and a third space, informed by both, might be reached.

Greene (1995) refers to the work of Toni Morrison in suggesting why the art of the other is particularly important in this regard:

“In her case, the project involves exploring the ways in which what we think of as our Americanness is, in many ways, a response to an African presence far too long denied. Morrison is not interested in replacing one domination by another, but she is interested in showing others what she sees from her own perspective – and in this showing, enriching all others’ understanding not only of their own culture but also of themselves” (p. 161).

What she is suggesting is that the self-representation inherent in Morrison’s work provides an example of the locus for the intersection of self and other. Here again, we find that the goal is not a usurpation of power, but a decentering of it; a creation of some wiggle room, so to speak, so that negotiation towards mutual cultural competency can begin.

2.11. Art and Phenomenology

If art is a system of communication that transcends other forms of communication, such as speech, then exactly how does it work? Dewey (1931) posits that:

“The essential thing esthetically is our own mental activity of starting, travelling, returning to a starting point, holding on to the past, carrying it along; the movement of attention backwards and forwards, as these acts are executed by the mechanism of motor imagery” (p. 106).

This may also be framed according to what Jordan (2002) refers to as cultural translation. That is, the aesthetic experience of viewing art may also be described as an act of translation in which the viewer’s sense of the world must be reconciled with the artist’s and vice versa. There is a dialogic aspect to this way of thinking that can be applied to encounters with the other as well, and a way of moving back and forth, in and out, required to discern and define those encounters, that seems to echo Dewey. Both of these concepts, the moving back and forth and the idea of translation, find play in the fields of phenomenology and semiotic analysis as well.

Phenomenological philosopher David Abram (1997) suggests that the notion of *objective reality*—dearly held by those who prefer to view life through the lens of the scientific paradigm as a crucial aspect of the analytical process—does not actually exist. In fact, it may be argued that attempting to engage in dialogue from a position that assumes objectivity closes down the dialogue before it even begins. Rather, an introspective analysis of our own positionality is what allows us to see how differently the other is situated, and we are opened to the possibility of how another experiences life. In this process, we must be intensely subjective in determining how our position was constructed. As Bourriaud (2002) reminds us, “*it takes two to make an image*” (p. 26). The dialogic process of encountering and experiencing art cannot be contained within a notion of objective reality because such a notion is instantly limiting. It precludes the dialogue that is necessary for meaning to take shape.

Further, and in a more technical explanation, Don Ihde (1986) articulates the phenomenology of how we see and make-meaning as follows: “phenomenology begins with a kind of empirical observation directed at the whole field of possible experiential phenomena” (p. 31). He describes this experience as the relationship between ‘noema’,

or the thing/phenomena, and 'noesis', or our experience of the thing/phenomena. The noesis is related to the "I" positionality of the experiencer. In deconstructing what really happens between noema and noesis, Ihde defines four hermeneutic rules as guidelines for noticing how meaning in such interactions unfolds: "(a) attend to phenomena as and how they show themselves, (b) describe (don't explain) phenomena and (c) horizontalize all phenomena initially" (p. 38) and "seek out structural or invariant features of the phenomena" (p 39).

If we were to consider a phenomenology of art that looks to Ihde's (1986) rules as a methodology, then a useful framework for how to build meaning from an aesthetic experience begins to emerge. Following the path of the rules, one begins with *observation*; this is the act of looking itself, and the moments of pause before a work of art that such an act requires. In the next step, the viewer, in taking account of what is being observed, begins to see; that is, discernments are made, specific elements leap out as the eye wanders, and a body of associations begins to assemble. The third step, *horizontalization*, is perhaps where the real challenge begins as the goal is to assume that all observations and associations are of equal importance unless and until they can be logically determined to be otherwise. This is trickier than it sounds, because it also requires the sort of flexibility of mind called for by Dewey (1931) and Freire (1970) to move back and forth and in and out, without letting any particular impression or association dominate. This is similar to what Husserl referred to as *epoché*, or "the suspension of belief in accepted reality-claims" (Ihde, 1986, p. 69). It is in the fourth step that those reality-claims are investigated. Ihde's idea of seeking out structural features is presented here as the practice of *reflexivity*; it is at this stage that the viewer's associations and impressions can be troubled for underlying assumptions. Instances of attraction and rejection of various aspects of the art are explored to determine what informs them. Through this process the socio-political construction of both noema/object and noesis/subject begin to be uncovered. Rather than attending to what we know, we can employ a phenomenological methodology in looking at art to consider *how* we have come to know. Like Abrams, Ihde's process requires the rejection of any notions of objective reality so that real discovery can ensue. This process becomes central to the project of creating and then addressing ontological uncertainty in order to produce new understandings.

To return to anthropology for a moment, Ihde's assertions around the hermeneutic rules for observing phenomenologically are echoed in the way some anthropologists view visual data. For example, Pink (2003) calls for reflexivity as a central aspect of the task of visual observation and analysis. She asserts that:

"...reflexivity should be integrated fully into processes of fieldwork and visual or written representation in ways that do not simply explain the researcher's approach, but reveal the very processes by which the positionality of researcher and informant were constituted and through which knowledge was produced during the fieldwork" (p. 189).

In other words, meaning is made not only through observation but also through a process of uncovering how our observations are mediated by our social and political situations, which requires both observation and introspection to form the dialogic process of making meaning out of the experience of looking at visual phenomena.

Closely related to phenomenology, semiotics also examines how meanings are made and communicated through a dialogic process. For Gunther Kress (2011), in writing about the application of critical discourse analysis (CDA) to education, multimodal social semiotic analysis presents a coherent framework: "*Multimodal social semiotics* has two aspects. *Multimodality* focuses on the material *means* for representation, the *resources* for making texts: that is, on *modes*. *Social semiotics* provides a theoretical framework for a focus on all aspects of meaning-making" (p. 208). One of the key tenets of the multimodal angle in Kress's work is that it disrupts the notion that text or even language is the primary mode through which meaning is made. Instead, Kress suggests that it is our *selection* of, and *attention* to, signs (as potentially discreet aspects of texts) that is key in the construction of meaning. So while the practice of CDA is clearly a useful one, it is even more useful when less literal forms of texts are considered. Therefore, if we were to apply this schema to Dewey's (1938) ideas about art as experience, and in consideration of a phenomenology art, then we may consider the work of art as the text, made up of a myriad of possible signs, depending on the interests, manifested in the acts of selection and attention, of the person experiencing the art. The ensuing dialogic process is located within all the larger discourses that are found to inform it. A critical discourse analysis of social semiotics, then, gives us a framework for studying the phenomenological experience of encounters with art and for plumbing the meanings that develop for individuals based on non-verbal

personal interactions. Key here, as in phenomenology, is that the process of meaning making is interactive.

This way of looking at art, as a field of open interpretation, is likely unfamiliar to most, and possibly even a little threatening. Returning to the discussion earlier in this chapter we can now think phenomenologically and semiotically about how art and other objects of material culture produce meaning in service of whatever institution or particular curator has arranged them. Those early museums did not invite us into open interpretation, but rather provided a closed narrative of the Way Things Are. A phenomenological practice of looking at art calls more for what O'Neill (2009) argues is "interpretation without a master" (p. 83), in which no particular narrative dominates, but meaning is made through the dialogic consideration of intersection, interconnection and intersubjectivity. That is, if we can observe, see, and horizontalize our attention and selection in a practice of reflexivity, we are freed to create our own interpretation. From this standpoint we can begin to think not only of art as a text, but also of institutions as texts, and of various 'isms' as texts.

Thus far, what I have tried to make clear is that the art of the other, particularly the Aboriginal other, was at one point swept up in the matrix of colonial power relations and used to form part of a narrative that allowed for Eurocentric dominance in Canada. Within this assertion lies the fundamental principle that art is powerful – it has the ability to move us, to frame and reframe our thinking. And to be truly conversant with art, we must enter freely into dialogue with it. For meaning to be made, the veils of our various positional 'isms' must first be shed so that we are available to the experience of engagement. Through this dialogic encounter, we acquire a new language, one that allows us to begin to see through the eyes of another, of the other, which better enables us to locate ourselves and see constructions of difference for what they are. Finally, by making room for the exchange between ourselves and art, we have a new text to analyze, a third space text, that is informed by both our own experience and our new understanding of the experience of the other, an understanding that exists beyond language, beyond text, beyond art.

It is worth noting here that there is a definite distinction to be made between the ways in which Indigenous and non-Indigenous people engage in this process, especially in the context of Indigenous subject matter in art. One of the findings of Cote-Meek's

(2013) study asserts that “narratives of ongoing colonial violence are difficult knowledge for an Aboriginal student – to engage in critical discussions is difficult for any learner, but it is especially difficult when one is the casualty in the narrative” (p. 149). This presents another crucial point of difference in the ontological underpinnings of both Settler and Indigenous responses, and one that requires thoughtful consideration and management. A student grappling with art that carries messages about the impact of residential schools, for example, brings with them to the dialogue all of the vast array of their own experience. For a non-Indigenous student, there is an outsider aspect to the formation for their response to such art, while for an Indigenous student such work might tap into painful personal associations, leading to an entirely different level of understanding. Further, as Cote-Meek points out, there is the additional challenge faced by Indigenous students that they may be viewed as an informant by their non-Indigenous classmates, which deserves serious consideration by practitioners in assisting students to navigate their reactions to such work. Each students’ reaction to Indigenous expression forms a part of their movement towards decolonizing themselves, but that will necessarily play out differently for those on either side of the colonial fence.

2.12. Transformative Education

The articles by Carol Schick and Verna St. Denis (2003, 2005) mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, while addressing Aboriginal education in the Saskatchewan context specifically, fall as much under the category of anti-racist practices in education as they do under Aboriginal education. Building upon the idea of how the assumption-exposing aspect of a decolonizing practice can open space for meaningful dialogue around the inclusion of the perspectives of those on the margins, anti-racist pedagogies rely on critical race theory and anti-oppression discourses to examine the ways in which existing power structures support and enforce white privilege.

Another important informant to this work can be found in transformative education, and here I rely on the work of Jack Mezirow (1978), who describes the beginning of a transformative shift in thinking as being rooted in a disorienting dilemma. In the case of my current research, I have presented this dilemma as ontological uncertainty, from which, following Mezirow’s thesis, considerations of the formation of both perspectives and habits of mind can be explored, making space for the introduction and synthesis of new perspectives in a process of meaning-making through critical

discourse (2003). The focus of Mezirow's work is on transforming stunted frames of reference into more holistic and nuanced understandings, and here we find a deep connection to the goals of anti-racist pedagogy as well. But, for Mezirow, it is the examination of the process of transformation that is of interest, and that makes it relevant to discussions of the role of art in considering previous discussions of phenomenology and multimodal meaning-making. It is the opening of third space thinking that is a primary concern.

The complexities around the need for this sort of opening up were well articulated by Brazilian scholar, Paulo Freire (1970). Freire described both the ways in which a colonial narrative was superimposed as a repressive element in the school curriculum, and also of the disruptive nature of peeling back assumptions that hold colonial narratives in place. Opposed to what he described as the banking model of education, in which knowledge is deposited into children by teacher-experts, Freire focussed on the dialogic nature of education. In this model, which adopts a problem-based orientation, teachers and students are co-learners, which makes room for multiple perspectives, thereby reducing or even eliminating the impact of cultural hegemony, through the negotiation of concurrent and disparate contextual realities, or ontological uncertainties. In articulating a theory of education that moved away from the legacy of colonial systems of education, Freire presented a new approach that was rooted in student experience, rather than in the needs and goals of a colonial master story.

In his revision of education aimed at social justice, Freire (1970) called for a new way of understanding ourselves in relation to others. He offered that all interactions are coded situations that require a flexibility of mind to navigate:

“Its ‘decoding’ requires moving from the abstract to the concrete; this requires moving from the part to the whole and then returning to the parts; this in turn requires that the Subject recognize himself in the object (the coded concrete existential situation) and recognize the object as a situation in which he finds himself, together with other Subjects” (p. 105).

The idea of situation is a powerful one because it forces the recognition that all things are interconnected – the subject begins to perceive that nothing happens in isolation. Situations are coded by virtue of the particularities of the players (both animate and inanimate) in the circumstance, including social forces and institutional concerns. Since all phenomena are interdependent in a web of possible meanings, the

process of decoding allows us to detect the nature and trajectory of the various strands of interconnection that form the present moment and create the situational relation. Decoding can help us pinpoint and trouble our assumptions within that matrix.

The decoding of any situation relies upon an individual's ability to move from concrete thinking to abstract thinking and back again in an effort to locate both subject and object as being not only discrete, but simultaneously bound as well. That is, he saw great possibilities in disrupting notions of self and other by attending to how they are constructed. This requirement for flexibility in engaging with the other marks a new trajectory in Settler/Indigenous relations based on the loosening of long-held grips on the colonial binary and new questions about authority.

But, as Homi Bhabha (1990) points out in his discussion of the notion of the third space, "...the history of colonialism is the history of the West but also that the history of colonialism is a *counter-history* to the normative, traditional history of the West" (p. 218). What Bhabha is referring to here is a kind of cultural shift in perceiving the other (and the material culture of the other) that is achieved through an equally informed dialogue in which neither one nor the other dominates; a sort of hybridity, to use Bhabha's term. This shift is being facilitated by recent critiques of traditional anthropology (Clifford, 1988; Kramer, 2013), and by Aboriginal authors and artists (King, 2003, 2013). Through this lens, we begin to see historic display practices as an aspect of setting up incommensurability (Bhabha, 1990), but also as a place from which that incommensurability can be challenged.

Returning, for a moment, to the objections to Bhabha's third space as articulated by Donald (2012), I would suggest that Indigenous peoples have long since mastered living in a third space within the groundedness of their locations upon the land. As Haig-Brown (2010) frames it, Indigenous people were forced through assimilationist attempts to pick up Western colonial ways as a mandatory secondary discourse (Indigeneity being their primary discourse). In this light, the third space that I suggest is possible is perhaps more relevant to Settler Canadians than to Indigenous Canadians, since it is Settler Canadians who now need to pick up the secondary discourse of Indigeneity in order to come to a hybrid third space.

Working in the area of transformative education, Anne Curry-Stevens (2009), following the work of both Freire (1970) and Mezirow (2007), advances the notion of universal privilege, an acknowledgement that every person is simultaneously both oppressed and oppressor to someone else. In this light, she riffs on Freire's ideas to form a pedagogy of the privileged, aimed squarely at unpacking how privilege is constructed and maintained. In her dissertation research Curry-Stevens examined the practices of twenty educators working in social justice education in public institutions. Most of these educators had practices that took the form of anti-racist and anti-oppressive workshops, union steward training, and sensitivity and human rights workshops. Through her research, she determined that in order for transformed thinking to take place, our narrative foundations must be shaken in order for new narratives to find ground. Curry-Stevens postulated that transformative education for privileged learners (that is, those who fall so closely within the limits of normative notions of Canadian identity that they have never needed to question themselves) can be conceived as a two part process that begins with confidence shaking, or the creation of ontological uncertainty. The second stage involves confidence building, which includes forming plans of action to put new understandings into practice, and finding support to sustain such efforts. Although Curry-Stevens frames her work in terms of only two stages, each of which contains a number of sequenced steps, I suggest that it is useful to insert a third intermediate stage in between that involves re-establishing narratives that are more holistic and take into account the power structures and the impact of previously held narratives. While Curry-Stevens does include some discussion of this in her articulation of the steps involved in the confidence shaking stage, part of what this study aims to address is the necessity for reframing and rebuilding narratives in the context of decolonizing education.

In the case of this study, the goal of transformative education is one of decolonizing education, essentially by beginning to decolonize the self. In alignment with Curry-Stevens' framework (2007) in the first stage, I sought to disrupt participant's Canadian narrative foundations by introducing the notion of art as holding dialogic potential, and then offering them works of art that that expressed explicitly indigenous perspectives on the Canadian narrative. Participants, through their engagements with art, both as we practiced together during our first few sessions and as they embarked on their own learning, began to detect and fill gaps in their knowledge about Indigenous

peoples and history. In this practice, participants built new narrative understandings of Canada and began to understand gaps in their prior knowledge as a product of internalised Eurocentric narratives. It is precisely because this is where most of the real work we did together was situated that I suggest adding an intermediate stage to Curry-Stevens' model; especially since this work is directed at those who will themselves become teachers responsible for the delivery of Indigenous curriculum, the establishment of new narratives is central to the work of decolonizing education. Further, in an enactment of what now becomes the third stage, because they were working as a community of learners, participants took courage from one another and felt both acceptance and empowerment as they learned together, supporting one another in forming plans to take their new learning into their future classrooms.

2.13. Summary

In preparing for this dissertation, I have drawn on a broad spectrum of discourses, including Aboriginal education, antiracist education, anthropology, art history, phenomenology, and transformative education. There is a lot here to consider. I have also done quite a bit of reading in the area of Indigenous research methodology. While, in the end, I have opted for a more Western approach to qualitative research, I have kept several important principles drawn from Indigenous discourses in mind as I worked through this process. First, I have drawn inspiration from Cajete's (1994) notion that Indigenous education positions us to find our face, heart and foundation in whatever work we choose to do. Grappling with identity, choosing to work to decolonize education, and relying on what I know of art and Indigenous expression deeply informs this work as my face, heart, and foundation have crystalized for me, their prismatic influence infusing my thinking. Second, Wilson (2008) argues that a relational perspective is key to real understanding from an Indigenous point of view. Further, he suggests, "rather than viewing ourselves as being *in* relationship with other people or things, we *are* the relationships that we hold and are part of" (p. 80). I have kept this idea at the front of my mind as I wrote about the methodology, findings, and discussion in the chapters that follow.

Chapter 3.

Methodology

3.1. Program

As described in the introduction, this project developed over the period of a decade or so, starting with a unit I developed for a Social Studies 9 class. In the post-secondary context, I've had the opportunity to deliver some of this curriculum to several PDP modules, and undertook a preliminary study of this work in the context of a graduate class in Education, taught by my supervisor, Dr. Susan O'Neill. Prior to this study, I had only anecdotal evidence that my ideas could be enacted through phenomenological art inquiry in ways that created transformative possibilities for students. The preliminary study examined reflections from students about their experience. Within the students' reflections there were indications of transformed thinking, even after just a few hours of guided phenomenological art inquiry. The students' reflections also revealed just how intimidated they were by the idea (and later requirement within the BC curriculum) of including Indigenous content in their lessons. There was real fear, real anxiety about making mistakes and offending people, and I began to realize that for a program like this to be effective, it was not enough to simply shake up participants' thinking—I also needed to help them build new and more helpful knowledge and narratives about Indigenous education and Indigenous peoples.

With this understanding in mind, I designed my dissertation research to include both a program component, with the aim of improving and supporting participants' understanding of sensitive and relevant Indigenous education, and a study component, to examine whether or not the approaches used in this program were effective. This chapter describes the development and delivery of the program, followed by a discussion of the study methods of data collection and analyses that were used.

3.2. Overview and Aims

One of the central themes that emerged time and time again as I read through the books and articles accounted for in the literature review was the growing need for Indigenous voices to be situated within curriculum and in schools. Therefore, one of the questions driving this research asks, how might student teacher engagement in phenomenological art inquiry, informed by Ann Curry-Stevens' framework for transformative education for privileged learners (2007), impact on student teachers' perceptions of Indigenous peoples and education, and how might they enact more holistic approaches to Indigenous education that avoid replicating colonial stereotypes? Ultimately, my aim in working with pre-service teachers was focused on decolonizing education; that is, to bring them to an awareness of the constructed nature of both knowledge and curriculum, and to trouble the assumptions such constructions both rely upon and produce. To support this work, I looked towards critical pedagogy to provide a philosophical foundation, and to transformative education to provide particular strategies and a general framework. In undertaking Curry-Stevens' framework for transformative education, it necessary for there to be some kind of catalyst to create ontological uncertainty, to shake the foundations of what we think we know about Canada and about Indigenous peoples and their relationship with Canada. My second question, therefore, asks if can art precipitate the kind of ontological uncertainty necessary for transformative education to ensue.

3.3. Critical Pedagogy and Transformative Education

We cannot teach what we do not know. In the case of Indigenous education, as outlined in the previous chapter, there has been little opportunity offered in the formal learning environment of the K-12 system to acquire meaningful learning about Indigenous peoples and history. As a nation mired in colonial mores and stereotypes (and not necessarily consciously aware of them), often, informal learning opportunities are steeped in oppressive colonial discourses. In the light of increasing demands on teachers to up their Indigenous education game in response to changing curriculum and provincial education mandates (and for some this means including it for the first time), it is little wonder that many teachers feel overwhelmed, intimidated, and out of their depth (Dion, 2009).

To begin my work in this complex arena, I turned to practices that are rooted in critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy rejects the notion that knowledge is neutral and seeks to loosen the grip of hegemony on the minds of both students and teachers in a process of conscientization, which is a “deepening of the attitude of awareness characteristic of all emergence” (Freire, 1970, p. 109). For Freire, this process also requires praxis, which means developing the capacity to see and work against oppressive forces while maintaining the ideals of liberatory education. In this way, critical pedagogy also seeks to locate the ways in which curriculum has constructed both Indigenous and Settler identities, presenting them as eternally at odds with one another, locked in an incommensurability that Bhabha (1994) suggests is often present in colonial narratives. These practices, conscientization and praxis, seek the emancipation of the oppressed from the stranglehold of the kinds of self-limiting thinking that keep the status quo in place.

In addition to critical pedagogy, I also wanted to consider more deeply the notion of perspective transformation and what this would mean for pre-service teachers participating in the program. To understand this concept, I began by examining the work of Jack Mezirow, who is often considered the founder of transformative learning. Transformative learning builds on Freire’s ideas and extends them into an approach for understanding the change process in adult learners (Martin & Griffiths, 2014). In essence, Mezirow’s ideas are founded on the notion that we need to disrupt our habitual frames of reference in order to receive and process new ideas. This can mean re-examining “fixed interpersonal relationships, political orientations, cultural bias, ideologies, schemata, stereo-typed attitudes and practices, occupational habits of mind [...] paradigms in science and mathematics, frames in linguistics and social sciences, and aesthetic values and standards” (Mezirow, 2003, p. 59). Transformative education seeks to effect psychological, convictional, and behavioural changes in learners. That is, in the examination of habits of mind, learners are encouraged to see knowledge as constructed, to see the forces that have formed their deeply held convictions about the nature of reality (ontology), and then to make changes in practice that reflect and support new understandings, working against the replication of previously held convictions. In relating this to Indigenous pedagogy, it seems to me there are clear connections between Mezirow’s thinking, and that of Gregory Cajete in his discussion of finding face, finding heart, and finding foundation (2000). Each scholar requires that

learners engage in a reflective practice as a central part of their learning that moves it from external to internal and back again, accounting for connections, associations, and habits of mind. In considering why they think as they do, learners connect with their deepest sense of self (face, heart, and foundation), deconstructing some prior learning and reconstructing new understandings.

As hooks (1994) points out, “the education most of us...received and were giving was not and never is politically neutral” (p. 30). That is, in order to make space for transformed thinking to occur, we must first be able to question how we have come to think as we do. Critical pedagogy seeks to trace the roots of presumed neutrality in the curriculum. This is a particularly delicate and often challenging task when it comes to beginning teachers, many of whom arrive at teacher education programs with earnest idealism, believing in the value of their own education, and wanting to replicate it for future generations. Disabusing them of the notion that their education was not neutral, and was in fact deliberately constructed to maintain the oppression of Indigenous peoples is delicate work, involving what Britzman has termed difficult knowledge (1998). Key to supporting pre-service teachers in this process is helping them move beyond the initial shock of ontological uncertainty and into praxis.

Pushing these foundational notions even deeper, Joe Kincheloe (2003), looked at the idea of critical ontology, recognizing the profound impact of Cartesian dualism on modernist thought, which manifests itself in the rise and prizing of notions of individualism. Essentially, his premise was that ontological uncertainty is the best place to begin a practice of critical pedagogy. Interestingly, Kinchleoe looked towards Indigenous ways of thinking and knowing as a powerful starting point for this process, recognizing that the focus on relational identities and consideration of community well-being offered an alternative to Western positivism and individualism. His work sought to examine the ontological underpinnings of modern Western thought and to develop new frameworks for thinking about the world. In the end, he suggested that enactivism, which is largely a relational mode of thought, could offer “an understanding of the system of relationships that construct our selfhood” (p. 60). This is perhaps at the very heart of the transformation I aimed to promote through my work in relation to the program.

In structuring the content for the five sessions of the program I spent with study participants, I built on the work of Ann Curry-Stevens (2007), adding an intermediate

stage to her two-stage transformative education framework. In the first few sessions, I wanted to create some ontological uncertainty for participants, to shake their confidence in what they believed to be true, both about Indigenous peoples, and about themselves. In the final two sessions, I wanted to help participants begin to form their own ideas about how to approach Indigenous education by leading them through activities in which they had the opportunity to educate themselves and rebuild their confidence in undertaking this task. This later portion of our work together is enactivist in nature, as my goal is to help students see the web of relationships that have informed their understandings, and to rework their thinking to reflect new understandings.

To my mind, the goal of all of these thinkers links to notions of hybridity and the third space, as put forth by theorist Homi Bhabha (1990). For Bhabha, hybridity “is the ‘third space’ which enables other positions to emerge. This third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom” (p. 211). It is the element of hybridity that I find to be particularly compelling here, as it suggests that these new structures of authority are negotiated, which, itself, implies that they are achieved dialogically.

3.4. Phenomenological Artistic Inquiry

Dialogue is perhaps the key element in phenomenological art inquiry as it has been put forth for this study. In an effort to create ontological uncertainty for participants, I selected work by a range of artists to share with them. In particular, I wanted to include work that was political, even radical in nature, by artists such as Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun, Jude Norris, Rebecca Belmore, Thomas King, Jarrod Miller, and Wab Kinew, each of whom produces work well outside of the canons of historic Indigenous cultural production, while at the same time maintaining clear references to Indigenous cultural traditions. If transformative education is a dialogic process, then there is necessarily another side to it, and for the purposes of this study, these artists, writers, and performers provided the other side. Through their work, they introduced participants to new ideas about Canada and Indigenous peoples, new perspectives that often challenged those of participants. My goal was to help participants learn to detect and engage with the information and stories the artists were offering in their work, to help them learn to move beyond looking and to really begin to see that there are other

perspectives on Canada, historically repressed ones, that need to be heard and considered as well. This is an important consideration in approaches to Indigenous education, because the need for self-representation has formed a large part of the call raised by Indigenous scholars and advocates (Battiste, 1999; Dion, 2008). Bringing Indigenous artwork into a learning space, whether in the form of paintings, books, drama, poetry or song, is a powerful way of responding to that call.

As discussed in the literature review, American educational reformer John Dewey's framing of art is as experience (1934). That is, in its very expressive nature, art communicates to us, invites into to the perspective of the author/maker.

"It is when the desires and aims, the interests and modes of response of another become an expansion of our own being that we understand him. We learn to see with his eyes, hear with his ears, and their results give true instruction, for they are built into our own structure" (p. 350).

Dewey recognized that art offers a dialogic opportunity that has the potential to transform the viewer's understanding. It is all a matter of educating the viewer/experiencer to develop a practice of taking the time to stop and notice the nature of their reactions and thinking. In this context, the transformative process is not necessarily instantaneous, but may proceed long after the initial point of encounter.

Quoting one of the key figures in phenomenology, Merleau-Ponty, Maxine Greene (1995) offers: "we may have the experience Merleau-Ponty describes when he talks about 'a route' being given to us, 'an experience which gradually clarifies itself, which gradually rectifies itself and proceeds by dialogue with itself and others' (1964, p. 21)" (p. 149). Art creates the conditions through which we can build and rebuild our frames of reference in relationship to those offered in the art we encounter. This approach to art, specifically to the art of the other in the Canadian context, makes space for "hybrid constructions of identity, cultural transference and migration" (Hoekstra & Groenendijk, 2015, p. 216).

My thinking is framed specifically in terms of phenomenology because of its hermeneutic implications; that is, a hermeneutic practice extends itself beyond the simple analysis of text to concern itself also with the situated meaning of texts. Fundamentally, this is a relational perspective, and so it also appeals to my interest in maintaining an Indigenous cast to my overall research project. And it is precisely this

analytic type of inquiry, this noticing of our own noticing, that I want to activate in students. I want them to react not only to the stimuli they are presented with, but also to themselves in relation to stimuli. Art becomes the catalyst for ontological uncertainty, which in turn becomes the catalyst for transformation. In relation to my work in Indigenous education, I am particularly interested in this process as a step towards decolonizing education. We form and hold assumptions about others daily, often without being aware of it. To be able to really see the other, to hear their voice, and see through their eyes, as Dewey suggested (1934), is to contain the potential to transform.

3.5. The Program

This research took place at Simon Fraser University in the Faculty of Education's Professional Development Program (PDP) in Teacher Education. It was designed to be carried out over the course of participants' first term in teacher education. This involved delivering a pilot program in Indigenous education to a module of student teachers (STs), which consisted of ten programmed hours over five sessions.

3.5.1. Participants and Educational Context

Commencing in January 2017, I was assigned by the Director of PDP to work with the Fine and Performing Arts Module (FPA), which was headed by two seconded Faculty Associates (FAs), and one Faculty Member (FM). Neither of the FAs nor the FM were enrolled in the study, but at least one of them was present during each session I spent with participants, and we met frequently for planning and debriefing purposes, so they do form part of the research context. There were 30 participants in the study, and permission to participate was collected from each student teacher in the module in the form of a signed consent form. Each participant has been assigned a pseudonym in order to protect their privacy and anonymity, as per the ethics agreement and consent. Participants in the study were predominantly of European extraction, with one study member identifying as a visible minority. While another participant acknowledged having some native ancestry, there were no participants in the study group who identified as Indigenous. Two participants did, however, identify their family origins as Canadian "through and through." This information is an important consideration in the analysis of

the study, as the demographics here are indicative of wider trends in teacher education programs, making this work widely relevant to Canadian teacher education in general.

Both FAs were experienced secondary teachers. Wendy was in her second and final year as an FA and was returning to her district at the end of the term to take up an administrative posting. Lauren was in her first year, and was working with FA one for the first time. Both FAs seemed committed to social justice, but in the meetings that led up to the start of the study both FAs also expressed their lack of knowledge (but willingness to learn) about Indigenous peoples and education.

Having worked as an FA myself, I was very conscious of the amount of work the team had to do over a very short period of time. They were just beginning their first course with a new group of student teachers entering their 401/2 term, Introduction to Classroom Teaching. This course is the only course STs take during their first term of PDP, and is generally run from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm over fourteen weeks. During that time, in addition to the classroom portion of the program, students also engage in a two-day school exploration, as well as two, two-week short immersions, during which time they are expected to teach several lessons on their own. STs must also participate in several PDP wide activities, as well as engaging in one week of service learning. Ultimately, this leaves only seven weeks of classroom instruction time, during which FAs are expected to deliver the equivalent to 30 hours of instruction in *each* of Indigenous and Special Education, lesson and unit planning instruction, clarification of roles and responsibilities of teachers, assist students in developing teaching credos, encourage the development of reflective practice, and supporting student learning needs as they arise. It is a big job. While I had initially hoped to deliver 15 hours of Indigenous content, making up half of the required 30 hours, time constraints only allowed for ten contact hours with participants. The institutional conditions that led to this limitation will be taken up further in chapter five.

Each session took place in a classroom on either SFU's Burnaby or Surrey campuses. The sessions were designed to be largely dialogic, but each included a short didactic element, usually in the form of a PowerPoint presentation and short lecture. Indigenous circle protocols were also introduced and employed at least once during each session. Every other element of each session was framed as open, so that questions and discussion could ensue organically. For the most part, I have limited my

descriptions of each session to the agenda for each week, art imagery that was used, or descriptions of works used that are not reproducible in this format, and a brief outline of the general flow of the session. Discussion of particular moments and interactions will be taken up in the next chapter.

3.6. Reflexivity of the Researcher

In undertaking this program and study, several key factors and ideas informed my thinking and are worth discussing here with regard to their impact on this work. Perhaps first and foremost among them is my strong sense of being an insider/outsider to many of the discourses and institutions within which I work. To begin, I am often keenly aware of my position as both insider and outsider to Indigenous knowledge and experiences. My Indigenous friends, relations, and mentors have exposed me to a variety of cultural practices and knowledge that have deeply informed my thinking and my work, helping me to make sense of much of the intuitive knowledge I carried by providing a real-world context for my own knowing. But the facts remains that I grew up in a Settler home, able to pass as a Settler, which reason tells me will always place a limit on my knowing (van der Wey, 2007). By the same token, however, all of the exposure I have had to Indigenous culture, art, and knowledge has influenced my perspective to the degree that neither can I ever fully identify as a Settler, especially in consideration of the colonial conditioning this has historically entailed. In the context of K-12 schools, while my teacher training was rooted in Western perspectives, I brought a slew of Indigenous perspectives and sensibilities into my work with students in classrooms, often feeling at odds with curricular conventions and the cultural climate of schools. But perhaps this liminal positioning is what draws me to Bhabha's (1994) notion of the third space and its potential for weaving of two solitudes into a new hybrid ontology. Finally, as a researcher, I needed to be both within and outside of the process I was enacting with students over the course of the study. I needed to be fully present within program delivery, attentive and responsive to students' reactions, concerns, and questions, but also outside of it in pulling back to analyze what was really happening as we journeyed through our time together, and as I read participant reflections on their own process. While all of these insider/outsider positions may be framed to indicate a potentially unstable perspective, I return to Indigenous thought to support the notion that being an insider/outsider actually lends itself to both a deep consideration of the

personal foundations on which this work is built, and on the importance of employing a relational perspective in considering its implications and reverberations.

Perhaps my first encounter with academic writing on Indigenous education came from an introduction to Gregory Cajete's 1994 book, *Look to the Mountain*, which was used as a resource by my fellow Faculty Associate during my first year of teaching at SFU in 2010. Although the focus of our module was environmental education and his writing was used to enhance that aspect of our work, I was drawn to Cajete's holistic sensibilities, his merging of art, science, and ecology into a package that spoke directly to my spirit. In my early readings, Cajete's discussion of the artistic foundation of Indigenous education was particularly exciting. "Art allows us to symbolize knowledge, understanding, and feeling through image, thus making it possible to transcend a finite time and culture. Art becomes a primary source of teaching since it integrates and documents an internal process of learning" (p. 40). Further, his notion of the pathway as a metaphor for Indigenous education matched my own ideas about our ability to truly perceive one-another, an ability that is fundamentally about process, and which follows and describes pathways to learning over time, as opposed to instantaneous occurrence. Cajete also introduces the notion of learning as a set of concentric circles, in which each bit of learning is nested within a web of connections to all other learning. By tracking the interconnections of the concentric rings, we begin to understand the physical, spiritual, social and psychological origins of each bit of learning. It is precisely this kind of tracking, framed as noticing one's noticing in a phenomenological sense, that research participants in this study were engaged in.

Later readings of Cajete (2000) revealed a more important aspect of his thinking about the purpose of Indigenous education. His notions of finding face, heart and foundation, as discussed briefly in the literature review, resonated deeply with me as both an educator trying to find ways to help students connect to their learning, and as a new researcher, trying to describe my own location. Finding face refers to learning to know one's self, one's origins, and how those factors have contributed to one's sense of self. Finding heart, for Cajete, refers to finding one's passions and motivations, while finding foundation means locating the discourses and practices that most sincerely help in finding one's heart and face. Taken together, Cajete's assertions both about Indigenous education and about locating one's self offer a stabilizing locus from which to move into this research.

Shawn Wilson (2008) asserts that that “Indigenous ontology and epistemology are relational and...Indigenous methodology and axiology should follow relational accountability” (p. 99). The notion of relational accountability underpins one of the primary reasons that identity became a focus for the organization of my thinking. If Indigenous thinking is relational, predicated on the importance of relationships and inter-relationality, Eurocentric thinking may be characterized by its focus on individuation, born of the view that there is a singular and definable reality, organized into a hierarchy that posits humanity, arguably white male humanity, at the top of a heap that hierarchicalizes the relative importance all of living creatures beneath it. In order to get at this with students, I often draw a triangle and a circle side by side on whatever instructional surface is available, illustrating the relational considerations hierarchical conceptions pre-empt by virtue of their rigid structures. If we consider all of creation as being contained within a circle, however, then the fullness of interconnections can be better mapped and explored.

The point, for Wilson, and the one I try to make for my students, is that the way in which one sees the world is really important. An ontology that posits humanity as superior to all other life (and worse, within a hierarchy of superiority) will necessarily fail to take the wellbeing or interests of anything (or anyone) deemed lesser-than into consideration, producing a singular and self-centred version of reality, expressed in the example above as a triangle. An ontology that views humanity relationally to all other life on the planet makes room for the consideration of multiple interests in an ethos that rests on a version of reality that sees all things as interdependent, expressed as a holographic set of interrelations within a spherical space that contains and makes room for all of them. Such fundamental beliefs, whether one identifies more with one camp or the other, are profoundly impactful in the formation of identity (see also Little Bear, 2000). So this notion of relationship, relationality, has also informed my work, providing further stabilization for my thinking through it.

3.7. Study – Data Collection and Analysis

3.7.1. Week One

Agenda:

- 1) Introduction of researcher and research project
- 2) Consent forms
- 3) Territorial acknowledgement
- 4) Introduction of students (with the prompt “when did your family come to Canada, and from where?”)
- 5) Introduction to Indigenous protocol (PowerPoint)
 - i) Doing things in a good way
 - ii) Seven generation thinking
 - iii) We are all related
 - iv) Appreciation versus appropriation
- 6) Phenomenological activity 1 – “What do you remember learning about Indigenous people in your K-12 school experience?” and “Where else do you remember learning about Indigenous people?”
- 7) Brief introduction to phenomenology
- 8) Phenomenological activity 2 – *Red Man Watching White Man Trying to Fix Hole in the Sky*, Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun (1996) (Figure 1)
- 9) Phenomenological activity 3 – *Just for a Moment, Always*, Jude Norris (2013) (Figure 2)
- 10) Primer in Indigenous terminology
- 11) Introduction to the First People’s Principles of Learning
- 12) Reminder to submit reflections, and notice of next session

The first session took place in mid-January during participant’s second week of PDP. We began with introductions, research requirements and ethics, and the introduction to Indigenous protocols. Once the introductions were finished I began with some key protocols, including the rationale behind the territorial acknowledgement, and the Indigenous ethic of *doing things in a good way*, and its relationship to *seven*

generation thinking (making decisions based on the understanding that what one does has the potential to affect people for the next seven generations to come). To summarize, I offered artist Michael Yaggulanans' notion that doing things in a good way means "don't hurt yourself, don't hurt others, and don't hurt the earth" (President's Dream Colloquium lecture series, Returning to the Teachings, September 22, 2016, SFU, Burnaby). I also suggested that doing things in a good way relates to another common Indigenous axiom – *we are all related*.

I then described to participants a situation related to Indigenous teaching and learning that had recently occurred in my own life. About a week before our first session, I received an email from a former student of mine in PDP who is now a practicing teacher in a Lower Mainland school. This teacher was working on developing an Indigenous unit for an elementary school class she was assigned to teach in the upcoming school year. Her specific request was that I come to her school to teach her students how to make dream catchers. Because it was at the front of my mind, I related the story to participants prior to the introduction of our first phenomenological activity, and I shared with them that I declined her request, in part because I felt a bit offended that after all the work we had done together (work that was similar to what I was doing with the study group, although much less in-depth) she was still considering including Indigenous content that would definitely perpetuate colonial stereotypes and notions of pan-Indianism.

We then moved into our first phenomenological activity. I invited STs to take a couple of minutes to talk to the participants around them about the question "What do you remember learning about Indigenous people in your K-12 school experience?" giving them three minutes to talk before we debriefed. I next introduced the notion of phenomenology by comparing it to KWL (what do I **K**now, what do I **W**ant to know, and what did I **L**earn), which is a common pedagogical strategy. I suggested doing a little practice in this by looking at two pieces of art, and introduced the following questions as a frame for accounting for their responses:

- What do you notice?
- What does this bring up for you (what do you already know in relation to this)?
- What do you like about it? What resonates with you?
- What do you not like about it? What do you find yourself resisting?
- What questions arise for you?

I informed students they could talk to one another and were welcome to get up and look at the art, assuring them that there was no danger of being wrong because there were no right answers – the activity was about the dialogue they had with themselves in relation to the work and the thoughts of others.

We started our practice with *Red Man Watching White Man Trying to Fix Hole in the Sky* by Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun (Coast Salish/Okanagan) (see Figure 1., below).



Figure 1. *Red Man Watching White Man Trying to Fix Hole in Sky*, Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun, 1990, 142 x 226.1 cm, acrylic on canvas, private collection.

We next looked at a photo-collage by Cree artist Jude Norris, *Just for a Moment Always*, following the same protocol that we had with the first work. Once both of these experiences were debriefed, we returned to the PowerPoint to cover common terminology associated with Indigenous discourses, such as the terms Indian, Aboriginal, Native, and Métis. I introduced to participants the difference between Western and Indigenous paradigms by drawing a triangle and circle on an adjacent whiteboard. I pointed out that Western science, using Linnaeus' work as a starting point, tends to construct a hierarchic version of how all life on the planet fits together with human beings at the top. By contrast, Indigenous ontology views all life as inter-related, so it all fits

within the circle according to patterns defined by interrelationships. I then introduced STs to the First People's Principals of Learning (FPPoL), crediting British Columbia's First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), locating the principles as part of the BC First Peoples English 12 curriculum. The session concluded with a quick recap and a reminder to send me a reflection before the next session.

3.7.2. Week Two

Agenda:

- 1) Territorial acknowledgement
- 2) Thanks for reflections – discussion of Dream Catchers
- 3) Indigenous versus Western ontology (triangular versus circular models)
- 4) Indigenous pedagogy
 - i) FPPoL review
 - ii) PDP Goals – how are they similar? Dissimilar?
- 5) Phenomenological dialogue practice
 - i) Rebecca Belmore video (*Vigil*, 2003)
- 6) Sharing circle
 - i) What relationships do you see between Thomas King and Rebecca Belmore?
 - ii) What appeals to you? How might each mode be useful?

I began the session with a territorial acknowledgement, and reminded students of the model I'd drawn during a discussion in our previous session that illustrated the difference between positivist Western approaches to ontology (a triangle), versus an Indigenous perspective (a circle). These were offered as explanations of how we learn to view the world, following the thinking outlined in an earlier section of this chapter. Where European ontology attempts to lay theory over the framework of reality, I suggested to participants, Indigenous thought examines relationality to understand a theory of reality.

We talked about schools as providing structure similar to the triangle and circle frameworks. Teaching has historically been a matter of top down habituation. Indigenous pedagogy, however, is more akin to the circle model where there is a cycle of learning that is more like an apprenticeship model. I related a story I had heard at a conference in Victoria about the way the speaker learned stage by stage throughout his growing up years how to prepare salmon for smoking, as an apprentice to his father. I then shared two stories from Rupert Ross' book, *Indigenous Healing* (2013), that expressed his coming to understand the difference between Western and Indigenous thought, and how evident the relational aspect of Indigenous thought came to be to him, but only after a number of years of encountering and considering it. In the first story, Ross talks about picking up an elderly woman from a local First Nation who was walking along the side of the road. To make conversation, he asked her if the berry picking was good. Her reply was that she'd seen eight bears at the dump the previous evening. It took him years to work out that rather than avoiding his question, as he'd originally assumed, she'd answered it relationally. Bears at the dump mean no food in the bush; therefore, the berry crop was poor and the picking worse. In the second tale, Ross compared the methods of Indigenous and Western sciences, suggesting that in the course of studying the properties of a particular plant, the Western method involves removing the plant from the field and dissecting it to study its constituent parts and properties. An Indigenous scientist, on the other hand, may spend time observing the plant in its natural environment, especially with regard to its relationship to other creatures in the same environment (what avoids it, what uses it, etc.), in order to reach the same conclusions.

I introduced the final activity for the session, which was to have students compare and discuss in their table groups the relationship between the 10 program goals of PDP (Figure 3) and the FPPoL (Figure 4). I asked students to talk about how the goals are similar and different, or where the points of disjuncture might be. Both resources are included below.

10 Program Goals

Goal 1: The development of a clear, coherent and justified view of education

Goal 2: The development of a clear commitment to lifelong and lifewide learning

Goal 3: The development of a clear commitment to uphold the principles that should govern a democratic and pluralistic community

Goal 4: The development of a clear commitment to maintain ethical and functional working relationships with all members of the educational community

Goal 5: The development of knowledge about curricular content, educational theory and effective practice

Goal 6: The development of the clear commitment to respect and celebrate students

Goal 7: The development of the ability to create a caring, cohesive community of learners

Goal 8: The development of the ability to create opportunities for learning

Goal 9: The development of the ability to blend theory and practice in well-organized ways

Goal 10: The development of ability to use assessment and evaluation practices in a thoughtful and ethical manner

Figure 2. <https://www.sfu.ca/education/teachersed/programs/pdp/goals.html>,
retrieved February 12th, 2017)

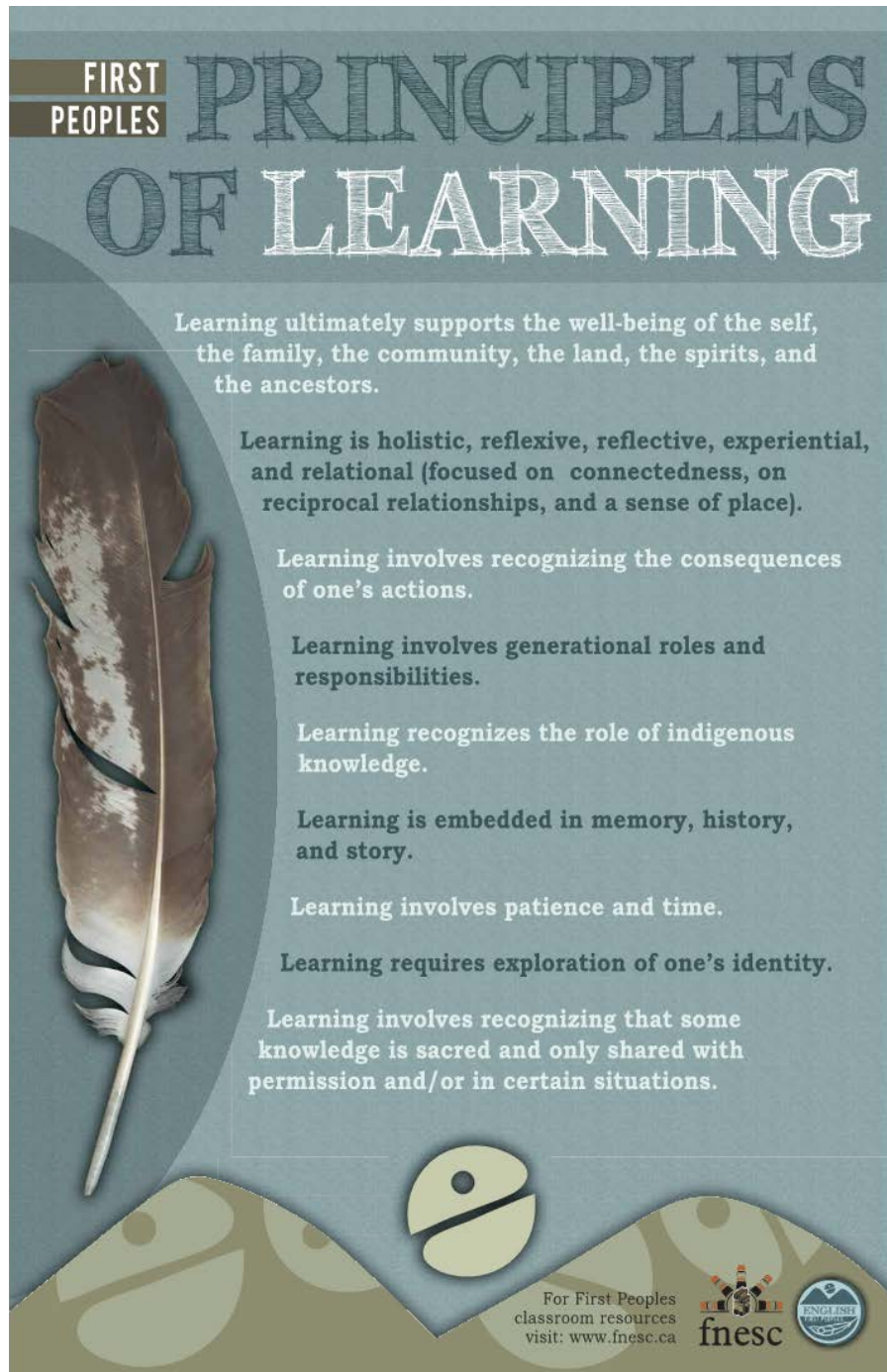


Figure 3. <http://www.fnesc.ca/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/PUB-LFP-POSTER-Principles-of-Learning-First-Peoples-poster-11x17.pdf>, retrieved, August 3, 2017

After a short debrief, we moved on to the next component of the session, which was to view the performance art work *Vigil*, by Rebecca Belmore (2002) as part of Vancouver's Talking Stick Festival through the Firehall Arts Centre. I reminded students before the performance began about the questions that would invite them into phenomenological dialogue.

- What do you notice about this work?
- What do you know about it, or in relation to it?
- What do you like about it? What resonates?
- What do you dislike about it? What do you resist?
- What questions arise for you?

Vigil is a 13-minute edited version of a site-specific performance set in an alley in Vancouver's Strathcona neighbourhood on the Downtown East Side (DTES). Bellmore begins the performance by scrubbing the street around the telephone pole where her work is centred. Clad in jeans and a T-shirt, feet bare, she is down on her hands and knees, scrubbing the street with a brush and soapy water from a bucket. Her arms are covered in black marker, spelling the names of those Indigenous women who had gone missing from the DTES and were presumed murdered. When she is finished scrubbing, Bellmore rises and hollers out the names inscribed on her arms, sliding the stem of a rose through her teeth for each, leaves, thorns and all, spitting the pieces from her mouth as they break off. In the final stage of her performance, Bellmore dons a long red jersey dress and begins to nail herself to a nearby telephone pole by means of the dress. After every few nails she stops and tears her dress away from the pole, sometimes jerking her body violently to do so. In the end, Bellmore frees herself from the shreds of dress that still cling to her arms and shoulders, coming to a stop before the watching crowd in only an undershirt and underpants, exhausted.

After debriefing the video, I reminded students about the sheet that I gave them the previous week with a description of the phenomenological dialogue with art project, and 34 artists on the back that they might choose work from. I asked them to choose an artist from the list, choose a piece of work, and try to take themselves through the same process that we had done three times together during our sessions. I asked them to look at the sociocultural history of the artist and to consider the points of resonance and disjuncture they find in their work.

3.7.3. Week Three

Agenda:

- 1) Territorial acknowledgement
- 2) Thanks for reflections and general comments

- 3) Indigenous oppression
 - i) Jared Miller's Apology (Classroom Edition #5 - I must apologize for being Indian)
- 4) Phenomenological art inquiry practice
 - ii) 8th Fire, Episode 2
- 5) Sharing circle

Session three started out with an acknowledgement of the territory, and a recap of some of my thinking about their reflections on the previous session. We moved next into the power point I had prepared for the day, which began with a quote from the late Richard Wagamese, regarding the importance of stories to Indigenous people, and about the reiterative pedagogy they hold through opportunities to consider and reconsider them.

“See, the important thing about our stories isn't so much the listening, it's the time you spend thinking about them. There's lots of traditional thinking buried deep within each story and the longer you spend thinking about it the more you learn about yourself, your people and the Indian way.”
(*Keeper'n Me*, Richard Wagamese, 1994, p. 145)

I introduced several key restrictions that sprang from earlier versions of the Indian Act, such as the ban of the Potlatch and Tamanawas, and Bill C-31 and which amended the Indian Act to grant status back to Aboriginal women who'd married off-reserve to non-Indigenous men, as well as to their children. I also shared with students the University of Manitoba's Indigenous Student site, which has pamphlets on debunking myths about Indigeneity, taxation, homes, and educational benefits. Finally, I introduced the Truth and Reconciliation Canada website as a key resource to look more deeply into the legacy of residential schools. Next, I shared the poem “I Must Apologize for Being an Indian,” by Jarrod Miller, written in response to the Canadian government's official residential school apology, delivered by Stephen Harper in 2009.

We closed the session by watching episode two of the CBC documentary production, 8th Fire, hosted by hip hop artist turned politician, Wab Kinew. The episode, entitled “It's Time!” included vignettes on the importance of good relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians to the health of our economy, several

examples of anti-racist work at the community level, and the introduction of several successful Indigenous entrepreneurs and artists. When the episode finished we closed the session with a sharing circle.

3.7.4. Week Four

Agenda:

- 1) KAIROS blanket activity
- 2) Sharing circle

The KAIROS activity is scripted, and requires two volunteers to assist, so as lunch was ending, I approached two students to ask if they would be willing to work with me. When the session began, I asked participants to spread out the blankets they'd brought, along with some I provided, all over the floor, and encouraged them to move about on the blankets until I asked them to stop. As the activity began, I assumed the role of narrator, reading out a script that described early contact, while the volunteer "Europeans" I'd recruited earlier handed out coloured cards and numbered scrolls to most participants (the activity is designed to leave at least a few participants with no role for reasons that become evident as the narrative wraps up). As the activity progressed participants were slowly removed from the blankets by waves of conflict and disease, symbolised by the coloured cards, described by the narrator and supported with scripted dialogue from the "Europeans". Eventually, participants were called upon to read out the scrolls they held, one by one, as more devastation and problematic legislation was accounted. By the end of the activity, there were very few blankets left on the floor, and those that remained, were bunched up into islands just large enough for each remaining participant (only about four of the original 30, none of whom had received a coloured card) to stand upon. After taking a moment of silence to contemplate the activity and the human losses it depicted, we reformed a circle and made two passes around so that every participant had both time to share and respond to one another before closing.

3.7.5. Week Five

Agenda:

- 1) Small group sharing

2) Closing circle, sharing highlights

Session five, the last session we held, was set aside for students to share their dialogues with art with one another, accomplished first by sharing in groups of six, and then sharing highlights in a larger circle. The last half of the session was recorded on video, while each dialogue circle was recoded in audio only. One group of six chose to opt out of recording their circle. While the various groups shared their art work, the FAs, FM, and I circulated amongst the groups, listening in. At the end of 45 minutes, we moved all groups together into a closing circle, where participants had the opportunity to share highlights from their conversations, and ask questions about the program, and about Indigenous education. At the end of the session I handed out the Post-Pre-Survey. I was able to collect about 2/3 of them that day, while the others were handed in at their final sharing session (which was not overseen by me and did not form part of the study).

3.7.6. Ethics, Permissions and Data Gathered

Ethics approval was granted to conduct this research by Simon Fraser University's Office of Research Ethics (ORE). Permissions were gathered from student participants in the form of signed consent forms. Each participant was assigned a pseudonym to maintain their anonymity, and each session reflection was also coded in sequence, so that if a quotation is selected from Martha from the final reflection, it will be referred to as Martha, R5.

Data gathered included video and/or audio recordings of each session, written reflections from participants after each session, and a final reflection that discussed their art inquiry. A post-pre survey was also employed to help students assess their own learning. A description of each type of data collected and the approach to analysis that was used is provided in the sections that follow.

3.8. Analysis

While this research could lend itself to a number of analytic modes, including auto-ethnography and interpretive phenomenology, I settled on a combination of thematic analysis (Makut & Morehouse, 1994), and multimodal social semiotic discourse analysis (MSSDA) (Kress, 2011). The ideas underlying this study are complex and

overlapping, and I was conscious in considering how to analyze data that there were many moving parts to be accounted for and that this would require several analytic methods to be weaved together as different elements of meaning making were being focused on at different points in the program. In addition to concerning myself with the language participants used both during the sessions and within written reflections, I was also concerned with exactly what aspects of each artwork participants were picking up on, and so looked more towards MSSDA, which considers multimodal modes of meaning making (e.g., image, gesture, sound, movement, etc.) within the analysis process. In addition, as a well-practiced classroom teacher, I was constantly looking out for signs of engagement and emergent patterns within the group dynamic. I was also aware that in most cases the art that the participants were looking at did not always contain conventional language, but rather the more universal, and therefore infinitely idiosyncratic, language of art (Dewey, 1934)—accounting for a broad range of semiotic interactions was more useful here as well. And finally, I was also concerned with the social and institutional circumstances under which the research took place, which again meant considering meaning-making beyond conventional textual formats.

3.8.1. Thematic Analysis

I looked to Maykut and Morehouse (1994) for specific methodology in teasing out emergent themes from participants' work. Their framework for thematic analysis rests on the foundation of a phenomenological approach, an alternate paradigm to the dominant Western positivist paradigm traditional research has employed. As qualitative research is rooted in anthropology, the necessary vagaries of humanity at play in uncontrolled real world scenarios inform the concerns of early researchers in this vein. But because the methodology did not, in fact could not, conform to positivist research methods and ideals (such as the scientific method and the maintenance of objectivity), qualitative research has been suspect within the larger research community. However, Maykut and Morehouse provide a sound articulation of the philosophical rigour with which qualitative research is undertaken. As they suggest, "the alternative paradigm, and the phenomenological position within it, is oriented toward discovery of salient propositions" (p. 13). That is, knowledge/meaning-making is not pre-determined and then tested for, but rather it emerges from the consideration of participants' considerations, in a mode of indwelling. That is, the researcher becomes "human-as-

instrument” (p. 25) lives with, in, and through the research process, learning to *read* the effects of the multidimensional forces that form participants’ experiences, and therefore their meaning-making.

The particular appeal of this analytic approach lies in its support of the researcher/human-as-instrument sensibility, which, to my mind, connects with Indigenous research methodologies. In this process, the analysis is often ongoing and inductive; that is, a picture of the meaning behind participant’s session reflections develops over time through continual data review and consideration. Indwelling through this process positions the researcher as not separate from the participants and their data, but as a co-participant in the process. In this way, researchers are not asked to cast aside their subjectivity in an effort to achieve an objective perspective as is the goal of quantitative researchers, but rather to make use of their subjectivity, learning, and insights, thereby capitalizing on its available richness within the analytic process. In addition, thematic analysis has its roots in phenomenology and associated hermeneutic analytic activity, which matched the process through which I drew students in the program, creating a balance between program delivery, participant reflections, and researcher’s analysis.

Following Maykut and Morehouse’s (1994) thematic analysis protocols, each session’s reflections were gathered and read several times over the week following each session, in order to gain familiarity with their contents. In this first stage, I looked at reflections in session groupings, combing through each set several times as I underlined and focussed on significant units of meaning, using pens of various colours in order to develop the first set of loose codes. I then spent time reviewing and transcribing the session recordings to ensure that I was still close enough to the time of delivery that my own memories of the sessions were fresh, enhanced by reviewing the recordings to ensure I was not missing any significant moments.

It should be noted here, however, that there were some limitations to the process of recording and subsequent transcriptions. First, I had to grapple with the desire of some participants to not appear on camera, despite the fact that virtually all of them had agreed to do so via their consent forms. As Bhattacharaya (2007), suggests, “the formal consent form can only serve as a fluid guideline that gets contested and negotiated throughout the research process” (p. 1111), so there must be room for participants’

wishes to be honoured in this regard. Second, because I had no assistant in recording each session, the camera's POV was always a single, still perspective that did not encompass recording each participant as they responded to dialogue and questions in the debriefing portions of each session. For this reason, in many cases I have been unable to accurately enumerate the precise number of respondents in each of the important moments of dialogue I unpack in the following sections.

When all of the sessions were concluded and I was satisfied that I had a clear picture of participants' thoughts and reactions to each session, I reordered the data into individual participant groups in order to get a sense of the arch of each participant's process over all five sessions. I spent several days reviewing each session's reflections in discreet groups, continuing to look for units of meaning I may have missed on my first few reads, and noting larger codes as they emerged. When it came to the final summative reflections, from which most of the supporting evidence in the findings is drawn, I was able to make connections between participants' thoughts and expressions across time, thereby distilling a vast array of sentiments into a set of larger codes. These codes were then cross-referenced with the findings from other data components, such as session transcripts and my own research journal to provide further interpretation and the development of three central themes. However, because the FAs for the module were unable to make additional time for me to come in and work with participants again, I was not able to engage in a process of member-checking to ensure that my interpretations matched their intended meanings. While I recognize that this is often an important aspect of ensuring consistency in qualitative research, in the end, I am not uncomfortable with the absence of this process in my analysis, especially given the nature of its cast. Consider, for example, Schick and St. Denis's (2005) assertion that "it is difficult, especially if occupying a normative position, to scrutinize or examine one's own identity" (p. 299). As indicated by the research of Ladson-Billings (2006) and Schick and St. Denis (2003, 2005), student teachers in the throes of both antiracist and Aboriginal education aspects of teacher education are not always immediately aware of the impact of the processes they are experiencing, so looking at their unedited words in group discussions, and in post-session reflections perhaps allowed me more insight into the nature of their responses, given my own research into transformative education (Curry-Stevens, 2007; Mezirow, 2003). Having said that, I am also very conscious that my interpretations of the participant contributions, both written and verbal, are by no

means definitive, and certainly, alternate readings of each comment and interaction are possible. I was also conscious of considering the axiology of Indigenous research methodologies and practices as I analysed data, and did my best to consider each student, each session, and the overarching goals of Aboriginal education and of the program holistically, which I hope has at once honed and softened the perspectives I have taken in the pages below.

3.8.2. Multimodal Social Semiotic Discourse Analysis

Considering analysis from a multimodal social semiotic point of view, as offered by Gunther Kress, provides complex and more integrated possibilities for meaning making that involved more than talk and text. One of the most compelling features of Kress' (2004) theory of multimodal social semiotic discourse analysis is his acknowledgement that the primacy of language as the source for meaning and knowledge making is problematic in its limitations. He points out instead that we ought to extend our consideration of how meaning is made to include "the many material resources beyond speech and writing which societies have shaped and which cultures provide" (p. 208). For Kress, communication is necessarily a part of the process of making meaning as well, and since communication is itself multimodal (consider, in addition to literal text, glance, gaze, gesture, posture, tone, and even context), social semiotic discourse analysis offers considerable scope in considering what constitutes texts available for analysis. The other possibility it opens is the consideration of "*learners as interpreters*" (p. 215, emphasis in original). In this consideration, participants' "selection, attention, framing, (and) interpretation" (p. 221) of phenomena warrants analysis as well. For example, despite being asked to include the sociocultural history of each artist, several students opted not to select or attend to this portion of the task, resultantly interpreting their dialogue through alternate frameworks, such as exclusively aesthetic considerations, and those that were rooted in and maintain colonial narratives, which necessarily limited their ability to undertake the dialogue to the depth that was requested of them. MSSDA explicitly makes space for this consideration, allowing for the production of broader interpretations and meaning-making in a way that standard forms of CDA are not open to.

In essence, multimodal social semiotic discourse analysis is similar to exclusively text based analytic strategies in that the researcher looks for themes, connections, and

emergent evidence of meaning-making. The difference is in the range of possible modalities up for consideration, and to the affordances they offer. In the light of Indigenous considerations in research methodology, I am further convinced that the flexibility offered by MMSSDA speaks to the Indigenous axiological principle that we are all connected, and that our ideas, notions, thoughts, and reactions are all connected as well. In addition, such a mode of analysis enabled me to see each participant in a more holistic light, and to better form understandings of their learning in interconnected ways.

3.9. Analytic Process

By the end of the study, I had several huge bodies of data to analyze. In addition to the collected written reflections of each participant (not every participant submitted every reflection, which is addressed further under the chapter on resistance), I created transcripts of each session based on the video and audio recordings. I also wrote my own reflections on each session, and had a range of supplemental documents, including email correspondence between myself and FAs and FM, and meeting notes. These supplemental documents were used largely for context in my interpretations but were not part of the data set and were not approved for use in my analysis. Finally, I had a post-pre survey from 23 participants that included 34 questions about STs knowledge and comfort level both before and after our time together. In order to unfold the process of analysis with some clarity, the approach taken to each body of data will be discussed first, followed by a description of how themes emerged across the data, and how they were refined to three data-derived themes, and two meta themes. In addition, one significant dialogic thread, while not definable in the magnitude of a theme, did emerge as an important part of my reflexive practice.

3.9.1. Session Reflections

It should be noted that despite all student teachers providing their consent to participate in this program and research, there was some confusion created around what responsibilities this entailed. As a result, the participation trends of respondents clearly suffered, ranging from 25 after the first session, to 18 after the fourth session. Although 28 participants submitted a final reflection, that too represented an incomplete sample. In total, only 12 participants submitted each requested reflection. A discussion of the

factors that culminated in this trend will be taken up in the next chapter, under the meta-theme of resistance.

As mentioned above, each session's reflections were reviewed several times first as I began to identify units of meaning. I then linked related units of meaning together to form codes, ultimately funnelling the codes into broader themes that captured the sensibilities expressed by participants. Session transcripts and related video were then reviewed to ensure that the units of meaning, codes and themes accurately reflected the circumstances of each session, and ensuring that nothing was missed.

3.9.2. Post-Pre Survey

Developed by Hiebert, Domene, and Buchanan (2011), the Post-Pre measure asks participants to make decisions on a series of statements that reflects their understandings of the subject both before a study, program, or unit, and after its completion. The appeal of such a measure is that it honours the Indigenous education principle that learning takes time, and that it is "holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational" (FNSEC, 2009). That is, participants were given a chance to process their learning cumulatively and then reflect on their learning over time. Another appeal, as reported by Hiebert, Domene, and Buchanan, is that such a measure offers greater trustworthiness and consistency in results, in part because participants' self-reported data can be used to corroborate researcher determined theme trends.

The survey consisted of thirty-four statements that I developed based on my program aims, each of which, save statement 29, was designed to predict responses that moved participants from either deficit or low levels of confidence or knowledge to positions that indicated an increase. The outlying question was inserted as a measure of attentiveness, and did show that the results could be construed as largely consistent. The responses required participants to gauge their level of agreement with the statements provided, measured on a scale of 0-4 in which 0 represents "not true for me" and 4 represents "true for me". The range of possible responses included in the original survey appears below:

- (0) **not at all** true for me
- (1) **not very** true for me
- (2) **sort of** true for me

- (3) **mostly** true for me
- (4) **very** true for me

The questions in this survey were designed to help participants evaluate their knowledge and comfort levels both before and after the program was completed. Of the 27 surveys handed out, 23 were returned.

3.9.3. Session Transcripts and Personal Reflections

All sessions were reviewed several times, formatted into transcripts, and checked against students' reflections in the discernment of themes. Personal reflections that were written immediately post-session were supplemented with data drawn from transcripts. In looking to my own writing, I did not take the same thematic approach I did when analysing participant reflections, where I was seeking new units of meaning to code. Rather, I used this data set to confirm and support the findings in the analysis I had already done, once again to ensure that I was not missing key units of meaning, and interactive moments within the program.

Chapter 4.

Findings and Discussion

4.1. Findings

This chapter contains the majority of findings from each of each of the datasets collected during the study. Because of its importance to the overall study and analysis, I have created a separate chapter to deal specifically with findings related to resistance. To set the tone and get at the global sense of students' perceptions of the program, I begin with a brief discussion of the results from the post-pre survey given at the end of the program. This is followed by a thick description of each session, and a thematic analysis of participants' final reflections, linking emergent session themes to final reflection themes. The first two themes, Angst and Action are discussed with evidence drawn largely from the participants' final reflection data. To address the third theme, the power of Art, I first provide an analysis of the final session, which featured participants sharing their own artistic dialogues with one another in small groups, along with discussion of the importance of art to this process. For this analysis, I have relied on MSSDA in trying to get at how the art chosen, and how the details participants focussed on, were key aspects in creating the ontological uncertainties that were central to the possibility of transforming their thinking; I have reserved the specific details of that analysis for section 4.7. Final Session Analysis and The Power of Art, as it seems best to link the description of the process directly to the findings. To support this, I also draw upon evidence from participants' final reflections in elucidating this theme.

4.2. Post-Pre Measure and Discussion

One of the most challenging aspects of research is, of course, analysing results. In the case of qualitative research, this often means pouring over reams and reams of papers, teasing out emergent themes to get at meaning-making trends and their deeper implications. Because this analysis is exclusively the work of the researcher, there is some concern over the necessarily subjective nature of this practice with regards to its overall trustworthiness. To this end, I employed a retrospective self-assessment tool, the Post-Pre measure, to make space for participants to assess their own learning.

The responses for the survey were given in the form of a numeric rating on a scale of 0-4 (0 meaning not at all true for me, and 4 meaning completely true for me), and the scale was offered in relation to their perceptions before and after the program. I tabulated the results of each question to confirm that overwhelmingly, the results of the survey indicated a consistent shift from pre- to post- conditions. There was distinct evidence available in the measure to indicate that our time together did shift attitudes and increase confidence among the STs. Several key indicators will be discussed in the next chapter. Grey columns in the chart below indicate the mean scores for both before the program and after the program. Statements highlighted in green indicate the greatest change in participant responses. The statement highlighted in orange indicates the sole question that predicted an inverted response, in which participants were anticipated to move from a position of ‘true for me’ to a position of ‘not true for me’.

| Thinking about the Starting from Now/Learning to See Program and knowing what you know now, how would you rate yourself before the project and how would you rate yourself now? | Before Program | | | | | | Now | | | | | |
|--|----------------|----|----|---|---|------|-----|---|----|----|----|------|
| | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Mean | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Mean |
| 1. I think about the processes involved in colonization and its effects on Aboriginal peoples. | 3 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 1.7 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 11 | 11 | 3.43 |
| 2. I recognize aspects of colonization in my own education. | 3 | 8 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 1.6 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 14 | 5 | 3.04 |
| 3. I understand some of the principles of anti-oppressive/anti-racist education. | 1 | 5 | 10 | 2 | 5 | 2.21 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 8 | 12 | 3.21 |
| 4. I have a clear understanding of what meaningful Aboriginal education looks like in a variety of examples. | 9 | 9 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0.90 | 1 | 1 | 16 | 5 | 0 | 2.4 |
| 5. I look for ways to include Aboriginal content in my teaching practice. | 11 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0.69 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 10 | 6 | 3.0 |
| 6. I am aware of the value of including Aboriginal content in my teaching practice. | 11 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1.48 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 13 | 3.48 |
| 7. I feel my life is enriched by my awareness of Aboriginal content and pedagogies. | 0 | 10 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 1.91 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 8 | 12 | 3.4 |
| 8. I feel my life is enriched by my awareness of Aboriginal content and pedagogies. | 1 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 0 | 1.77 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 12 | 7 | 3.18 |
| 9. I can clearly identify colonial stereotypes about Aboriginal people. | 0 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 2.26 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 13 | 3.52 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|---|---|----|------|---|---|----|----|----|------|
| 10. I understand art as a mode of communication. | 1 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 14 | 3.08 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 17 | 3.65 |
| 11. I think about my relationship with Aboriginal Education. | 3 | 12 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1.34 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 3.04 |
| 12. I think it is important to consider voice and bias when reading a text. | 0 | 2 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 2.6 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 13 | 3.34 |
| 13. I think it is important to consider voice and bias when looking at art. | 0 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 2.6 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 14 | 3.43 |
| 14. I challenge stereotyping when I see it occurring. | 1 | 2 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 2.52 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 11 | 8 | 3.13 |
| 15. I see Aboriginal people as peers in the present. | 0 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 12 | 3.13 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 19 | 4.08 |
| 16. I feel comfortable doing research on Aboriginal art. | 1 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 2.3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 10 | 3.34 |
| 17. I feel comfortable doing research on issues facing Aboriginal Canadians. | 0 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 2.3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 10 | 3.34 |
| 18. I have opportunities to learn new things when exploring Aboriginal issues and ideas. | 0 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 2.21 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 10 | 3.34 |
| 19. I notice the presence (or absence) of depictions of Aboriginal people in mainstream media. | 3 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 1.73 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 15 | 3.17 |
| 20. I enter into a dialogue with art when I seek to understand it. | 3 | 4 | 9 | 7 | 0 | 1.86 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 12 | 4 | 2.82 |
| 21. I seek out opportunities to increase my knowledge about Aboriginal people, pedagogies, and issues. | 5 | 13 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1.08 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 13 | 6 | 3.08 |
| 22. I understand the importance of including Aboriginal content in school curriculum even when there are no Aboriginal students in my class. | 1 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 1.47 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 18 | 3.69 |
| 23. I am familiar with the work of several Aboriginal artists. | 4 | 10 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 1.43 | 0 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 2.87 |
| 24. I am familiar with the work of several Aboriginal authors. | 7 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1.09 | 0 | 3 | 8 | 8 | 3 | 2.5 |
| 25. I am aware of several Aboriginal films. | 8 | 10 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0.91 | 1 | 5 | 11 | 3 | 3 | 2.08 |
| 26. I am familiar with the resources in my school district to support the needs of Aboriginal learners. | 9 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0.91 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 6 | 4 | 2.52 |
| 27. I am familiar with the resources in my district to bring more Aboriginal content into my classroom. | 10 | 9 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0.74 | 0 | 4 | 10 | 7 | 2 | 2.30 |
| 28. I see my relationship with Aboriginal peoples as an on-going and developing one. | 0 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 2.39 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 15 | 3.56 |
| 29. I feel anxious about including Aboriginal content in my lessons. ** | 4 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 14 | 2.91 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 2 | 1.60 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|----|----|---|---|------|---|---|---|----|----|------|
| 30. I feel confident discussing Aboriginal content and ideas with my students. | 7 | 10 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1.17 | 0 | 4 | 6 | 10 | 3 | 2.52 |
| 31. I am excited about the possibilities that a dialogic approach to art holds. | 2 | 5 | 9 | 3 | 4 | 2.08 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 6 | 12 | 3.30 |
| 32. I am excited about the possibilities available for including Aboriginal content in my classroom. | 3 | 6 | 10 | 3 | 1 | 1.69 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 9 | 10 | 3.26 |
| 33. I have talked about Aboriginal education with others outside of the dialogue group. | 4 | 6 | 10 | 1 | 2 | 1.6 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 14 | 3.43 |
| 34. I feel empowered to do research aimed at including Aboriginal content in my lesson. | 6 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 1.26 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 6 | 10 | 3.13 |

Figure 4. Post-Pre Survey

As mentioned earlier, of the 27 surveys handed out at the end of our final session, 23 were returned. All statements indicate a positive shift in comfort and knowledge (save statement 29), indicating that overall the framework and pedagogies employed in the study were largely successful. Of particular interest are the responses to six statements (5, 11, 21, 22, 33, and 34), which indicated the greatest shift in the mean from before to after the program. Questions 5, 11, and 22 indicated a growing awareness on the part of participants about what was required of them in order to be effective in delivering Aboriginal education to their students (i.e., looking for ways to include Aboriginal education in teaching practice; thinking about one's relationship with Aboriginal education; and understanding the importance of Aboriginal education, even in the absence of Aboriginal students). That is, such statements ask participants to assess their own reflexivity with regards to Aboriginal education, to question their own ontology. Questions 21, 33, and 34 on the other hand, look more towards participants' assessment of their ability to act towards improving their practice (i.e., seeking out opportunities for self-education; talking with others outside of teacher education about their learning; and feeling empowered to do research towards practice improvement in this area). Each of these two areas, reflexivity and action, offer important support for the findings of the thematic analysis of session reflections offered later in this chapter.

A third set of statements is also important to emphasise in this data, relevant to the themes that emerged from analysis. Although they did not show the greatest shift in perceptions, statements 10, 13, 16, 20, 23, 24, 25, and 31 all related to participants' experience with and exposure to Indigenous art. It should be noted that in looking at these results, the study was conducted in the context of a Fine and Performing Arts module, so many of the participants were pre-disposed to thinking more about art

production and appreciation in general, possibly leading to lower rates of shifts in perceptions. These statements, however, also support and lend further interpretations to the findings from the session reflections that follow.

In relation to statement 29 in particular, it is clear that there remains room for improvement, as the angst experienced by participants was not entirely alleviated by the end of the program. It must also be considered, however, that learning takes time, and is recursive. It is often in the consideration and reconsideration of learning that meaning emerges.

4.3. Session Narratives

4.3.1. Session One

In my introduction, I included the information that I am Métis and French Canadian on my Father's side, and second generation Irish Canadian on my Mother's. I asked participants to introduce themselves in the same way, stating where their ancestors were from and how long they had been in Canada wherever possible. I wanted to give students a moment to consider their relationship to Canada, including its length and informing circumstances, such as details of their ancestor's immigration, without overloading them with notions of Indigeneity and Settlerhood. While most participants knew their heritage and the country of origin of both parents, proudly relating the details of such, some students were less aware of their own family stories, and two, including Kiley, identified as "Canadian, through and through" (VR1). This struck me as particularly interesting, given the instructions for the activity and the responses of most other participants. If we were engaging in a dialogue about when and how we had come to be here, to my mind the only participants who might reasonably claim this subject position were Indigenous participants. No one in the group identified as Indigenous, so this assertion seemed at odds with the nature of the activity. In retrospect, it also offered some foreshadowing of some of the interactions that were to come.

Before moving on to the first activity, I told an off-hand anecdote about a former student teacher who'd recently invited me to her class to make dream catchers with her students, as mentioned in the session description in the methodology chapter. Several students gasped audibly as I began to tell the story and instinct told me that these were

indications of recognition. My response to this request, as I shared with participants, was to suggest she get an education kit from the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia that would offer her the opportunity to co-learn with her students. I finished the anecdote by tying the story to Celia Haig-Brown's (2010) discussion of Indigenous thought appropriation, and to the idea of Indigenous ethics, or doing things in a good way. To my mind, this anecdote presented a good opportunity to share with participants an example of learning in action. The teacher in the story did not simply develop an idea without research and then deploy it, but rather developed an idea and then checked in with a mentor to test the idea before developing it further. My hope was that participants would find some wisdom in this tale, but as later sections of this chapter reveal, I was only partially correct in this.

When I asked students the first question of the formal program, what do you remember learning about Indigenous people in your K-12 school experience, several students reported to the group that they recalled having fairly rich instruction, including field trips and visits from elders (Alana, Cara). Most participants, however, recalled doing a few craft projects in high school, and very little in secondary school (Kiley, Terry). Brendan reported that as a person of color he always noted the lack of representation of other persons of color in textbooks, including Indigenous peoples. I next asked where else they'd learned about Indigenous people. Again, after discussing it with one another, a few students reported they had personal relationships with Indigenous people (Jackie, Alana), and another said she'd taken classes at university on Canadian history (Kiley), but many still found themselves to be at an exposure deficit. This was an extremely important discussion, as it gave participants an opportunity to explore their own learning and understanding, and many were surprised to realize how little they had been exposed to.

I then introduced the notion of phenomenology to participants, mentioning Husserl and the idea of *lebenswelt*, and David Ihde's (1986) ideas around the relationship between noema (the perceiver) and noesis (the thing being perceived and its attendant meanings). I compared the process of phenomenology to a common pedagogical tool, the KWL chart (what do I **K**now, what do I **W**ant to know, and what did I **L**earn). This was the crux of the program as participants, many for the first time, were being asked to go deeper than casually looking at art. They were being asked to stop,

see, and consider it. Participants were provided with the five guiding questions for engaging in a practice of phenomenological art inquiry:

- What do you notice?
- What does this bring up for you?
- What do you like about it?
- What do you not like about it?
- What questions arise for you?

Next, I showed the image in Figure 1. in the preceding chapter, and invited students to think and speak and move freely during their looking activities. Several responses related to “Red Man Watching White Man Trying to Fix Hole in the Sky” were about the brightness of the colours and the natural shapes (Chrissy, Sharla), about the relationship between the scientists and the ladder and the Indigenous man in the foreground and their possible power differentials (Jackie, Nicole, Jacqueline), and about connections to other artists, such as Salvador Dali (Cara). Three participants also took a narrative approach to analyzing the painting, suggesting storied reasons behind the compositional arrangement of figures and landscape, suggesting that it looked like rubbish had been dropped off on the landscape, or that art had been abandoned (Brendan, Dan, Nicole).

In relation to the second work we looked at, “Just for a Moment, Always,” participants reported even more narrative based responses to the work, trying to determine what was intended by the juxtaposition of the Aboriginal warrior in full regalia in the foreground, to the urban landscape of the mid-ground, peppered with anachronistic and misplaced elements of traditional native life, such as tipis and game animals (Brendan, Leah, Michelle, Chrissy). One participant suggested that the image made her feel as though the building had simply grown up under the caribou at its top, leaving the animal stranded at the top of a skyscraper in an urban landscape. Other participants were more attentive to specific details, such as the warrior’s garb (Gerry), aspects of light and colour (Cara, Paulette). Eileen related the warrior figure in the foreground to the notion of the Dead Indian (King, 2012).

During the didactic portion of the session, as I led participants through a visual presentation on terminology (Aboriginal, Indigenous, First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Status Indians), we talked a little bit about Indigenous identity politics, prompted by Kiley’s

question as to why it was problematic when people pretend to be Indigenous, offering that if she'd claimed to be Scottish, no one would have blinked an eye about it. I mentioned the recent difficulties in this area that author Joseph Boyden has encountered, with some Indigenous people questioning his pedigree, and therefore his right to represent Indigenous voices in mainstream media, as he had been doing. This discussion was an important one, as it was generated by a participant's question, but I found myself slightly surprised that it had arisen as a challenge to Indigenous identity. We had discussed at the beginning of the session the question of what participants themselves had learned about Indigenous peoples in school, generally concluding that the misrepresentation and erasure of Indigenous peoples in school curriculum was at the heart of the problem in Indigenous and Settler relations. It seemed a clear leap to me to extrapolate that into misrepresentation being a problem in general, so my instincts suggested that something more was at stake here in this participant's question. While the question provided me with a better sense of where participants were starting from in terms of Indigenous education, it also seemed to indicate an even deeper dearth of understanding than I had anticipated, having assumed that most people accept that adopting another identity or subject position to which they are not authentically entitled is highly problematic. I realised that I was making assumptions about participants' general knowledge levels and readiness to accept some of the material I was sharing with them, and took this into consideration as I planned how to approach future sessions. As you will read in the chapter on resistance, however, this discussion marks just the beginning of the difficulties this participant encountered with the material we were covering.

4.3.2. Session Two

Before the formal content of session two began, Paulette asked about the dream catcher story I'd mentioned in the previous session, wanting to ensure that she understood the moral, so to speak. She asked if it was okay to include such an activity as part of a unit plan as long as there was reference made to the culture of origin and it was relevant to the rest of the learning. She also expressed her understanding that it was best to find an activity related to the Indigenous people on whatever territory one might be teaching. I agreed that her assessment was correct. Alana asked about how to find someone to bring in to a class to teach. I replied that most school districts have Aboriginal education resource teachers and workers part of whose role it was to assist

teachers with this content, so checking with schools is a good place to start. I then updated participants on the story of the student teacher I'd referred to in the first session, mentioning that she had suggested she might show her students the 2003 Disney film, *Brother Bear*, as a means of introducing cultural differences to them. I reported that I'd sent her an article critical of the film, along with the suggestion that she continue to look for place-based resources. There was evident relief on faces around the room that this anecdote had been brought up again. I knew from my initial review of their reflections that this story, presented as a pedagogical problem, had really piqued their interest and related anxieties, so this was a great opportunity, again, student initiated, to unpack it further.

In particular, this anecdote provided a chance to discuss the importance of place-based learning within Indigenous education. Because participants had been re-familiarised through our discussions during the first session with historic modes of teaching about Indigenous peoples, which usually involved looking at the historic lifeways of one representative group from each of five major regions of Canada (usually the North West coast, the Plains, the Arctic, the Eastern Woodlands, and the Atlantic coast), I wanted them to be able to grasp the difference that learning about local living cultures would make both to themselves and to their students. While some participants easily understood the pedagogical problems inherent in using a Disney film to teach about Indigenous peoples, expressed by a few groans and eye rolls as I told the story, still others were clearly having difficulty with getting at the nuances of why an animated film rooted in corporate production and sales concerns presents a continuation of the significant representational problems faced by colonial subjects. But the fact there were a few who adopted the posture of wanting to learn by bringing their questions regarding this to the whole group for discussion made space for other learners to express their concerns in this area, and find support through our collective dialogues. This was also an opportunity to revisit the importance of learning about Indigenous peoples in the present, as opposed to relying on materials and resources that persistently focus on the past, thereby relegating Indigenous peoples there, rooting them in the past in the psyches of their students as well.

I reminded students of the diagram I'd drawn the previous week, explaining that these models, the triangle and circle, represented Western and Indigenous ontologies, ways of understanding reality. We then talked about the ways in which curriculum tends

to promote the Western model, even to becoming a matter of top down habituation. I then related an Indigenous learning story in which a son learned from his father over the course of many years how to properly cure salmon. This apprenticeship model, I suggested, is a common mode in Indigenous education and casts the teacher in the role of guide, placing the onus for learning on the student. In this way, learners feel respected and are better prepared to take on the roles they will need to within the community, someday becoming the guides themselves. I wanted to help participants begin to identify that there are different models of learning beyond what they may have encountered in their own schooling.

I then introduced the second activity for the day, which was to compare FNESC's First Peoples' Principles of Learning to the 10 Program Goals of SFU's PDP. After about ten minutes, we debriefed the activity. There was a real buzz in the room, both as participants undertook this task and as they shared their findings. Many expressed a sense that both the principles and goals shared a lot of similarities, and it was easy for them to find links. Wilf, for example, noted that several of the goals from each document were concerned with community building, while Cara noted that several of the goals related to the FPPoL because they referred to the relational nature of learning. I was really pleased with the connections participants were making, as I knew from previous experience that before being introduced to the FPPoL, many in-service teachers and pre-service teachers carry the impression that Indigenous education is something entirely different, and even opaque, compared to their own learning experiences. Here, it became clear to participants that this was not the case at all. Participants were able to see for themselves that both the PDP goals and the FPPoL were deeply rooted in concerns of both human understanding and well-being. While the discussion had the potential to be quite rich, I was conscious of time, and moved the group along to the next activity. We spent the next 13 minutes watching an edited version of *Vigil*, by Rebecca Belmore (2002).

When the film was over, I invited participants to discuss what they'd seen at their table groups, hinting that the location of the work, Vancouver's Downtown East Side, held some clues about the content. After several minutes of table discussions we debriefed as a group. Alana asked why Belmore had been nailing herself to the pole, and Agnes replied that it had to do with the cycle of addiction. I was really pleased at this point, because it was clear that the group was becoming more comfortable in bringing

forth their prior knowledge, willing to take risks in helping one another learn. Several participants fixated on the introductory portion of the piece in which Belmore prepares the ground on which she will work by scrubbing it clean with soapy water and a brush, feeling somewhat repulsed by the action, and the dirtiness of the alleyway in which Belmore's work was situated (Gerry, Wilf). This precipitated some discussion that connected the act of scrubbing to the learning that Indigenous students acquired through residential schools, which helped Gerry and Wilf come to terms with their initial reactions. There was also some discussion of religious symbolism related to both the action of nailing and the colour red (Shelley).

At this point, we moved from an arrangement of table groups into a larger circle. I was aware that all students entering PDP are required to read *The Inconvenient Indian* (King, 2012), so I asked students to talk a little about any relationships they saw between Belmore's expression and message and King's. I explained the circle protocol, that we'd go around the circle once, and only one person would speak at a time, with all other in the group having the responsibility of listening. I related my own feelings about the difference between King's wry tone, and Belmore's raw tone, and that since both were artists and I was fascinated by the differences in the ways they told overlapping stories. Several participants reported that both artists were very accessible. James mentioned his dawning awareness of King's discussion of sports teams and the notion of the dead Indian, and he was glad the book had provoked consideration of this often raised but rarely resolved issue. Teams such as the Chicago Blackhawks and the Cleveland Indians annually face calls to revise their logos and messaging, as the underlying messaging behind using caricatures and out-dated language carry the message that Indigenous lives and concerns are not relevant and do not deserve consideration. Jacqueline reported having a much stronger emotional reaction to Belmore's work, and while she felt she learned and retained more from King's work, she enjoyed the way the two complimented one another, the rawness of Belmore's work playing off the humour embedded in King's work. Gerry described King's book as a good jumping off point for further research. Several participants noticed King's use of lists in the telling of Indigenous history, reporting that it forced them to lookup names and terms that were unfamiliar (Jacqueline, Jackie, Cara, Dan, Terry). Martha expressed her appreciation of the reading as she had identified as one of the students who learned little to nothing about Indigenous people in her K-12 education. At the end of the session, I

reminded students about the sheet I'd given them on the first day, which, in addition to explaining sessions and reflections, also contained a list of 34 artists from whom they could choose an artist's work to engage with in their own phenomenological art inquiry for the final session.

4.3.3. Session Three

Session three began with a territorial acknowledgement and some opening remarks about participants' reflections. I wanted to reiterate with students my understanding that we were all beginning at different places in this work, and that feeling unsure and asking questions were good signs of learning. In particular, I wanted to address Shelley's concern, raised in her post-session reflection, that work such as Belmore's was contributing to negative stereotypes about Indigenous people. Specifically, in her reflection, this participant wondered:

"why no one ever seems to portray Indigenous people as strong people...I feel as though they have never been looked at as a strong culture. But at the same time, have they tried to speak out, or done an art piece that represented the strengths that they as a culture hold?" (Shelley, R2).

I introduced the perspective that Belmore is an internationally known artist who uses her position to draw attention to issues facing Indigenous people, so it was with some confusion and concern that I read this reflection. I had been showing works by self-actualised and internationally recognized artists, whom I felt indeed represented the strength of Indigenous peoples and vision, and yet, this participant was not seeing this aspect of my selections at all. Her reaction to this and other aspects of the program are taken up further in the next chapter. I was thankful for the critique, however, because each such moment is an opportunity for deeper reflection on improving my own praxis. Clearly, I needed to frame the work we were seeing not just in relation to the context of Indigenous self-expression, but also to locate it within larger Western notions of success, connections that I had tacitly expected participants to be able to make for themselves. Before moving into the formal content for the day, I also updated participants on the story of the former student teacher and the dream catcher. That week she'd emailed to say she'd found a First Nations developed lesson plan on Coast Salish storytelling, which I immediately approved and congratulated her on. I was very pleased to share this final update, and the success it brought.

The didactic portion of the session began with a quote by Richard Wagamese:

“See, the important thing about our stories isn’t so much the listening, it’s the time you spend thinking about them. There’s lots of traditional thinking buried deep within each story and the longer you spend thinking about it the more you learn about yourself, your people and the Indian way.”
(*Keeper’n Me*, Richard Wagamese, 1994, p. 145)

I wanted to get at the reiterative nature of pedagogy and related learning. I then introduced several key pieces of legislation that directly impacted the well-being of Indigenous peoples, such as the potlatch ban of 1885-1951, and Bill C-31 (1985), the legislation that returned Indigenous status to the women who had lost their identity and community rights and position through marriages to non-Indigenous men. It was clear that several participants in the room were surprised by much of the information I shared with them. This was confirmed in their sessions reflections and many were continuing to identify their lack of knowledge, and their surprise that that had been previously unaware of this lack.

We moved on to look at Jarrod Miller’s response to former Conservative PM Stephen Harper’s 2009 Apology to Indigenous peoples for the abuses as Indian Residential Schools, which I both showed on a screen, and read aloud to participants. After allowing an opportunity for participants to chat about the piece amongst themselves for a few moments after hearing it, they reported their responses, including the sense that Miller was really effective in pointing to the ridiculousness of Harper’s apology (Terry, Cara). There was, however, also an undercurrent of displeasure at this offering. Chrissy understood the apology as a poem, and then objected to it on its lack of aesthetic merit, suggesting that it was poorly constructed and lacking in nuance. Others commented that the sarcastic tone of the apology was off-putting. For example, the second paragraph of the poem reads:

“I feel regret for the years of burden my kind has been to the Canadian public at large. As well, my apology is extended on behalf of my mother. She feels sorry for the years during which she tried to keep her language while attending a government-controlled residential school in northern Manitoba” (Miller, 2009, n.p.)

Chrissy suggested that the tone of the poem is one of “obvious sarcasm instead of the more subtle satire I prefer, I personally feel the quality of the writing is kind of low” (Chrissy, R3). In looking at this participant’s reaction, it seems clear to me that there is

an element of resistance here that Chrissy was, at the time at least, unable to identify for herself. While she at once admits that she is drawn to satire, something in Miller's words did not sit right with her, seemingly turning her away from the depth of the poem's content and into the more superficial considerations of the style in which the message was delivered. This calls to mind the work of Dion (2008) and the notion of the perfect stranger, a subject position adopted by Settlers and characterised not only by what they know (or think they know) about Indigenous peoples, but also "what they do not know, and what they refuse to know" (p. 331). Chrissy was being offered by Miller his accounting of the relations between Canada and Indigenous peoples. In a mode of what Berlak (2004) might refer to as defensive anger, she shut down and refused to hear what he was telling her through his work. While this initial reaction is somewhat disheartening, I am also reminded of the recursive aspects of learning. While we were not able to unpack her written reflection and its implications together, as she moves through her own learning, a re-visitation of this incident might yield deeper consideration of the reasons for her reaction, especially given her expression of appreciation for the five framing phenomenological art inquiry questions in her final reflection.

Still other participants made connections to other resources they were exploring, including podcasts and YouTube videos on both missing and murdered Indigenous women (MMIW) and the fallout from residential schools (Brendan, Kiley). As with each work of art I chose for the program, it felt as though we could have spent an entire session on this work alone, which provides a clear indication of its effectiveness in generating dialogue.

We then moved on to watching part two of the CBC documentary series *8th Fire* (CBC, 2012), hosted by Wab Kinew (Anishnabe). As I'd predicted, participants were particularly engaged by the depiction of an anti-racist workshop held by a Métis facilitator at Waneskewin Heritage Park just outside of Saskatoon (Mabel, Nicole, Wilf, Leah, Paulette), noting that it had made them aware of some assumptions they'd been unknowingly carrying about Indigenous peoples. Alana was especially touched by the Paul Martin segment in which he averred that while he was not directly responsible for the past, he is responsible for the future, and would like to be able to tell his grandchildren he did his best to be of help and service to Indigenous peoples. While the discussion had the potential to be quite rich, we were once again pressed for time and I moved to close the session. (As a side note, it is important at this point to remind the

reader that the constant need for more time was a recurring issue during and after each session. While I had several conversations with FAs about trying to make more time within the tight schedule of their daily programming to come in for a session that was just about unpacking what we had learned rather than about introducing new material, but they were both consistently unwilling to give up extra time for this process. This is discussed further in the next chapter.) Before I could do so myself, Wendy stepped in to ask again if I could clarify expectations about the reflections, especially the final reflection, describing participants' dialogue with art. I did my best to reiterate what I'd shared about the assignment each session, but was conscious of not wanting to be prescriptive about the activity, as participants' honest and genuine reflections were more important to me that "getting it right."

This was my first real indication that the confusion about assignments the FAs were describing to me in their emails was perhaps not being generated by participants. Participants did not ask any questions as I described again my expectations for their work, so it began to occur to me to be concerned as to what was really happening. I had provided information in the consent letter, through a Power Point presentation, and through discussion at the end of each session. And despite several meetings with FAs during which I encouraged them to ask STs to reach out directly to me with questions, this seemed to produce no results, leaving me to question if this openness was actually communicated to participants, beyond my own encouragement of such communication at the end of each session. This concern is taken up further in chapter five.

4.3.4. Session Four

The Kairos blanket activity is a scripted exercise developed by the Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives Society, and was described in the previous chapter. Many participants described the activity as both impactful and practical (Mabel, Nicole, Kiley, Frances), and several others described their surprise at how angry the activity made them, and how upset they became with their treatment by the "Europeans" in the activity (Jackie, Michelle). Many students also commented on how useful they thought his would be in their own classrooms, and spoke about their excitement at doing this activity with their own students (Cara, Chrissy, Terry). Another theme that emerged was how much participants enjoyed the chronological aspect of the activity, suggesting that while they may have known the facts previously, it was useful to hear them while also

experiencing them kinaesthetically (Alanna). Leah offered in her reflection on this session that the activity “was especially powerful as we were able to kinesthetically walk out the history” (Leah, R4). I am reminded here of Berlak (2004) and the notion that trauma can be a key factor in transformative thinking. Leah’s comments reflect Berlak’s discussion of what it means to become a secondary witness to trauma, and how there is an attendant mourning, perhaps both for the injury and for the loss of innocence about such injuries it entailed. Participants felt the pain of Indigenous people in and through their own bodies, connecting them to the history of colonization in a manner unavailable through lectures and didacticism. Connor was particularly impacted by the realization that the decimation of Indigenous populations was deliberately and knowingly human caused, as opposed to being the result of a natural disaster or a matter of congenital weakness. Other participants described feeling alone and awful during the activity, which they felt made it powerful as well, offering a visceral impact and a sense of true connection with what can otherwise be dry and disconnected history (James, Chrissy, Dan, Connor).

The two students who took the roles of the Europeans (Brendan and Paulette) spoke quite a lot about the discomfort they felt at playing the roles of the Europeans, and Paulette stated that she actually began to identify with the isolation the Europeans must have felt, adopting more of a sympathetic attitude to the Europeans than for Indigenous peoples. This was not a reaction I had anticipated, and I found myself somewhat surprised by it. In my consideration of how she had arrived at these feelings, I was reminded that Paulette was also an actress, so part of her formal training made it necessary to inhabit the character she was asked to play, including consideration of their back story, real, or intuited and imagined. In her reflection on this session, Paulette also expressed shock at her own reaction: “I wasn’t surprised that I felt quite uncomfortable being a ‘European’ and bossing my classmates around/removing their blankets from the circle, but I was shocked that by the end of it, I actually sympathised with the colonizers” (Paulette, R4). In her reflection, Paulette concluded that the underlying emotion she thought the colonizers might have felt was fear, manifesting itself in the need to control everything and everyone, which is reminiscent of some of the motivators of white fragility offered by DiAngelo (2011). Unfortunately, once again, the lack of opportunity to take the time to explore and unpack this moment in relation to our larger learnings about

Indigenous education meant that we had to leave her assertions as they were. I am hopeful that they remain resonant, however, as she moves forward in her practice.

After our first round of sharing, I offered information on the website where the activity can be found, and described the need to prepare for emotional reactions if participants were to undertake this activity with their students. I also spoke a lot about self-care after this and other emotional activities, suggesting that this aspect of Indigenous thinking is often absent from Western thinking, where we are often taught to hold things in rather than working through difficult feelings and knowledge. Cole drew parallels to the prison system and the activity, wherein isolation and abuse are mechanisms of social control. I found this to be an interesting parallel, and in line in many ways with my own impressions of the control exercised on Indigenous peoples by various iterations of the Canadian government. However, and perhaps it was because we were using a sharing circle with its incumbent protocols, no other participant took up this line of thinking as they shared their own responses. For other participants this raised the questions about how to include Indigenous education not on a large scale such as with this activity, but more on a daily basis in smaller ways that allow for the effusion of Indigenous pedagogies and learning in classrooms above and beyond the development of unit based learning (Jackie). Chrissy described enjoying the aesthetics of seeing all of the blankets laid out together on the floor, which added to her sadness at the destruction of that beauty. Dan described feeling disappointed at the behaviour of early colonizers, and that although they perhaps thought differently then, they must still have seen the devastating impact of their actions, making it deeply disappointing that they did not behave differently. When we'd finished the second pass, I suggested that one of the skills I hoped participants would develop was a tolerance to ambiguity that would serve them well as they wade deeper into Indigenous education; that not knowing, or being uncertain about knowledge, makes a good foundation for beginning to know.

I asked the group if anyone was planning to teach math or science, or teach elementary grades, which would necessarily include teaching math and science. About half the group responded that they would, and I used this opportunity to discuss culturally relevant pedagogy, and the notion of place based education. I pointed out that the territory we were on was the land of salmon, eagles, mountains and rivers, so figuring out how to bring natural features into math and science lessons would be an example of culturally relevant pedagogy, asking questions such as how to calculate the

volume and speed of flowing water, the distance travelled by spawning salmon, etc. For example, Marin and Bang (2015), and Nicol, Archibald and Baker (2013), address science and math education, respectively, through the lens of Archibald's model of story work as a means of relating math and science learning to Indigenous knowledges in culturally relevant ways. I offered to send participants information about these two articles, and while we were not able to read and discuss them during their session, I did make the articles available to students through their course website and encouraged them to engage in independent study on this topic. I finished by pointing out that thinking about education in this way, and possibly even learning words in the language of the people whose territory one is on, is a really effective way of showing respect for the people who came first.

At this point, Lauren intervened and asked if participants could use the remaining time to reflect on the activity they'd just done, effectively terminating further unpacking of the activity. I agreed, somewhat reluctantly, stating that I'd planned the day to be quite loose in honour of the nature of the work we were doing (having done this activity once before, I'd noted that participants really needed down time afterwards). Lauren then announced that she needed to leave for a small family emergency. Before we settled in to the notion of writing, one participant (whose face was off camera and cannot therefore be identified) asked if we could brainstorm ideas for including Indigenous content in daily lessons. Brendan and Paulette spoke more about their feelings at playing the Europeans in the activity, Paulette again identifying with the Europeans presumed feelings of isolation and aloneness. I pointed out that we are all someone's oppressor and someone's oppressed, and that both of those positions are a spectrum rather than a static position. We talked about the human condition in general, and that very few people are entirely good or entirely evil, and we all vary in our attitudes from day to day and moment to moment, trying to work through the complexity of Paulette's feelings together. I also used this opportunity to speak about the notion of racial or cultural purity, another form of essentialism that is not helpful, noting that few people are genetically 100% what they appear to be, which I tied back to the notion that we are all related. As indicated in the following paragraphs, despite Lauren's request, and perhaps because of her departure, the conversation continued for at least 15 minutes after she left, indicating that my initial instinct to keep the session going rather than to leave time for in-class reflection was not off the mark. This incident further suggests another form

of resistance, in the form of an attempt to control the situation by shutting down dialogue peremptorily, was at play here.

Alana related a story about a teacher who made a significant misstep with Indigenous students and lost the confidence of the class. She wanted to know what the best way to set one's self up to teach Indigenous students so that one would not overstep bounds and offend. I reminded participants of the activity we'd done at the beginning of the first session, when I'd asked them to say where their families were from and how long they'd been in Canada. This type of activity allows for each person in the room to acknowledge their position relative to the history of Canada, and also creates opportunities for the teacher to present themselves not as an expert, but as a co-learner with students. Further, it presents one of those small ways in which one can infuse Indigenous pedagogy and thought across the curriculum. Another participant reflected the same concerns and I reiterated the point about co-learning, and the power of seeing oneself more as a facilitator in unpacking what students learn rather than as an expert and arbitrator of knowledge. In this way, student learning can emerge naturally, and the teacher can respond to needs as they arise. This is also, I pointed out, an aspect of Indigenous pedagogy.

Dan said he was struggling with how to include Indigenous education within music education. I suggested a few articles I had come across, and then mentioned that the *Women's Warrior Song* has been gifted by Martina Pierre (Lil'wat) for use to the world, so bringing it into a music classroom would be a great starting point. A few more participants had comments to make about Indigenous music and its relationship to place, and I noticed that several of them begin their offerings with "I could be wrong...", suggesting a lack of confidence in their knowledge. I also suggested that joining a drum group, or asking a drum group to come in might be a good way of introducing Indigenous content into a music class.

At the end of the session, a few participants asked about the art inquiry activity and what was expected of them. Wilf asked if I wanted formal writing. I replied that I did, but that I was also trying to leave the way they approached this task to be self-directed so that they could really describe their process and the feelings they experienced while engaging in it. I asked them to account for what they needed to learn in order to make sense of what they were seeing and feeling. I hinted that learning the

name of the nation the artist was from and a few things about their community was a good place to start, because that would likely inform their understanding.

4.4. Participant-Generated Themes

As I read through the session reflections, and reviewed session recordings, several key themes emerged. Each batch of session reflections was analysed using thematic analysis. The analysis in this chapter is largely limited to discussion of participants' fifth and final reflections (coded as R5), most of which were by far the richest in their discussion of the program. While the data from earlier session reflections remains an important consideration in the development of themes, I was also aware that by creating opportunities for reflection throughout the study participants would be better able to track and articulate their growth over time, ideally culminating in a deeper final reflection. In my estimation of their submissions, I found this to be largely true, so the decision to focus on the final reflections seems justifiable.

The units of meaning from each reflection are presented in the following chart in order of their frequency of occurrence. One of the major trends that emerged was that much of the content of each session's reflection was directly related to topics addressed during the session, in a mode of affirming understanding. Although many of these units of meaning qualified as themes, they were given less consideration in the emergence of the larger themes.

| Session | No. of Respondents | Units of Meaning |
|---------|--------------------|---|
| 1 | 25 | new learning; dream catcher anecdote; understanding appreciation versus appropriation; feelings of fear and self-silencing; anticipating future learning; power of dialogue and art |
| 2 | 26 | power of art to communicate; guilt; increasing comfort with uncertainty; awareness of PDP goals and FPPoL; ontological difference between western and Indigenous paradigms; resistance; the importance of local content; dream catcher anecdote |
| 3 | 22 | awareness of the lack of Indigenous ideas in education; shame/guilt/ignorance; hopefulness; feeling called to action; myths and misinformation; outrage at the Indian Residential School system |

| | | |
|---|----|---|
| 4 | 18 | acknowledging prior ignorance; sadness/guilt; emotional connections to content through art |
| 5 | 28 | accessibility of art/power of the dialogic inquiry approach; increased confidence; self-direction/action plans; ignorance/lack of knowledge; insecurities/fears; relevance of material covered; growing awareness of Aboriginal presence through art; trickledown to family and friends; importance of local people and knowledge; resistance |

Figure 5. Units of Meaning

As the data coalesced, and I considered and reconsidered its implications, three distinct themes emerged. Where possible, I also matched data from STs' reflections to the moments they refer to in the raw data of the initial video/audio recordings, in order to ascertain links between my perceptions and the circumstances surrounding their genesis. In the end, I settled upon several codes that support the three overarching themes that emerged as a result of this process:

Angst (coded as ignorance/lack of knowledge; fear of offending; resistance) – this includes references to feelings of fear and self-silencing; guilt; resistance; shame/guilt/ignorance; outrage at the residential school system; acknowledging lack of prior Indigenous knowledge; sadness; insecurities and fears.

Art (coded as accessibility of art; the power of the dialogic approach; and growing awareness of Aboriginal art and presence) – this includes units of meaning regarding of the power of art as a mode of communication; the power of dialogue with art; emotional connections through art; and, awareness of Aboriginal presence through art.

Action (coded as self-direction/Action; relevance to daily life; and increased confidence) – this encompasses anticipating future learning; increasing comfort with uncertainty; hopefulness; feeling called to action; and trickledown to family and friends.

In order to give the reader a clear picture of how important each of these themes was within participant reflection, I offer an accounting of their frequency of occurrence. Angst, which included both concerns over lack of knowledge and fears of offending, was mentioned 24 times in participants' reflections. References to personal agency, characterised by increased confidence and excitement for learning, reports of sharing learning with family and friends, and growing awareness of the presence of Indigenous peoples, were made 25 times. And assertions about the dialogic potential of art, and the accessibility and pleasure of art, were made 22 times. In elucidating the occurrence of each theme, I have also linked them to Curry-Stevens' (2007) stages of transformative

learning, including my proposed intermediate stage, to better get at the efficacy of this pedagogy in the overall study (see Chapter 2, section 2.11).

In considering these themes within the context of the program goals, linked to Curry-Stevens' framework, findings related to angst are connected to the foundation/confidence shaking stage, while findings related to art are connected to the establishment of new narratives. The third theme, action, is also connected to this framework as the final stage of transformative education. In working through the process of arriving at these themes, one of the threads that emerged in my analysis was that of transformation itself. This I have termed a meta-theme, as, while it composes a portion of the framework for my research, it is not based on specific units of meaning drawn from participants' reflections. It does, however, serve as an umbrella under which to discuss links between the three major themes that did emerge from participant data. Looking at the evidence from participants' final reflection in particular, there are very clear indications that most students did experience transformations in their thinking about Indigenous peoples and Indigenous education. Wilf, for example, offered that "I've become so much more aware of how relevant these issues and discussions are to our present and our future. This is not just a part of our past, this is part of who we as Canadians will become in the future" (Wilf, R5). Gerry asserted that "overall, I am feeling fairly confident in my abilities to include Aboriginal Education in future lessons as I move forward in my teaching career, where originally there was only fear and doubt" (Gerry, R5). Finally, Michelle wrote, "before my time in PDP my knowledge of Aboriginal culture was limited...after the sessions with you I feel I have a much better understanding of how I can make sure that future students will not grow up with the limited information my generation did" (Michelle, R5). I am reminded here of the First People's Principles of Learning (FNSEC, 2009) and the assertion that learning takes time and patience. What this program offered participants was not a set of pat answers and canned units, but rather a place from which to begin the process of transforming their understandings and to continue their learning about Indigenous peoples in holistic and decolonizing ways. In many ways, teaching is an act of faith for instructors, for it is the students themselves who must choose to take up and internalize what we offer them.

The second meta-theme that emerged was that of resistance. While some evidence of this theme occurs explicitly in the data, as in the story of Lauren's

intervention above, it is also evident in some of the events that created confusion around participation expectations, in trends related to data collection and the completeness of the data available, and in the social dynamics in each session, including the highly regimented allotment of contact time, and the inability (or perhaps unwillingness) of the FA team to create more space for the meaningful unpacking of each session. I suggest, therefore, in my analysis that there was a degree of institutional resistance in operation. Certainly, in light of similar findings in the research of other scholars in Indigenous and anti-racist education, a discussion of this theme and its implications is warranted (Dion, 2009; Schick & St. Denis, 2003). This theme will be discussed in the next chapter.

4.5. Angst

Angst is defined in the *Oxford On-line English Dictionary* as “a feeling of deep anxiety and dread, typically an unfocused one about the human condition or the state of the world in general” (retrieved from <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/angst>). In essence, this theme touches both on the feelings participants brought with them into their PDP experience with regards to education, while also touching on the feelings of ontological uncertainty I hoped to provoke in participants through the introduction of phenomenological artistic inquiry as part of stage one of transformative education. The numbers in Figure 7., below, that appear next to each code in the chart above reflect the frequency with which each occurred across the study group. It is worth noting that while resistance is mentioned only twice, it has developed into a meta-theme in consideration of the overall project; in fact, owing to a number of factors, both with regards to personal interactions, and institutional circumstances, it is addressed at length in the next chapter as suggested above. In terms of the transformative education framework used in this study, angst also reflects the intention of the first stage, that of foundation shaking. In the discussion below, I have drawn on two codes in order to better get at the sources of anxiety for participants.

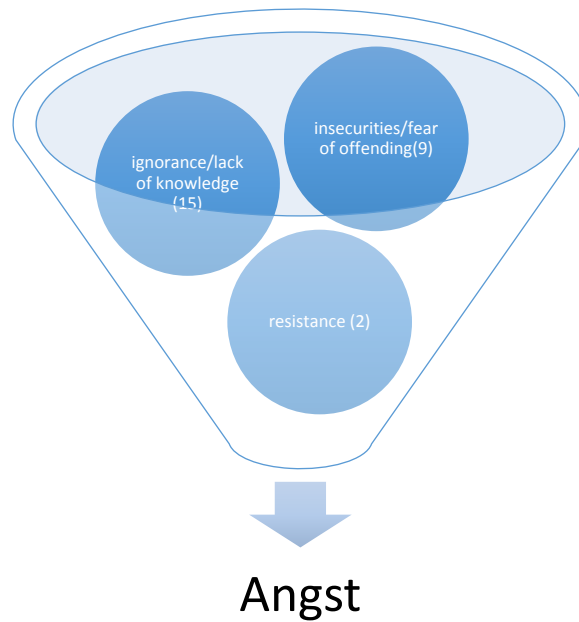


Figure 6. Codes drawn from units of meaning informing the development of Angst as a major theme.

4.5.1. Fear of Offending

The fear of offending was mentioned seven times in participants' final reflections. In each case, this fear was discussed as a condition that pre-existed our sessions together, and was therefore not part of the creation of ontological uncertainty in which we engaged. It must be acknowledged, however, that this necessarily informed participant thinking, and it became part of the focus of each session to work through such fears. In most cases, this fear is also linked to ignorance, but it is worth noting that the relational value of wishing to be inoffensive is embedded in this angst as well.

“When we began our work with exploring Aboriginal history, culture, current issues, and integrating this learning into my teaching practice, I felt largely uninformed and out of my depth. I was incredibly intimidated to speak in group discussions, for fear of saying something that would be considered ignorant or politically incorrect.” (Joanne, R5)

“When we began our work with exploring Aboriginal history, culture, current issues, and integrating this learning into my teaching practice, I felt largely uninformed and out of my depth. I was incredibly intimidated to speak in group discussions, for fear of saying something that would be considered ignorant or politically incorrect.” (Joanne, R5)

"Before our sessions, I was terrified at the idea of Indigenizing my future classroom because I feared I would involuntarily offend someone." (Michelle, R5)

The expression of this particular angst provides a clear picture of the fall out from decades of avoiding Indigenous content in schools and in curriculum. Words such as ignorant, intimidated, and resistant peppered participant reflections, highlighting their unease with both the expectation that they would include this content in their work, and with the content itself. This aligns completely with Lowman and Barker's (2015) discussions on the reaction of Settlers to engaging in difficult conversations about the nature of their relationships to both the Canadian colonial state, and to Indigenous peoples, as well as with Dion's (2008) writing about the position of the perfect stranger. It seems clear, however, that only because of our programmatic focus on Indigenous education did any of these sentiments arise at all, making abundantly clear the absolute necessity for the on-going facilitation of Aboriginal education as a central concern in teacher education. It is clear that our historic curricular silence regarding Indigenous peoples in school curriculum have directly contributed to the ubiquity of the perfect stranger subject position. Further, as evidence that breaking such silences is highly effective in shifting away from that positioning, those participants who described rich early educational experiences centred on Indigenous peoples and learning during our first session together expressed far fewer of these types of concerns than did their peers who'd received little such education.

In many ways, it was the discussion prompted by my initial question in our first session that helped participants reflect on the connection between what they'd learned themselves and what they were expected to teach. When asked to consider for the first time what they'd learned about Indigenous peoples in their own K-12 educational experiences, many students noted that the majority of their learning took place in elementary school, and that they'd received little information in high school. Through our discussion, the group also came to realize that most of what many of them learned about Indigenous peoples was rooted in the past and therefore unconnected to the contemporary lives of indigenous peoples. This problem has been attributed by Dion (2009) as a result of the fact that the "stories that dominate Canadian history reflect an unwillingness to and inability to come to terms with the reality of Canada's relationship with Aboriginal people" (p. 5). That is, curriculum has historically been designed to keep

non-Indigenous Canadians in line with the colonial mythologies that keep Indigenous peoples off of our collective radar. However, as our work together progressed, participants began to see the impact such limited inclusion had on their understanding. By far, the persistence of such concerns presents the most compelling support for changes to both the BC curriculum, and to teacher education curriculum as well.

4.5.2. The Dream Catcher

While participants did not describe the genesis of the fear of offending they initially carried with them, the off-handed anecdote I shared with them during session one may offer some insight.

Not surprisingly, six participants mentioned this incident as part of their first reflection, expressing anxiety and uncertainty as to why making dream catchers as a classroom activity was problematic. Terry, for example, stated:

“I don’t have trouble understanding any of the more obvious forms of cultural appropriation, but when something seems to me to be a respectful celebration and appreciation of a cultural practice, tradition or style, rather than something offensive, I have a hard time understanding how it can be considered appropriation.” (Terry, R1)

I realised immediately that I had created in participants precisely the type of fear that I had hoped to help mitigate. Prior to my research, I’d heard many anecdotes from practicing teachers about encounters they’d had with Indigenous parents and educators that left them feeling stunned and shut down because of the anger they encountered. In most cases the teachers reporting the anecdotes also reported having good and inclusive intentions in whatever lessons they’d developed, so they were taken aback when they received feedback that was critical of their efforts. In many ways this is tied to discussions of Settler identity formation and the normativity of whiteness referred to in earlier chapters (Ladson-Billings & Donner, 2005; Regan, 2010; Schick & St. Denis, 2003, 2005), in which the teacher’s sense of self and feelings of personal morality are challenged. Unfortunately, in many such cases, there is no pursuit of the kind of dialogue that could untangle the misunderstandings created between intention and reception, resulting in teachers remaining feeling shutdown while their critics are left feeling unheard. In the situation I had inadvertently created, I knew at least that we were

already aimed at pursuing that type of dialogue, and that it may even strengthen the impact of the program.

Luckily, before the next session, the teacher wrote again and asked me what I thought of the idea of using the Disney film, *Brother Bear*, to help students see cultural differences in a positive way. This time, and because in re-reading my research journal reflection on this interaction I was reminded that I was dealing with a person who would never intentionally offer offense, I set about addressing her query by sending her a link to an article that would help her understand why that film may not be the best resource to use, and suggested that she look for a way to root her teaching in local culture and history. I really wanted to help this young teacher get to where she needed to be with this work, and to remind her of some of the focal points of Indigenous education we had worked on when she was my student.

As soon as our second session began, one of the participants raised the issue of the dream catcher. She wanted to confirm her perceptions of the moral of the dream catcher story, asking if it would have been okay to make something such as a dream catcher in a classroom if it was done with reference to the culture and people from whom the tradition originates, and better still if it is tied to the people in the region one is teaching in. I agreed that her understanding was sound, and then related my own thinking about this incident, including my uncertainty over what it was that had bothered me about the original request. In part, I knew it had to do with my sense that what was really in operation in her request was pan-Indianism; the notion that one Aboriginal person is interchangeable with another and that Indigenous cultures across the continent are more or less the same, rendering our relationship to land and the specificities of our cultures of origin and personal life experiences immaterial. In other words, any Indigenous person, in this young teacher's mind, seemed fair game to come in and make dream catchers, regardless of whether or not they'd ever done so before. But I was also distressed because during the time that she was my student, I had imparted to her much of the knowledge about Aboriginal education I was engaged in with participants in the study. I was left with the feeling that, like Berlak (2004), while I thought I had been making progress in antiracist and Indigenous education, somehow, I had not been heard or understood as clearly as I had hoped. After exploring some of my reactions to this aloud with participants, I updated the class with the next chapter in the story, involving the *Brother Bear* film and my solution to this second question. It

presented a good opportunity for us to explore together what a practice in self-education might entail. I pointed out that despite finding her original request problematic, I was happy and willing to help this former student until she came to a solution that would work for her, and still pass muster with me.

Finally, and conveniently, before session three my former student sent me a link to a government of Canada website that had a First Nations developed unit on Coast Salish storytelling. Bingo! She got there! I was delighted to deliver to participants the final chapter of the saga and with being able to conclude the story with her successful outcome (considerations and concerns around practice aside). While only one of the participants mentioned dream catcher episode specifically in their final reflection, several of them did still indicate some lingering concern over their understanding of how to discern where the line of appropriation (or perhaps inappropriate inclusion) might be, which I sensed was still rooted in this story.

Upon reflection, despite the somewhat ham-fisted initial handling of this anecdote, it did turn out to be a powerful tool in the confidence shaking stage of transformative education. Most of those participants who were uncertain about why making dream catchers and other such crafts was potentially offensive (such as paper towel roll totem poles and choose-your-own-Indigenous-crest activities) worked hard to learn what they needed to know in the face of the problem as it was presented to them. For example, Terry, quoted above, reported in her final reflection that “these sessions...have caused me to think more deeply about Aboriginal issues and the common misconceptions that many people have, myself included” (Terry, R5). This participant went on to discuss the increased frequency of incidents in which she was aware of Aboriginal presence, or the lack thereof, and of stereotyped discourses about Indigenous peoples in everyday conversations. In considering the process of transformative education, this participant presents a good example of having begun PDP with a particular frame of reference about Indigenous peoples which, when examined through phenomenological art inquiry and foundational instruction in indigenous education, yielded space for new understandings about her own positioning and what she will need to do to develop her teaching in this area

4.5.3. Lack of Knowledge/Prior Education

Participants were surprisingly frank in their final reflections about the fear and ignorance with which many entered this study. The angst they expressed is mirrored in the research of others working in this field as well, such as Carol Schick and Verna St. Denis (2007, 2005), as well as Margaret Kovachs (2013), amongst others, and points to the effects of a colonial system of education, which for years has deliberately suppressed the identities and histories of Indigenous peoples. This theme was mentioned 12 times in participants' final reflections, often contextualised as a moment of realization.

"For me to say that I was unaware and ignorant of Canadian Aboriginal history would be an understatement...I remember thinking to myself: If this is so important, why have I not heard about this before?" (Wilf, R5)

"In the beginning of entering PDP I knew very little about First Peoples history and even less about how to incorporate First Peoples history and principles into the classroom...Even though I was excited about this 'shift' towards truth and reconciliation in our education systems, I was still nervous about how I as a future teacher could incorporate it into my teaching since I knew so little." (Mabel, R5)

"Before I began PDP I didn't have much knowledge about aboriginal culture and education." (Gerry, R5)

Perhaps the most exciting thing about realizing there is something one doesn't know, is developing the desire to *want* to know. While there were participants who, from the onset, felt they had a good understanding of the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada, every participant reported having learned something of value during our sessions in their final reflection. The majority, however, began from a real place of not-knowing, and in some cases were even unaware of gaps in their knowledge until our work together began. For those participants, the foundation shaking stage was highly productive, confirming the efficacy of beginning a practice in transformative education this way.

The real lesson here to my mind is the highlighted need for Indigenous education in Canadian curricula that delivers relevant and current information about Indigenous peoples, as outlined by Battiste (2013), and Dion (2009). Our history on this land is as fundamental to our connection to it in understanding who Indigenous Canadians are as peoples, but so is the acknowledgement of our on-going presence. Curriculum at any level of education that fails to grapple with this reality will continue to produce oppressive

narratives about Indigenous peoples that seek to either essentialize or erase Indigenous presence. The angst expressed by study participants offers strong evidence of the ongoing and pressing need to continue to improve Indigenous education in order to improve conditions for Indigenous Canadians, as well as ameliorating the angst experienced by non-Indigenous Canadians.

It is worthwhile here, to revisit the role that differing ontologies play in the deployment of Aboriginal education in Canada, and of the consternation this realization can affect in those Settler Canadians learning about these differences for the first time. Lowman and Barker (2015), for example, point out that for years, the onus for new cultural learnings has been on Indigenous peoples who were expected to fall in line with the thought systems of their colonial oppressors. They suggest that it is now up to Settlers to swing the pendulum back, and release their death grip on Western notions of what is real about this country in order to re-learn from the alternate narratives of Indigenous peoples who offer a significantly different version not only of the true history of this nation, but also an alternate approach to learning through relational thinking that will help us move forward. But, as noted in Berlak's (2004) work, there are many aspects of the dominant discourse, rooted in white normativity, that contribute significantly to the lack of knowledge and prior education expressed by participants in this study. In her example, one of the white male students who was most resistant to the black guest speaker in Berlak's class noted in his reflection on the session that he was beginning to understand for the first time, that the guest speaker (and other people of colour) held ideas and subject positions that were as rooted in their own experiences and as valid as his own. She describes his dawning awareness as "an expression of nascent ability to receive information about how he might be seen and heard by others whose views he had been socialized to discount or not hear at all" (p. 131). So while some degree of lack or prior education can be attributed to the exclusion from curriculum of accurate portrayals of and information regarding Indigenous peoples, Canadian students have also been socialized to ignore the perspectives and concerns of Indigenous peoples, even when they have been granted access to them through literature, media, and social connections. While I do not suggest that either of these factors excuses Canadians from meaningful learning from Indigenous peoples, it certainly makes more complex the process of untangling these roots in order to encourage better growth.

4.6. Action

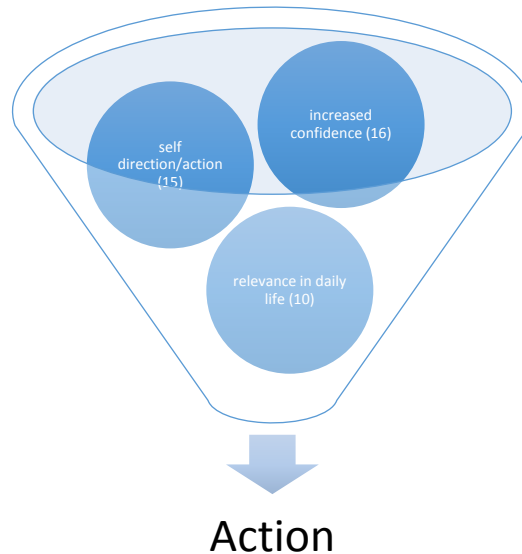


Figure 7. Units of meaning informing the theme of Action. In relation to the transformative education framework, this theme connects to the final stage, that of confidence building.

The most powerful tonic for the fears and concerns of participants was the recognition of their own agency, their ability to take self-directed action. By creating an initial art experience that encouraged free thinking, and free expression, students quickly became more at ease with their thoughts about Indigenous peoples and art and with the realization of their need to learn more. Through their own learning and reflection, participants faced and named their anxieties, rooting them out and replacing them with new learning, and new understandings that they became keen to share with others. This theme reflects the third stage of Curry-Stevens' (2007) framework, where action emerges from new understandings.

"I have already found myself correcting family members...when they bring up anything that is simply not true or just a stereotype that the 'white man' has allowed them to believe. I do not stand for any negativity or unjust comments like that any longer. Instead, I chose to

educate and inform, and in my doing so I hope that I am helping...towards reconciliation.” (Jen, R5)

“What you have shown me I will work my hardest to exemplify... for my entire career, because it is a transformative part of history that brings one to a place of humility and sadness, but creates passion and courage out of those emotions.” (Dan, R5)

“We have the unique opportunity to ‘pass the torch’ by exposing and educating children to varying knowledge and experiences relating to Aboriginal life. Integrating these aspects of culture, art, and stories in the BC curriculum will help young minds into developing awareness of the people whom they share this land with.” (Cole, R5)

“Despite some of the conversations we had as classmates regarding the ‘lack of practical resources’ that came out of our time together, I now realize that in the midst of those conversations, we were missing the point altogether. The purpose of Aboriginal education is not to be given the answers on a silver platter... It is instead about the depth of our roots in Aboriginal education so that we can take the principles we have learned and move forward into meaningful incorporation of Aboriginal education into our classrooms. This realization was humbling for me as a student teacher.” (Leah, R5)

Participants who discovered the power of their own agency in learning about Indigenous histories and pedagogy were quickly ignited to put their learning into action, and to gather more information and resources to support their practice. The simple availability of time and space to consider their relationships to Aboriginal education created opportunities for transformative shifts in understanding that might never have occurred otherwise.

I also want to draw attention to the final quote in this group, which addresses one of the key issues when it comes to decolonizing education. Many of the participants in phase one entered into the activities we engaged in together with a tacitly held banking concept of education in mind (Freire, 1970). That is, as is the case with many STs, they had the expectation that teacher education is a matter of getting the answers so they'd know what to teach their students. The realization of the need to take action in educating herself expressed by Leah is one of the most encouraging indications of the effect of decolonizing education encountered so far in my research. This participant moved from a place of expecting me to provide answers in the form of set unit plans and activities, to a place of understanding that much of the research and learning required to

enact Aboriginal education respectfully and effectively resides within the examination of self in relation to Indigenous peoples and history.

4.7. Final Session Analysis and The Power of Art

The discussion of this theme is divided into two sections. First, I offer a multi modal social semiotic discourse analysis of the final session as a means of addressing one of the central questions in this dissertation; can art precipitate the kind of ontological uncertainty that is necessary for transformative education to ensue? Therefore, in addressing this question, a short summary of each dialogue is offered here, with particular focus on conversations that indicate transformed thinking and new directions for further inquiry. At the end of this discussion, further support for the formulation of this theme is drawn from participants' final reflections. Further analysis of some key incidents during this session and the structural limitations that informed my ability to address them will be unpacked further in the next chapter.

During the final session, five groups of participants shared their phenomenological art inquiries with one another. Because each member of one of the groups opted out of recording during the final session, only four groups are accounted for here. Each group is coded by letter, and the participants in each group are indicated by their assigned pseudonym. The groups were given approximately 45 minutes to share their dialogues, resulting in the collection of nearly 2.6 hours of audio data. In terms of the analytic process employed, multimodal social semiotic discourse was employed because of its focus on participants' interest, which "names the effect – in the moment of making the sign – of the multiple and complex social formation of the sign-maker/learner, of her or his sense of their present social environment, and of the shaping of their meaning as a response to a prior prompt" (Kress, 2004, p. 209). Not only did I float from group to group as they engaged in their discussions, listening for indications of their own phenomenological art inquiry process, but in analysing the audio recordings, I was listening for moments when meaning was made regarding the art being discussed beyond aesthetic concerns (size, medium, colour, etc., largely relating to the first guiding question "what do I notice?"). I was listening for indications of participants' interactions with the social and political aspects of each piece, and listening as well for indications that they had employed the five guiding questions in conducting and considering their phenomenological dialogues with the work. Social semiotic

analysis is helpful in this regard because of the attention it pays to the meaning-maker's interest, which "guides *selection, attention, framing, interpretation,*" each of which aspect informs the meaning-maker's construction of understanding.

4.7.1. Group A (Terry, Sharla, Brendan, Michelle, Kiley, and Nicole)

Sharla and Nicole both selected *Time Warp* by Carl Beam (1984). There was minimal discussion about this work, but both made connections to its reference to residential schools and their devastating impacts. It was unfortunate that so little conversation ensued, because this recognition of the central theme of colonial resonance in Beam's work offered the opportunity to explore the ways in which that resonance applies to non-Indigenous people as well, and of how a practice in Indigenous education can help us to countenance both in the process of decolonization. Kiley chose *Kwagiulth Moon Mask* by Richard Hunt (2010), but the unpacking of this contribution has been excluded here because it forms part of the discussion on resistance in the following chapter. Brendan chose *The Spirit of Haida Gwaii* by Bill Reid (1991), but it was quickly evident from his presentation that he had done very little research, not even mentioning Bill Reid's membership in the Haida nation, or his importance to the revival of Haida art in the 1960s and 70s. This presentation, therefore, raised little discussion. However, it is also discussed further in the next chapter as well.

Terry chose *Perception Series, Lethbridge*, by KC Adams (2013) and precipitated the most compelling discussion in her group (see Figure 10, below). The series consists of several photographic diptychs featuring twin portraits of Adams' various subjects. Above the left hand portrait is printed a derogatory word or phrase the subject has been called in the past, such as "squaw", "dirty little Indian", and the portrait is taken as the subject spontaneously reacted upon hearing it again. On the right hand side is printed the subject's self-description and sources of personal pride, such as homeownership, university degrees, children, etc., and the portrait beneath is taken as the subject hears and reacts to their own self-description. The discussion began with the group noting that each subject appears with their name and nation listed. They then expressed surprise at the nature of what was said, of the stereotypes that were used. Kiley was surprised at the word "whore", while Brendan was surprised at the word "terrorist". Rather than picking up on the surprise these two participants expressed, the group quickly moved on, leaving an unrealised opportunity for dialogue around why these words were used. If

Adams' work is informed by the lived experience of her subjects, then the questioning of these two participants as to the veracity of those monikers is ripe with potential for unpacking. Although there may be myriad personal reasons for these reactions, their disbelief, in this light, reads as a denial of those lived experiences, and suggests a common strategy of avoidance in those confronting their own assumptions for the first time (Regan, 2013).



Figure 8. *Perception Series, KC Adams (2013)*

One participant shared the story of her exposure to a lot of anti-rape signs when she was staying in a northern Inuit community, and the group discussed how such stereotypes might have developed, but with little reference to the particular words Brendan and Kiley reacted to. Brendan, however, offered an interesting insight to the group at this point, suggesting “in terms of the patriarchy being dominant to women, and then add race in, so a white man might feel really superior to a native woman, so its about power and control.” Effectively, Brendan is describing one of the issues raised by intersectional feminists, which is that being a woman of colour is a different experience than being a white woman; those hierarchies, as imaginary as they may be, are definitely at play in our collective psyche, and Brendan hit it on the head. Although little discussion of this point ensued, I was glad it had been raised, as it presents evidence meaning-making beyond aesthetic concerns. The presenter finished her discussion, and the last work, Sonny Assu's *Breakfast Series* (2006), was presented, but precipitated little further discussion.

4.7.2. Group B (Wilf, Joanne, Agnes, Alana, Paulette)

Alana presented the short film, *A Red Girl's Reasoning*, by Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers (2014), which depicts the story of a woman taking revenge against a violent offender. The discussion of the film focussed largely on the dynamics between the main characters, rather than the cultural significance of the story. Paulette presented KC Adams' *Perception Series* (2013), relating that this series was born out of a racist tweet sent out by a Winnipeg politician's wife, but little discussion is made of this. Wilf introduced the work *The Happiest Future* from Sonny Assu's (2012), which features a quote ripe with the potential for genocidal intent from former bureaucrat Duncan Campbell Scott, "the happiest future for the Indian race is absorption into the general population. This is the policy of our Government." In the discussion, he pointed out that the fact that this is a poster points to the notion on serialization and repetition, saying "so if something is repeated enough we begin to believe it, so if something like this is repeated enough, people just assume that to be true, even if they don't really think about what they are saying or reading." This was an important moment in this group that seemed to indicate a growing understanding of the power of curriculum, media narratives, and social messaging to either define or erase Indigenous presence from a colonial perspective. In the context of all that we'd discussed at the onset of the program regarding how each of them had come to learn about Indigenous people, Wilf seemed to be making a deep connection to how information is formed and spread. This is born out by the research included in the literature review and relating to how curriculum informs both Indigenous and Settler identities (Dion, 2008; Schick & St. Denis, 2005). It was gratifying to me to hear and read this participant's reaction to the work he chose as it offered an indication that the approach of phenomenological art inquiry was indeed helping him to make inroads into learning to think about the construction of not only his, but of Indigenous identities, as constructed.

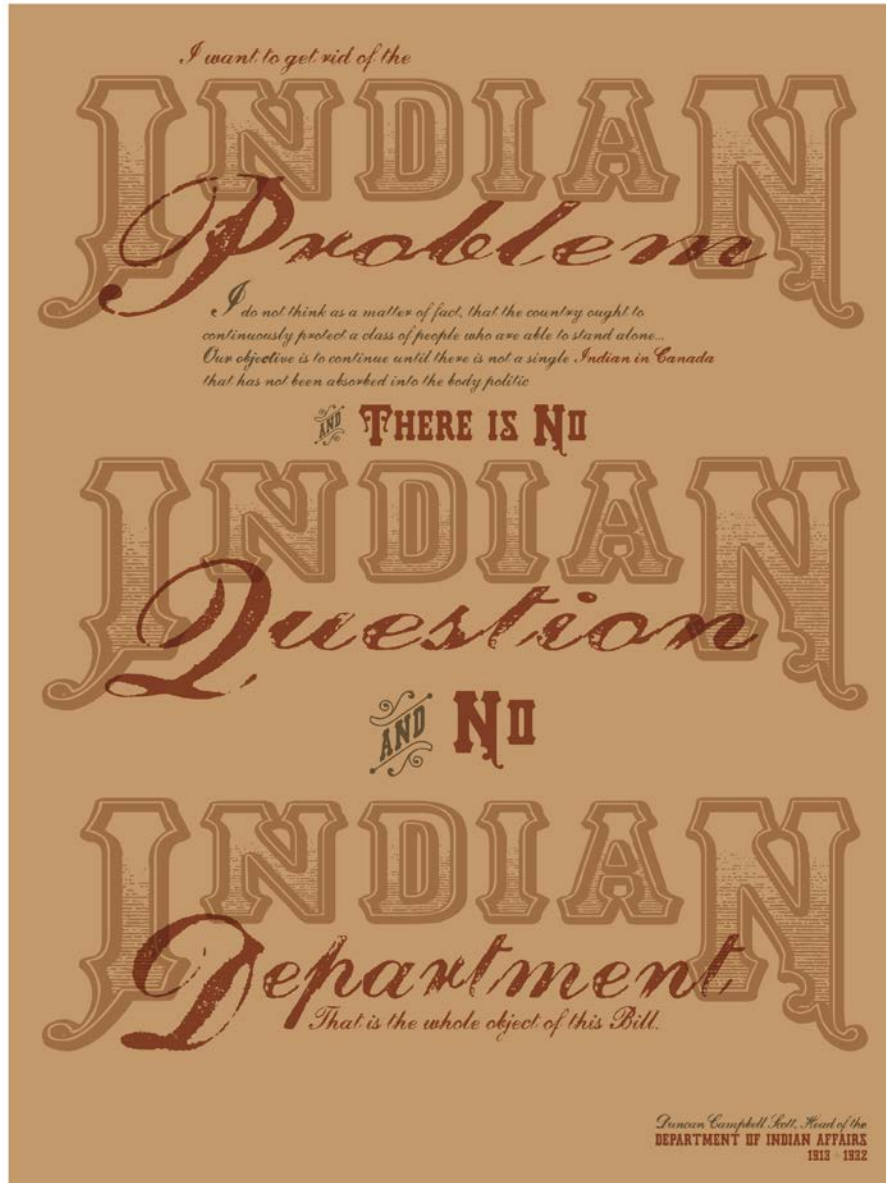


Figure 9. **The Happiest Future, Sonny Assu, 2012**

Agnes introduced George Littlechild's "The Oppressed and the Oppressor," (1998), making some reference to her impression that this work was about colonialism and the unnecessary take over of land. She reverted to a common stereotype in her discussion, however, in referring to the central figure, an Indigenous man in the foreground, as stoic. Unfortunately, no member of the group identified or commented on this, which could indicate either a lack of knowledge from group members, or a lack of confidence on the subject, both of which point back to the theme of angst. The final presenter, Joanne, introduced Morning Star, by Alex Janvier (1993), and described the research she did on this work. She described her interest in storytelling and in the non-

linear narrative formed by the piece. Little discussion ensued, but it is worth noting here that Lauren sat in on this group, and twice offered observations that remained on the surface level of aesthetics and free association, suggesting that the George Littlechild work seemed mistitled, and suggesting a psychedelic slant on Alex Janvier's work. Given the many discussions we'd had about how this process for students was linked to their work in Indigenous education and unpacking their assumptions, neither of her two offerings to the group seemed directed at helping them accomplish deeper understanding in this area. In fact, they seemed to entirely subvert the intent of the exercise, drawing participants further away from connecting Indigenous expression to Aboriginal education. More discussion on the resistance of FAs to this program and study, and some of the cultural and institutional reasons behind it, are addressed further in the next chapter.

4.7.3. Group C (Gerry, Dan, Connor, Kathy, Nancy)

Dan introduced the artist Roy Henry Vickers, showing several works and discussing the fact that his family annually takes a trip to Vicker's gallery, where his father usually buys a painting. There was some discussion of thematic animism within the work, but little else is discussed. Nancy introduced the work *Residential School Dirty Laundry* by Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun (2012). She discussed Yuxweluptun's 2016 exhibition at the Museum of Anthropology (UBC), called "Unceded Territories" and begins to unpack the political implications of the title. The work she chose to share is an installation piece featuring a crucifix shaped pile of white underwear in children's sizes. At each point of the cross, there is one pair of bloodied underwear exposed, and Nancy connected this to both the burden of an imposed religion and the burden of abuse. There is ample reflexivity in her response, as she identified as a Roman Catholic, and couldn't avoid feelings of implication, saying the work "made me angry with my religion, and made me ask what my religion is going to be, what I should do with this and what I should believe in." Here we find precisely the kind of ontological uncertainty that this thesis theorizes is available through dialogic interactions with art. Nancy's questioning, while uncomfortable, is also likely to be profoundly productive for her in practice as she continues to grapple both with these questions, and how to bring justice to this issue by creating curriculum for her students that shines a light on it in a holistic way.



Figure 10. *Residential School Dirty Laundry*, Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun (2012)

The next presenter, Connor, chose the video for the song *Uja*, by Tanya Tagaq. While he expressed appreciation for the technique of throat singing, and found the music initially “novel,” he eventually confessed that his “musical snob was coming out” and that the music was not to his taste, finding that “the whole album can be tiring to listen to.” Since his comments evoked little discussion, it is worth considering the impact of the assertion of musical snobbery, which seems at once to indicate some level of self-awareness, while at the same time failing to unpack the implications of this position. In relation to the use of the word *novel* in his presentation, there seems a further possibility that this snobbery is not simply a matter of taste, but also potentially linked to Eurocentric notions of art, ideas of high and low art that place non-European modes of production at the lower end of consideration. In the end, this moment represents a missed opportunity to detect and unpack assumptions.

Wilf introduced the “Prototype for a New Understanding” series by Brian Jungen (2009), in which Jungen repurposed Nike Air Jordan running shoes into Northwest Coast masks. The presenter made links to commercialization of NWC art, and notions of

appropriation, concluding: “I wonder what it means when someone like me walks into a store and buys something that has a lot of meaning to another culture.” Here there is evidence of growing ontological uncertainty, wrought by the consideration of art. He has not answered his own question, and neither did anyone in the group push him to do so, but the very fact that the question was formed indicates an opportunity for transformed thinking in an area he had not before considered. The final presenter in this group, Kathy, introduced a video about the *Red Dress Project* by Métis artist Jamie Black. This work was designed to draw attention to the number of missing and murdered Indigenous women that have been violently killed in Canada over the past several decades. What Kathy liked about this work was that “you have to inquire about it and ask questions to find out what it means. You have to investigate.” While the work drew little further conversation, this indication of Kathy’s understanding that art can be researched much like anything else, is also an indication of the importance of its use in Indigenous curriculum to stimulate.

4.7.4. Group D (Mabel, Jacqueline, Jackie, Frances, Sam)

This group yielded some of the most interesting dialogue out of all the sessions. Two members, Mabel and Sam, chose to introduce music by A Tribe Called Red, an Indigenous hip hop/electronic powwow group from Winnipeg. The first topic of discussion that arose was that both presenters were confused by the band’s request that fans not wear headdresses and war paint to concerts. This precipitated a lengthy discussion of what is and is not appropriate as far as fandom and cultural expression goes, and why some groups can retain clothing or language for their own use, but are offended when others take it up as well. There was discussion about the difference between being offered traditional clothing to wear (a Korean kimono in the example discussed for a friend’s family event) versus buying a costume. The group reached the consensus that these concerns are situational, and that asking permission is the best policy. There was further discussion about white people taking up hip hop (a music tradition born from the oppressed subjectivity of Black urban youth in the 1980s) as their art form, and discourses of appropriation linked to that. Each time a member of the group brought up an example of appropriation, another group member was able to shine light on why some situations were acceptable (being invited, or asking permission), while others were not (making assumptions, and disregarding requests to stop appropriating).

While the discussion before the participants even got to the video was extremely rich, the only real conclusion drawn was that appropriation should be considered situationally, which also seems to be an indication of the development of ontological uncertainty, and perhaps even forming new narratives as so many scenarios were fleshed out. The comparison of appropriation stories from various cultural contexts became a sort of litmus test to determine if it was really the culture of origin or the situation that was paramount in each case. It also made clear that while some group members had already given consideration to this matter, while others were still very much in the process of thinking things through. This cooperative learning environment stimulated discussion that had great transformative potential, but the element of resistance by which it was precipitated rises again in the next chapter.

Frances introduced the *Tree of Life* stained glass installation at Christchurch Cathedral in Vancouver by Susan Point. The presenter included the information that Point was born in Alert Bay on Vancouver Island, but raised at the Musqueam First Nation in Vancouver, and that as such, her work represented Coast Salish style. There was some further discussion of Point's work, but the conversation quickly moved to the next presenter, which was reasonable, given the amount of time the group spent on their initial discussion. Jacqueline introduced the work *Coke Salish* by Sonny Assu (2006), and more discussion about commercialization ensued, along with further discussion of appropriation. Perhaps the most interesting comment made during the discussion, however, was from Jacqueline, who stated that she sometimes walks up to a piece of art and thinks "this scares me because I don't know what any of this is' so I think it is really approachable in that way." While she may not have been experiencing ontological uncertainty in her dialogue with this work, there is a clear indication that she engaged in enough self-reflexivity to identify that she is occasionally intimidated by the prospect of understanding art. It could be read as the development of a disposition of the kind of humility that invites deeper inquiry; an openness to wanting to understand.

Jackie chose *Perception* by KC Adams (2013), which precipitated a discussion about language, several participants never having heard some of the slurs Adams uses in her work before. The naiveté expressed by this group in regard to racial slurs was quite impactful on me as a researcher. I wondered again as I listened to the recording whether this was truly a lack of knowledge, or whether it was born of a certain sense of decorum, a sense that good people don't use these words, so one must not admit to

knowing them. The former supposition can be explained, perhaps, by lack of exposure to Indigenous peoples, which is understandable, given the accounts of Indigenous education in Canada offered in the review of literature. The latter, however, potentially entails a more insidious manifestation of colonial whitewashing through which the status quo is maintained by avoiding difficult conversations, such as those involving racialization, entirely. While it is impossible to definitively point to the specific origin of their surprise and evident lack of prior exposure, certainly, given the parallels this conversation offers to discussions of Canadian identity and white normativity offered elsewhere in this thesis, it does seem fair to suggest that this conversation indicated the presence of unexamined assumptions within the group.

4.8. Final Reflections and the Power of Art

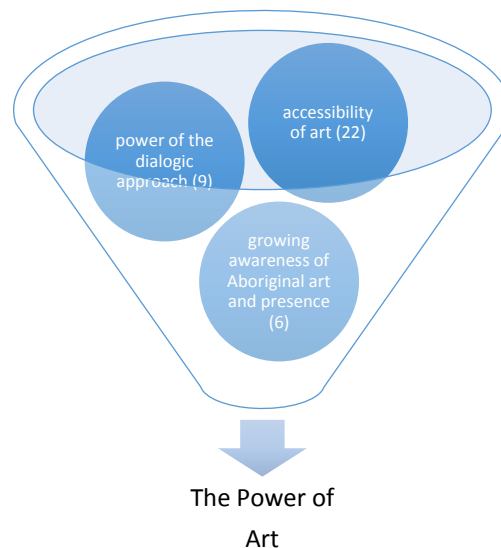


Figure 11. Units of meaning informing the theme of Art. In relation to the transformative education framework, this theme relates to the proposed intermediate stage, that of recreating narratives.

Participants made numerous assertions about the power of art to stimulate dialogue in their final reflections, and of their enjoyment of the process. By showing examples of successful contemporary Indigenous people engaging in radical acts of self-expression through art, participants had the opportunity to examine and confront some

of the omissions from their own learning, and the changes in their thinking were palpable. From a pedagogical standpoint, this theme is connected to the suggestion of an intermediate stage in Curry-Stevens' (2007) transformative education framework. In this stage, participants were able to discern new threads in the Canadian narrative, delivered by Indigenous peoples.

"I particularly enjoyed learning through the analysis of different art pieces in our last session. I really appreciated our group discussions around our chosen art and everyone had very interesting perspectives and thoughts to contribute. I could tell from our conversations how much we have learned and taken away from our education in these sessions." (Agnes, R5)

"...researching an aboriginal artist really resonated with me because I discovered an artist who's work I really enjoyed. This activity was most beneficial to my learning during the group sharing portion. I found myself gaining an interest in each artist as my peers were sharing their findings...Learning about ABED through art is a fascinating and an engaging way to learn about Aboriginal history..." (James, R5)

"By taking a troubled and devastating history and expressing the emotions of that in art, power is returning to those people – power to tell their story, express their feelings, and create something that will impact others as well as themselves." (Paulette, R5)

It was evident from participants' reactions that the art selected for this study, at least for the most part, had the impact it was intended to. They were able to discern and connect with new conceptions of Canada across a variety of discourses, including environmental stewardship and social justice initiatives, through the mechanism of artistic self-representation. Moreover, for many this activity presented a pleasant opportunity for both discovery and dialogue as they worked together to enhance and support one another's learning and understanding.

For Wilf, the development of a relationship to art was particularly striking as it was expressed in his reflections. In the first sentence of his first reflection Wilf stated, "one of the things I know about myself is that I have a hard time connecting to visual art" (Wilf, R1). As a musician, he went on to say, he is easily able to discern and admire technique, but felt quite out of his element as far as visual art was concerned. Even so, he submitted a comparatively lengthy reflection that showed a sincere effort to describe his reactions to and reflections on the artists we looked at in the first session (Yuxweluptun and Norris). In discussing his decision to keep his own counsel during our debriefing of the images, in his reflection, Wilf offers "I had a difficult time with

understanding the message, and part of me had some thoughts that I was afraid to bring up in class” (Wilf, R1). That is, he offers evidence that he was both having and processing reactions, but clearly required more time with his own thoughts before he was confident to share his unpacking of them. After the second session, during which I showed Belmore’s *Vigil*, Wilf reflected that he “found the performance art powerful and moving (but) again due to my lack of experience with performance art, I relied on my table group to explain the imagery, and symbolism...” (Wilf, R2). While still reticent to trust his own judgment, Wilf displayed an openness to hearing the thoughts of others. He moved quickly through the process of transformative education enacted in this study from fear to curiosity to confidence.

During our third session, I showed an episode of 8th Fire (CBC, 2012), arguably less aesthetically challenging than previous selections, but no less meaty for it. Wilf began his reflection on this session stating “I am so thankful for all the times we get together and are able to talk candidly in a safe space about our knowledge, or ignorance about aboriginal history and current events” (Wilf, R3). He went on to discuss his initial discomfort about discussing these issues in class, and his uncertainty over appropriate language, acknowledging the realization that he “came into the program with some misinformation” (Wilf, R3). In his final reflection, as quoted in the previous section, “For me to say that I was unaware and ignorant of Canadian Aboriginal history would be an understatement...I remember thinking to myself: If this is so important, why have I not heard about this before?” (Wilf, R5). It seems clear, following the thread in his reflections, that this participant grew considerably in both his knowledge and understanding of Indigenous peoples, and in his ability to engage dialogically with visual art.

Before moving on, it seems worthy to note that there are some potential problems in Wilf’s framing of the environment created by my work with this module. As mentioned in the description of study participants, nearly all of them were white Settlers, and no one in the group, save the researcher, identified as Indigenous. So we were working in a pretty rarefied environment, rendering participants’ experience virtually risk-free in a way that will likely not be the case in any working environments they encounter in schools. Having said that, however, these were real world circumstances reflecting the actual make-up of the teacher education program at SFU, and present precisely the reason that the approach of pedagogy for the privileged was employed. Additionally, as

part of my practice is rooted in anti-racist pedagogy and strategies, I was conscious of my responsibility to open and sustain dialogues around difference that are often otherwise neglected amongst privileged groups. So while on the one hand, I am pleased that he and other participants felt a sense of ease in our dialogues, it seems worth making clear that this was not because we were avoiding difficult knowledge, but because we were wading into it together in a considered way.

4.8.1. The Power of Phenomenological Art Inquiry

In relation to the transformative education framework employed in this study, Wilf's transformation follows precisely the trajectory theorized in Curry-Stevens' (2007) work. But exposure to art alone was not the key to this transformation. Rather, I suggest, it is the particular approach to engaging with art, rooted as it is in phenomenology, that was instigative in this process. Asking students to draw on prior connections, to account for their responses to the work, whether attractive or repellent, and to imagine new directions for learning based on their responses engaged them more rapidly into a dialogic space than unmediated *looking* could. Instead, of merely looking, I asked participants to really see. Although many alluded to the utility of this method of inquiry peripherally in their final reflections, no one articulated it more clearly than Chrissy:

"The five questions...provided for us to use as a starting point for our engagement with phenomenological dialogue with the pieces we chose are also a very simple tool we can use in the classroom to stimulate thinking about engagement with art...I found these questions to be a good starting point from which to begin my understanding of my feelings...It helped me formalize my understanding of my natural reactions and allowed me a deeper engagement with the material."
(Chrissy, R5)

It is clear that this participant has grasped the import of this activity as a starting point for re-learning, fulfilling the mandate of the proposed intermediate stage of this enhanced model of transformative education for privileged learners. This is the stage of reforming of earlier frames of reference with regards to Indigenous peoples in order to build the confidence necessary to lead to the final stage, that of action. Further on in her final reflection Chrissy describes her action plan for rethinking how she will include indigenous content in her lessons. She expresses a consciousness that she wants to "authentically and genuinely include Aboriginal pedagogies and perspectives without

simply having segregated lessons which I slotted in just to say I included something” (Chrissy, R5). Her articulation of this plan is also a marker of the success of this approach, as here she presents her disposition towards the third and final stage in the framework, and its related theme in this research, that of action.

4.9. Research-Generated Meta-Themes

While each of the previous sections has relied on CDA as an analytic method, applying MSSDA to the entire body of data gathered throughout the course of this study reveals some wider trends that I have termed meta-themes. The first, transformation, is drawn from the data itself, supported in particular by the results gathered from the post-pre survey given to students at the end of our final session. The second meta-theme, that of resistance, is drawn more from the circumstances under which the study took place, and from the reflections and in-session conduct of two particular participants, and which will be discussed in the following chapter.

4.9.1. Transformation

Anne Curry-Stevens (2007), following the work of both Freire (1970) and Mezirow (2007), suggests that in order for transformed thinking, in this case a decolonizing of education, to take place, our narrative foundations must be shaken in order for new narratives to find ground. Students, through their engagements with art, both as we practiced together during our first few sessions, and as they embarked on their own learning, began to detect and fill gaps in their knowledge in order to better understand the art they'd selected. They also began to understand those gaps as a product of Eurocentric narratives. Further, because they were working as a community of learners, they took courage from one another and felt both acceptance and empowerment as they learned together.

My goal for this research is to support pre-service teachers in creating personal connections to Indigenous people, history, cultures, and ideas, so that they can fulfil the provincial mandate to include such content in their practices as classroom teachers. Not only do the findings from the study provide ample evidence that the necessity for such learning remains a pressing concern within education, they also indicate that transformation through artistic inquiry holds promise for affecting real change. Rather

than reproducing the colonial narratives many were introduced to in schools, participants examined their prior learning to allow for ever-deepening understanding through the ebb and flow of learning in a pattern of exposure, consideration, new exposure, and reconsideration. During the sessions, we discussed how this reiterative methodology was directly related to both the FPPoL (“Learning requires time and patience”), and to the PDP Program Goals around developing both a practice of lifelong learning, and the consideration of best pedagogical practices. Often, as Wagamese (2011) reminds us, it is through that consideration and reconsideration of stories and ideas that content has a chance to really find anchor.

In support of the results indicated by the analysis of the post-pre measure, I would like to offer two more pieces of evidence drawn from the first and final reflections of Connor, and the final reflection of Martha. In his first reflection, Connor offered, “the two pieces of art we viewed were more modern than I would have predicted” (Connor, R1). In effect this is a beautifully naïve elucidation of assumptions about Indigenous peoples and art that the participant was clearly unaware he carried. By the final session, the transformation in his thinking is abundantly evident as he states “what has lifted me from a sense of hopelessness about these times has been our introduction to a number of First Nations artists...(who are) proudly and strongly reinventing and reimagining traditional First Nations art forms in ways that resonant (sic) across cultures” (Connor, R5). In her final reflection, Martha offered, “we began the PDP journey with insecurities and fears revolving around teaching Aboriginal education in our future classrooms. Although we may still have fears, the important aspect is that we are not afraid to admit them, and we are not afraid to ask questions and seek help” (Martha, R5). This avowal of personal empowerment in the face of a previously fearsome task presents a further indication that the enhanced framework of pedagogy for the privileged was, indeed, effective in promoting transformative changes in the thinking of participants. While this impact overwhelmingly evident in participant reflections and in the post-pre measure results, the overall study was not without its challenges.

Chapter 5.

Resistance

5.1. Resistance

As noted earlier in this thesis, most educational researchers and writers who engage in Indigenous and anti-racist education are no strangers to the many forms of resistance that can be enacted in classrooms and institutions (Battiste, 1999, 2013; Dion, 2009; Schick & St. Denis, 2003, 2005; St. Denis, 2011). In fact, Schick and St. Denis (2003) point to three common sources of resistance amongst pre-service teachers in their work in antiracist and Aboriginal education in Saskatchewan. First, in cases where courses in antiracist and/or Indigenous education are mandatory, there is the perception of a lack of freedom in course selection, coupled with the notion that being required to take such a course assumes that students are somehow morally lacking. This looms as a possible explanation for some of the resistance I experienced during the delivery of this program from both participants, and to some degree, from FAs. The British Columbia Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB, P5.C.03.1), requires that students complete the equivalent of three credits in Indigenous education as part of their teacher education, so that participants are exposed to Aboriginal education to some degree. But under normal circumstances this portion of their learning would have been conducted by FAs, so it is possible that both my presence and the program itself were seen or felt as an imposition by both STs and FAs, offering one rationale for the source of their resistance. Second, Schick and St. Denis suggest some STs are resistant because they simply don't think they will be in the position of teaching Aboriginal students, and so see such course content as extraneous and even disruptive to what they believe the real work of teaching to be. And third, Schick and St. Denis suggest, "students are concerned that they will be caught out by the shadow of their own racism" (p. 57). Certainly by the end of the program, many students were quite up front in admitting that part of what they learned during the program was just how little they knew to begin with, which suggests, perhaps, the uncomfortable discovery of tacitly held racisms and exclusive colonial perspectives. In this light, intuition, combined with thematic analysis, tells me that this may indeed be a significant factor in the responses and silences described in the sections below.

It is in this section that I rely most heavily on the methodology of MSSDA as I unfold key narratives from several divergent bodies of data. In the first discussion, I examine the reflections of Shelley as part of a thick description of some of the more troubling aspects of her engagement with the study. In the second discussion, I examine the elements of selection, framing, and attention offered by Kiley through written reflections, email communications, and general comportment during the study. In this case, I include not only her written responses, but also evidence drawn from the recording and transcriptions of sessions. These are coded by session number, so, by way of example the recording for session one appears as S1VR, while the transcript of the recording is coded S1T. In the third discussion, I address some of the institutional challenges that arose over the course of the study, exploring the potential of both personal and educational factors in creating the often limiting conditions under which the study took place.

5.2. Shelley

Shelley drew no particular attention to herself by her comportment in any of the sessions. However, as I began to review the reflections submitted after the first session, I was initially confused by what I read in her contribution. The reflection contained nothing whatsoever of the time we'd spent together, but rather discussed her impressions of a recent Indigenous education session presented to the whole of PDP by the Director of SFU's Office for Indigenous Education, William Lindsay (Cree). This was followed by a disclosure that she had several family members of Indigenous ancestry, including a grandfather and an uncle. Her reflection culminated in a discussion of some of the initiatives she'd undertaken to educate herself about Indigenous peoples, ending in an affirmation to be conscious of the language she'd use around Indigenous education in her teaching practice. While it was not connected to the content we'd covered together, it did seem to indicate a pre-disposition and openness to the tropes of Indigenous education, so I was not overly concerned. I postulated that she had perhaps misunderstood the nature of the assignment, or that she was flooded with a rush of assignments and just wanted to submit something that was at least related.

Shelley's second reflection, therefore, was even more of a surprise. I offer, below, a rather extensive quote, that expresses her reaction to viewing *Vigil*, by Rebecca Belmore:

"I did not enjoy today's class. I understood what was going on and what the artist, Rebecca Belmore, was trying to portray. However, I found it offensive. I have indigenous people in my family. I have drug addicts on my family, and alcoholics. Why is it necessary to portray them in a way that is always so negative?"

Something I am very curious about is why no one ever seems to portray Indigenous people as strong people? I feel as though they have never been looked at as a strong culture. But at the same time, have they tried to speak out, or done an art piece that represented the strengths that they as a culture hold? I understand that the 'whiteman' put them through horrible, unthinkable traumas, and the correction/apology for it is absolutely pathetic and can never make up for what was done to them as a culture, but I sometimes wonder, why not try to show how strong of a culture they are and the amazing things they are capable of doing and teaching us" (Shelley, R2).

The relative vitriol of this reflection really gave me pause when I first read it. While I appreciated the honesty and passion of the response, I was also a bit confused by it. In showing Belmore's work, as suggested earlier, my feeling was that I was in fact offering an example of a self-employed and highly successful Indigenous woman who was making art about the impact of systemic racism. Based on the ensuing discussion after the video was shown during session two, most participants seemed to accept that premise. So how was it that a person who claimed strong indigenous connections through family relations was misconstruing the meta-message in the inclusion of this work? I postulated again, considering the possibility of extenuating circumstances that may have coloured this participant's reaction to the session. Perhaps she had been triggered in some way by the content in the video, and subsequently shut down her engagement as a measure of self-protection. Perhaps she was simply irked by performance art as a medium (which anecdotal evidence indicates is not entirely unlikely). Whatever the case, her reflection stuck out, and my interest was piqued.

I felt that, given Shelley's disclosure regarding the presence of Indigenous family members in her life, I was not looking at someone who was clinging to perfect stranger positioning (Dion, 2008). Yet I sensed traces of the sort of defensive anger that Berlak (2004) described encountering in her work. It is possible that some of Shelley's difficulty with Belmore's work, rooted as it is in the colonial discourse of the worthlessness of Indigenous women (the very discourse that the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women is trying to address and correct), has to do with one of three ideological assumptions carried by pre-service teachers that Schick and St. Denis

articulate in their earlier referred to 2003 article. In particular, I think it is worth considering the assumption that Canada is fundamentally a meritocracy, so that if one works hard enough, and has the talent and discipline to persevere, any goal can be realized (p. 63). While my intention was to offer participants exposure to the work of an internationally celebrated artist, Shelley focussed instead on the hopelessness, grief, and despair left in the wake of women who have gone missing from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, which seems to have coloured her reaction to this work, and subsequently, her willingness to participate meaningfully in the program. In considering DiAngelo's (2011) list of common reactions on the part of white people to encountering programs that directly address racism and privilege, which includes "anger, withdrawal, emotional incapacitation, guilt, argumentation, and cognitive dissonance," (p. 55), it seems clear that several of these reactions are present in the content of Shelley's written session reflections.

When I received this participant's final reflection, my worst fears were realized. Amongst my erring-on-the-side-of-angels postulations lurked some darker intuitive considerations, in addition to the sites of resistance, assumptions, and reactions noted by other scholars outlined above. Maybe she just didn't buy into the program all, for whatever reason. Maybe it was a personality conflict of the type that emerges in some context or other for almost every human on the planet at some point. Maybe it was incurable ambivalence. I just wasn't sure. When I read her words, however, a more nuanced picture began to take shape. The particulars of capitalization and spelling in this, as in other quotes throughout this work, are preserved from the author's original text.

"Shannon's classes overall were fine. Nothing really stood out for me other than the game we did that showed a visual representation of what happened to the indigenous people once the Europeans came" (Shelley, R5).

"I learned as well that not all Indigenous people have the same feelings about their culture being shared. Some are very angry and feel that we shouldn't ask questions and shouldn't try to repeat some of their cultural art (ex. dream catchers) and then there are others who are grateful that teachers would take the time to offer a lesson in their class. From that explicit example I have learned to only ask specific people to come in and teach a class –one's who I believe would be honoured by the request and not feel disrespected" (Shelley, R5).

Admittedly, this one really hit me viscerally. Clearly, I had inadvertently alienated this student from the very first, and despite my efforts to mitigate any misunderstandings that developed during sessions, I had been unable to bring her around. In fact, hoping to address some of her concerns, during session three, the one following the introduction of *Vigil*, I mentioned that at least one participant had found the content offensive and expressed a wish for positive representations of Indigenous people, pointing out that that was precisely what I hoped I was doing by drawing their attention to the work of nationally and internationally celebrated Indigenous Canadian artists.

The first excerpt from Shelley's final reflection, however, indicates the presence of some elements that are more difficult to assess. The reference to the Kairos Blanket activity as a game is potentially an example of hasty writing, submitted without consideration or editing. But even the initial selection of the word *game* implies some things about the particular framework through which this activity was viewed (Kress, 2011; Mezirow, 2003). The first definition of game in the *Oxford Online Dictionary* is "an activity that one engages in for amusement or fun," which casts a significantly different light on the activity that what was intended. Since other participants described the activity as "heavy" (Martha, R4), "moving" (Leah, R4), "sad" (Chrissy, R4), "impactful" (Terry, R4), "powerful" (Jacqueline, R5; Frances, R4), and "effective" (Michelle, R4), it was difficult to make sense of the potentially more dismissive response from Shelley. Resistance began to emerge in my mind as the root cause of this participant's evident disengagement. But what was the real source of the resistance? In addition, despite asserting that this class was the only one that stood out to her, she did not submit a reflection for that session, so it is impossible to say why it stood out to her, or what she was able to take away from it. I considered again the work of Berlak (2004), DiAngelo (2011), and Schick and St. Denis (2003) as described above, but, realistically, it is impossible to be certain of the origin (or origins) of her resistance, at least in this respect.

In reading the final paragraph of her reflection, however, it became clear that at least part of the problem was that Shelley was still carrying her reaction to the story of the dream catcher told in the first session, and which seems to have negatively impacted her level of participation. Despite all of my efforts to mitigate the reverberations of the story for the entire study group, it was clear that not everyone was reached by those efforts. And while this may have provided a foil for resistance, a few other notable turns of phrase in that final paragraph suggest there are still more forces at play in this

participant's thinking. For example, the phrase "there are others [Indigenous people] who are grateful that teachers would take the time to offer a lesson in their class," sets up conditions for maintaining the power struggle between Indigenous peoples and Settlers as to who gets to determine what is included in Indigenous curriculum. In an educational climate that finds teachers under a legal obligation to include Indigenous curriculum in their lessons in culturally relevant and sensitive ways, an approach that considers that Indigenous peoples ought to be grateful for such opportunities becomes a little hard to swallow. The motif of Settlers making room for Indigenous people out of a sense of obligation while still maintaining their own authority rings strong in this sentence, evoking the kind of cognitive imperialism Battiste warns against (1999).

There is another level of concern regarding this assertion by Shelley, in that the goal of the program was to assist STs in creating personal connections to Indigenous peoples' history and culture, thereby empowering them to undertake the research and background work necessary to deliver culturally relevant and sensitive lessons in pedagogically sound ways. In her final reflection, Shelley spoke not at all about what she actually intended to do to build her practice in Aboriginal education, but rather about how careful she would be in inviting Indigenous people into her classroom, presumably to do this work for her. While it is impossible to be sure what her intentions in inviting an Indigenous person into her class might be, or how she might contextualize such a visit with supporting curriculum, it is certain that this expression of reticence is linked to her reaction to my dream catcher story. In considering this in light of St. Denis's (2011) discussion of the expectations of non-Indigenous teachers about their Indigenous colleagues (the sentiment of which is 'pass the bannock and can the politics'), I am left with the sense that this participant did not move forward through foundation shaking, to narrative rebuilding, to taking action, as the framework of the program was designed (Curry-Steven, 2007). Rather, she remained stuck in a pre-transformative state, characterized by anger, withdrawal, and perhaps emotional incapacitation, as discussed by DiAngelo (2011). Perhaps, had we the time to build a solid relationship, to build trust, and to really unpack our time together, this young person could have been moved to see things differently. As it was, however, I cannot be sure that, despite my best efforts, the program had any positive effect on this participant.

5.3. Kiley

Kiley presents a slightly different case from that of Shelley. From the first session, her comportment often drew attention, not only from myself, but from members of her cohort as well. By way of example, in our first session, she asked why “it was such a no-no about claiming to be Métis, whereas if we went around the room, I could have said I was Scottish and no one would have been offended by that?” (Kiley, S1T). She went on to ask me if I thought this was because First Nations and Métis were victims. I was quite taken aback by her question, and realized the need to answer it sensitively and openly, without betraying my own reaction. In my reply, I pointed out that membership in the Métis nation is sometimes contentious because the term has been misused to describe anyone of partially Indigenous descent. This is problematic when it comes to the families who were forced out of their land entitlements in the Red River Valley following the Red River Rebellion and the formation of Manitoba in 1870. Her question was provoked by some discussion in the class of the identity politics arguments that arose in 2016 over the Indigenous identity of author Joseph Boyden. I pointed out that one of the concerns raised by other Indigenous authors and activists is that Boyden became the face of Indigenous issues in Canada, the Go-To guy for interviews and sound bytes, which meant that other Indigenous voices, many with stronger ties to their identities and communities, found less air space. So when questions about his identity arose, it was more than a matter of being pretentious; it was really a matter of the dominance in media of a particular person whose claims to Indigenous identity appeared tenuous to many, and more deeply, a question of who has the right to speak for Indigenous peoples.

When I reviewed her first reflection, I was surprised to read that this participant was a Canadian history major who considered herself “well educated on the Indigenous people of Canada and the terrible struggles they’ve faced” (Kiley, R1). In my mind, her question regarding the potential victimhood of Indigenous peoples told rather a different story about the criticality of the education she’d received. My approach to this study was predicated on the understanding that all of the participants in the group, reflecting a microcosmic glimpse of society as a whole, were beginning their journey into Indigenous education from different and often divergent starting points. That meant not only trying to balance capitalizing on prior knowledge from those students who were more learned,

but also scaffolding concepts for learners closer to the beginning of building understanding. In this light, I needed to stay open to listening to what was beneath such sentiments such as those expressed by this participant, so that I could determine how best to help. It was clear to me that in offering me evidence of her prior knowledge, this participant was telling me that she really didn't need to, or care to, explore the history of Indigenous and Settler relations, and indeed seemed somewhat outraged that this was the direction our sessions were taking. In considering the implications of this with regard to the theme of resistance, I return to Schick and St. Denis (2003) and their articulation of the sources of student teacher resistance. In this case, Kiley's attitude could perhaps be linked to the feeling that her participation in this program assumed a "moral lack" (p.57) on her part, which thereby evoked a reaction of resistance. It could also be, given some of the descriptions of incidents to come, that she was also afraid to "be caught out in the shadow of [her] own racism" (p. 57), and so did not wish to be pushed further along this path. Whatever the case, I was alert to her feelings and my own, and interested in where this journey would take us.

Although Kiley did not submit reflections for either session two or three, some other relevant moments emerged, including her comportment during those sessions. In both cases, her body language showed significant signs of disengagement (S3VR), such as preoccupation with her hair, constantly examining the ends of the long strands of it she'd clasped in her fingers, which lasted throughout the entirety of session three. During the session four sharing circle after the KAIROS blanket activity, I offered a small box of tissue as a talking object, in part because I'd forgotten to bring my eagle feather, and also in case participants, some of whom were teary during the activity, required a tissue as they spoke. When the box was passed to Kiley, she held the tissue gingerly at the top by two fingers in a gesture that communicated disgust (S4VR). I noticed this during the course of the session, but of course let the moment pass. When I viewed the moment again (several times) in the session recording, I was really struck by the impact it had on me, and about the intensity of the gesture relative to the comportment of other participants in the group. Here, I am again reminded of DiAngelo's (2011) work, and of her assertion that anger and disengagement are common reactions to the challenge of facing difficult conversations around race and difference. Given that this participant did not submit reflections for these sessions, it is difficult to corroborate my thinking here, and certainly other interpretations of these events and moments are possible, but

experience and intuition tell me that I am not far off base in my analysis. Another way of framing this incident, for example, might be drawn from the work of Kakali Bhattacharya (2015), who characterizes such moments of tension in intercultural interactions as micro-aggressions, which, she points out “are often conveyed through actions and behaviours that [are]...dismissive and exclusionary” (p. 315). I think this phrase is particularly instructive in considering the remaining discussion of resistance in this chapter, as it not only characterizes the tone of some of the key incidents discussed, but also anticipates their impact.

By this point, I had already had cause to speak to the module FAs about this participant over some concerns about the email communication I’d received from her (I take up the response of the FAs to these concerns in a later section). After our second session, I received an email, which, while very sweet and polite in tone, was very pointed in its intent.

“I just wanted to e-mail you with a small concern of mine, as I think we both want our time together to be utilized as much as possible. I read your e-mail that Wendy passed on, and I was a little ‘put off’ (I don’t think there is a proper word for what I’m saying, not offended but perhaps concerned) with one part of it: ‘You are at the beginning of the process of working through your thoughts and feelings about Indigenous history and education, so I am not looking for expertise.’ Everyone has been enjoying your sessions with us but I think a good few in our class feel like we are learning things we’ve long known or held opinions on. A lot of us are not at the beginning process of working through our thoughts and feelings about Indigenous history...”(Kiley, EM1).

It was clear from the remainder of the email that Kiley was trying to say she held no ill will towards me. She said she was enjoying the sessions, and even referred to me as lovely, which was so kind. None the less, it was evident that something was at work here that was preventing this participant from really *hearing* what was happening in our sessions. Given the calibre of some of the other questions asked during the first session, including her own, I was committed to my approach of continuing to provide at least a small element of didactic information in each session for the benefit of those who were less sure of their levels of knowledge. In the end, however, the email did not leave me with a good feeling.

I took several days to form a reply, wanting to be sure that my response was appropriate and that the content of the message be more helpful than harmful. I'd felt somewhat provoked by her tone and some of the language she'd used, and felt I needed to be very considerate in my reply, while not backing away from my perception that there was clearly some teaching required here. In particular, I wanted to address the final line of her email:

"I think it is safe to assume at this point that we all have a solid sense of the horrors faced by our Indigenous Canadians, and though we remain remorseful, we are more concerned with how we can celebrate them instead of just feeling the need to redeem what our ancestors have done. We want to explore and understand the beauty of the race we are intended to teach" (Kiley, EM1).

My response was geared towards the message I had been trying to deliver through my work with the study group. Namely, that Aboriginal education is less about what specific activities and resources one might use in a classroom, and more about how it is framed and delivered to students. The following is a short excerpt from my reply:

"So I might ask you, if you have a 'solid sense of the horrors faced by our Indigenous Canadians' then how are you planning to communicate that understanding to your students so that they don't leave high school without any sense of what has happened to create the Canada we know today? Is it useful to be remorseful over history? What are you really expressing here, and what can you do, instead, to make things better by shining a light onto that darkness for your students? For years teachers have tried to teach about Indigenous material culture without addressing history, focusing, as you suggest, on the beauty, but eliminating the context. My work, especially by bringing in the art of contemporary Indigenous people, is to challenge you to seek to do things in a new way, in a good way" (REM1).

Admittedly, I felt really challenged and pushed by this exchange, but I was also confident that my approach was, in fact, meeting the needs of the majority of the students in the group. The assertion that it was her desire to "celebrate this race that we are intended to teach" was particularly troublesome to me, as was her use of the possessive 'our' in discussing Indigenous peoples, given her earlier assertions about her general knowledge about Indigenous histories. I recognized that perhaps we were talking about two entirely different things. Because Kiley felt very strongly about her

level of knowledge regarding Indigenous peoples, she felt I was challenging her in that regard and adopted a position of defensiveness (Berlak, 2004; Schick & St. Denis, 2003). Rather than being open to the discourse of anti-racism I was introducing to the class through asking them to examine their assumptions, she remained resistant to the process, as evidenced by her use of the words *race* and *our* with regards to Indigenous peoples, which terms invite connotations of both divisiveness and possession, both tropes of the colonial narrative. In the course of this study, this exchange has perhaps shed the most light on how deep the roots of colonial thinking can go, and on how difficult is the task of tracking and loosening them. I did receive a reply to this message, which was once again very sweet and polite in tone, leaving me with some hope that I had perhaps turned the tide in this relationship, and in her thinking, so that I could truly affect the type of transformation I was aiming for with this program. It was, however, after this email exchange that the moment with the tissue box occurred, and my hopes were dashed again.

During our final session, when participants were sharing their dialogues with art in small groups, Kiley began with the admission that rather than choose an artist from the list I had provided, she'd happened to be at a bar recently, noticed an Indigenous mask on the wall, and settled on the artist as the one she would focus on (to the credit of the business owners, that information was available to customers, which is often not the case with restaurant art, particularly Indigenous art). In the course of discussing her dialogue with the art, Kiley indicated that she had turned up information about the way crests are viewed amongst Northwest Coast First Nations, in that they are considered as the rightful properties of the families to whom they belong (Townsend-Gault, 2013), and are often passed along through matrilineal lines. In her concluding comments, however, Kiley stated that she wished she hadn't learned any of that, because it interfered with her ability to enjoy the aesthetics of the work (Kiley, S5AR). I was quite astonished as I listened to this final portion of her presentation via audio recording. How could this well-educated person have struck upon exactly the right information that could reveal just how different Indigenous and Settler understandings of art, culture, and property are, and then simply dismiss it out of hand, preferring to simply *look over seeing?* More pressingly, and getting to the basic concerns of the research project at its core, what might this mean for the students she would soon teach?

Perhaps because of our previous interactions, I perceived an affront in the method this participant chose in selecting an art piece for her phenomenological art inquiry. A tone of nonchalance was evident in her recounting of the process (sitting at a bar and noticing some art), which contrasted sharply with the earnest efforts expressed by her classmates to look at each artist on the list I provided. And while she found some valuable information in her research, she dismissed it out of hand as interfering with her aesthetic enjoyment of the work. In considering what might inform these reactions, and in answer to the questions posed above, I return again to both Berlak (2004) and DiAngelo (2011). Recall that Berlak described a moment in which one of her students realised for the first time that the thoughts and ideas of non-white others were as valid and rooted in experience as his own, and that this was the beginning of his coming to grips with his own positionality and its implications for those others. In my estimation, Kiley remained entrenched in a pre-transformative position throughout this study, never actually achieving the point of recognizing why discussions around normativity and difference are crucial to both antiracist and Aboriginal education. In considering why this might be, DiAngelo's work is useful again, especially in light of her discussion of anger and withdrawal as common reactions in such situations. Any transformation in Kiley's thinking was inhibited by her initial response of resistance, perhaps sparked by her assumption that participation in this program served to mitigate a presumed moral lack, culminating in both withdrawal as evidenced by her demeanour during sessions three and four, and in cognitive dissonance, as evidenced by her rejection of pertinent findings in her inquiry process.

Later in the session, it was Kiley who was surprised by the word "whore" as it appeared in one the portraits in KC Adams' *Perception* series (2013), stating that she thought white girls heard this word more often than Indigenous girls. Here, despite the fact that the word was drawn from the portrait subject's own experience, Kiley exhibited an inability to see past her own privilege and into the reality of another, again indicating entrenchment in a pre-transformative thinking state. Her denial of the subject in the portrait's experience seems to indicate a dearth of empathy, especially given the very dismissive tone in which it was delivered, most likely rooted deeply in the intergenerational transmission of colonial attitudes regarding Indigenous peoples. As well, despite Kiley's avowal through the earlier mentioned email that she was well versed in Indigenous history, I am reminded of Dion's (2008) description of perfect stranger

positioning, characterised by not only what one thinks they know, but also by what one does not know, and by what one refuses to know. Her refusal to accept the testimony of the portrait subject seems a clear indication of a fundamental refusal to know and accept the reality of another; to refuse to see, as Berlak's (2004) student ultimately did, the legitimacy of another's perspective.

As an experienced teacher, with more than a decade of teaching high school under my belt, I understand deeply the FPPoL principle that "learning takes time." More than a few times, I have had students come to me months or years after a lesson or incident they were unsure of to express the learning that had ensued for them since. We can't get everything at once. That's part of the human condition, so I have to conclude this episode with the evaluation that it is inconclusive. What really stood behind Kiley's resistance may never be known to this researcher, but the inclusion and consideration of it is necessary in order to paint a picture of just a few of the ways in which resistance can manifest itself. I consider this neither a success nor a failure in the overall study, but more a reminder of why I have chosen to do this work, and why I need to keep getting better at it.

5.4. Behind the Scenes

The day following session four, I received an email from the director of PDP, Dr. Paul Neufeld, requesting a meeting between myself, Dr. O'Neill, and Dr. Michael Ling, the Faculty Member with FPA. The feeling this evoked in me was not dissimilar to the way a child feels when called to the Principal's office. Despite having met with both FAs and the FM the week before to address participant questions, FAs had reported to the Director that there were still concerns lingering amongst STs and FAs about the purpose of the project, the nature of the research, and data collection methods, specifically the video recordings of each session. Upon receiving this invitation to meet, I was deeply concerned that my study, which had already been postponed by a year due to some structural reorganization of PDP modules, was going to be cut short, jeopardizing the usefulness of the work I had already done. Worse, I was concerned that termination of the study would send the message to participants that what I was doing was not important enough to continue, or that Aboriginal education itself was a suspect discourse, reinforcing the colonial hegemony long purveyed by institutions of formal education. Despite feeling confident about my knowledge base and pedagogical

approaches, and that the program was showing considerable promise evidenced in the reflections of participants, giving me a solid leg to stand on, I was still shaken by considering the potential outcome of this encounter.

I felt so frustrated at that point. I genuinely felt that I had done my best in the first session to make clear to participants the scope and purpose of the study, the data collection methods, and the expectation of contributing artefacts to the study in the form of written reflections. In the first moments of our first session I provided STs with the consent letter and form that had been approved by the Ethics Committee, and I showed them a slide that contained information about the study, data collections methods, and assignments. I discussed it with them, with both FAs present, and invited questions. At the end of the second session, I again offered a clarification about the reflection parameters, and made space for questions about video recording and assured participants that it was unlikely I would draw any images from them for use in my dissertation, hoping that would at last resolve their concerns. However, Wendy raised the same questions again at the end of session three, asking for further clarifications about reflections and the final assignment, stating that students were still not clear. When I invited students to ask for clarification once Wendy had introduced the topic, only three participants actually asked questions, which were mostly rooted in concerns over selecting an artist and the due date for the final reflection. After a little more discussion, Wendy asked *again* if there was anything else I wanted to clarify about the reflections. In my field notes from session three, I wrote of this moment: “Seriously. What am I missing here?”

In looking back, it seems that the confusion which such moments throughout the sessions ostensibly aimed to address was less a matter of actual lack of clarity for students than it was an indication of a growing tide of resistance, perhaps especially on the part of FAs. Not only was my presence imposed upon them by virtue of my needing to work with a module to complete my research, I also usurped some of their responsibilities in taking up a portion of their obligation to deliver Aboriginal course content to their students. While each FA reassured me over the course of our meetings that they were in support of my research and of the goals of Aboriginal education generally, I am put in mind of Sarah Ahmed’s (2006) concerns regarding some of the pitfalls of antiracism, as she notes that “sayings are not always doings” (p. 107). As I scrambled to make sense of how concerns over my research project could have

precipitated this meeting request from the Director of PDP, I came to realize that the act of bypassing me and going to the Director to have their concerns addressed was in fact a form of micro-aggression common in the face of discussions around difference (Bhattacharaya, 2015), and leading to “rendering a target group as outsiders – as *Them*” (p. 315). The attempt to remove me and my work from their module, which seems, given the circumstances, to be a likely goal of approaching the Director directly, reads in this light as an effort to undermine my credibility with students, and with the University, as well as simultaneously undermining the import of Aboriginal education. For all of their *saying* they supported my presence and my research, the FAs seemed not to *do* anything to support that position, and rather often conducted themselves in ways that actively worked against it.

The meeting with the Director itself was very collegial. I was invited into a dialogue to determine how to go forward in a better way. And there was learning for all of us in this process. As Michael had pointed out to me on the first day of the study just after I handed out the consent forms, people need time with such forms and to think about what they are agreeing to, so I was able to say that my own learning was around how to structure future research so there would be a gap between the introduction and commencement of the study to allow for consent to be given or concerns to emerge before getting things underway. In many respects, while this may be the real root of the issues STs were experiencing, it is also a reflection on the way PDP is structured; there was very little time available to realise such considerations given the limited access I was granted to the study group by the FAs, which was in turn delimited by the press of content FAs were obliged to deliver themselves.

This raised some additional points in our meeting, and opened a dialogue between Dr. O'Neill and Dr. Neufeld about how research within PDP could be better supported in the future. Having either the Director or Senior Supervisor introduce researchers would offer legitimacy to future projects, and inspire more confidence amongst participants. There was also some discussion about the heavy nature of the work I was undertaking with STs as the possible locus of passive resistance, such as the variable return rates of post-session reflections, so that their discomfort might be less about the scope of the work and more about the depth of what I was asking participants to think about.

This is a crucial consideration, and one I find myself returning to often as I reflect on the whole of the program and study. The work we did was heavy indeed, and, as elucidated in earlier sections of this chapter, and in the previous chapter, certainly there was evidence of both tacit and overt resistance to it on the part of participants, mirroring the findings of researchers who have done similar work in this area (Berlak, 2004; Dion, 2009; Schick & St. Denis, 2003, 2005). I was aware of this going in to the meeting, and felt comfortable with this discussion. But, perhaps because I was conscious of the precariousness of my position as a guest in the classroom of FAs, what we did not discuss during that meeting was the general lack of support I felt from them, which carried with it an undercurrent of a lack of understanding, and the consequence of undermining my credibility. And I wasn't sure how raising an issue that potentially brought into question the professionalism and openness of the FAs would go over with the program director. Despite the fact that there were and are many vocal advocates for Indigenous education and pedagogy within SFU's Faculty of Education, I could not be sure of how deeply their decolonizing work had penetrated. So I could not be sure of how welcome my suggestion that perhaps the resistance we were discussing in relation to students extended to FAs as well would be, though I knew it in my bones.

At the end of the meeting I was asked to write a letter to students that would address the several issues we had all spoken about. In the letter, I thanked participants for their reflections, and reminded them that there were still a few outstanding, encouraging them to keep submitting. I also tried again to alleviate some of the anxieties they expressed to their FAs about the privacy aspect of recording the sessions. I reassured them that the recordings were simply a measure employed so I could be sure I was really capturing the events that occurred during each class so that I could reflect more deeply and accurately on the process. I reiterated the Phenomenological Inquiry questions, and further assured participants that I was not looking for expertise, but that I was interested in their genuine reactions to and learning from the art they selected.

There were a few strategic elements to my writing of that letter, the first of which was my affirmation that I was reading all of their reflections keenly. But I was still receiving only a paragraph from several students and wanted to encourage them to dig deeper. The second strategy was to set word limits for the final reflection that would require some students to up their expressive game. In addition, I offered a longer lead

time for the final reflection, in conjunction with reducing the work load by one reflection, to allow more space for genuine consideration of their learning to emerge.

While I was deeply relieved that my research would be able to continue to the agreed upon end, I was still alarmed by the fact that things had somehow escalated to include a meeting with the Director and my Supervisor without my having detected the possibility of it coming. Communicating with the FAs was a routine part of my practice, in consideration of the scope of their work and my own, and the need to carefully coordinate when sessions would occur, and address issues as they arose. As stated earlier, on the surface our communications were respectful and supportive, if somewhat limited by time constraints, and did my best to thoroughly address any participant concerns that were brought to me by FAs. But I was also conscious of the fact that participants, save Kiley, were not communicating concerns directly to me. In light of the events that led to this meeting, many of which were obscured from me by issues of confidentiality, I continued to consider the tropes of resistance that may have been informing the circumstances in which I found myself.

In order to unpack this issue further, I returned to the work of Paulette Regan (2010), and looked specifically towards her discussion of settler resistance:

“Canadian society subscribes to the peacemaker myth as we cast ourselves as heroes on a mythical quest to save Indians. In this way, we deflect attention from the Settler problem. To do otherwise would engender our own collective identity crisis and expose us to the trauma of admitting uncomfortable truths” (p. 34).

In looking at the reflections and actions of Kiley and Shelley, and in the return rates of each reflection, the self-protection tacitly referred to in the above quotation seems to fit comfortably in the heart of what motivated such responses. The ontological uncertainty that I set out to engender as part of the transformative framework can, as Regan goes on to assert, backfire, manifesting itself in a variety of ways. Institutionally, she suggests, a kind of violent innocence is enacted as a form of resistance, that tends to play out in terms of excuses about the time needed for true change to be made, and the ongoing requirement of patience on the part of those directly affected by institutional racism. Her suggestion that this is a type of violence, despite appearing passive in

nature, is rooted in the discourses of oppression that maintain the status quo, regardless of clear evidence that Indigenous peoples are chronically hurt, belittled, besmirched, and erased by these discourses.

As I brought up issues concerning particular interactions with participants, such as those accounted for above, I wondered about the role this type of mute resistance might be playing in our interactions. FAs routinely defended and dismissed my concerns regarding the overt resistance of some participants, suggesting that there were mitigating factors regarding religious background that may be affecting Shelley's participation, and that Kiley had recently sustained an injury that may have had an effect on her thinking and performance. I was reluctant, at the time of these interactions, to push the issue of my concerns further with FAs, conscious of my position as a guest in their module, and of the protective feelings teachers often (and ought to) harbour for their students. But I wondered, if the nature of the subject matter these participants were resisting was rooted in other aspects of teacher education curriculum, such as special education or subject specific methodology, would my concerns have been so easily dismissed with the excuses offered by FAs? I suspect that the answer is no, and to support this position, I next unpack another key incident.

At the end of the previous chapter, I noted that the return rates for each reflection fluctuated, generally showing a decrease in returns until the final reflection, which was still not submitted by each of the 30 participants in the study. In the end only 12 participants submitted every single reflection. While there are myriad possible reasons for these drops in willingness or ability to participate, including workload, family considerations, interest level, and desire for independent study, taken in the larger context of the study, a reading of the situation concluding that resistance played at least a role in in how this aspect of the study unfolded is not untoward.

The FA team seemed to do little to ensure that I was receiving reflections from each student after each session, despite the fact that reflections were being routed through them, sent to each ST's primary FA first via email before being passed along to me, so that each FA could see who was and who was not submitting reflections. Part of their responsibility as FAs is to ensure that STs complete all assignments, the assessment of which usually takes the form of keeping records to reveal patterns of missing work. They therefore must have been aware of the particularly low response

rate from reflection four, which yielded only 18 responses, the lowest by far of all. It may be that this particular reflection fell through the cracks, since, as noted above, the request for a meeting with the Director of PDP happened very shortly after this session. But it is my feeling that something more was at play as well. I did take steps to indicate to those participants from whom I was missing assignments, sharing with FAs my own data collection tabulations, which yielded a few more submissions, but in the end, the numbers remained low.

This may seem a trivial point on the surface, a pettiness over a few missing documents that truly may just have become lost in the shuffle. But I know that in my own time as an FA, STs who did not complete such assignments were immediately on the radar as potentially falling short in their responsibilities, opening their work ethic and professionalism to scrutiny. So this begs a question: why were FAs inattentive to ensuring that all STs submitted reflections after each of our sessions together? Were they as lax in ensuring the return of reflections required for other aspects of the course? If my work with participants accounted for approximately 33 percent of the required course hours to satisfy the equivalent of three credits in Aboriginal education, was my request for reflections not as valid as the work FAs did themselves in this area? And what of the quality and depth of some of the reflections? While there were several reflections, especially in the final batch, that exceeded one page in length, the vast majority consisted of only a paragraph or a few sentences. And while I had suggested on the first day of the program that this was an acceptable length for an initial reflection, I was clear in each of the following sessions that I wanted participants to write more, especially given the knowledge and experience we were accumulating over the time. I wondered if the FA team would have been more concerned by the quality of reflections, and securing their return, if they had given the assignments themselves. If so, what rationale explains such a difference?

In answering these questions I look again to Robin DiAgelo (2011) who articulates just a few of the defensive moves that resistance can precipitate, including “the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, guilt, and behaviours such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation” (p. 57). While there were no overt expressions of anger during our sessions, certainly fear and guilt emerged time and again, both during session debriefs and in post-session reflections. I would suggest further that the reluctance to submit certain reflections may represent a

symbolic form of leaving a stress-inducing situation, and further, that the FA's reluctance to engage more deeply in efforts to secure a complete body of data for this study may also fit this category as well. Schick and St. Denis (2003) offer some additional instruction in how resistance can play out in institutional settings in a way that seems also to fit the circumstances and questions above. They suggest that "countless forms of denial are necessary to maintain oneself as innocent, including the following: ...dismissing experiences of oppression among target groups; and dismissing the credentials of one who brings bad tidings" (p. 66). These two forms of denial resonate with me deeply when I consider what circumstances and interactions precipitated the meeting with the Director discussed earlier in this section, and when I consider the possible reasons that participants were not being encouraged to submit each requested reflection.

One other aspect of this study has remained particularly troubling to me as I sift through the data and findings. My original plan for the final session, during which participants shared their phenomenological art inquiries, was to facilitate the unpacking of these inquiries in the context of a whole module sharing circle. If each of the thirty participants in the study was present that day, it would have meant that each participant would have a maximum of four minutes to both unpack their dialogue with art, and invite discussion. But FAs were very resistant to this notion, suggesting that we may maximize our time by dividing participants up into groups to share their dialogues in a smaller setting, thereby also mitigating any performance anxiety such an activity might precipitate. Without considering the fundamental problematic that a teacher with performance anxiety begs a number of serious questions about how they will manage their duties in schools, I capitulated to this request, telling myself that recording small group sessions for later analysis would be just as good as getting a sense of the whole group's work together. I knew I was probably wrong about this, but once again felt conscious of my position, and my feeling of relative powerlessness in deference to the organizational needs of the FAs. Despite assurances that we could end the session with a large circle to share the highlights of the dialogues, the clarity and pedagogical intent of my original plan was compromised, and I had to determine to make do.

In reconsidering this set of circumstances, and in analyzing the raw data and transcripts from each sharing circle, I am aware that one of the most detrimental results of this structural decision manifested itself in my inability to intercede in key moments of

dialogue, and to address and encourage emergent understandings as they occurred. The reader may recall my relatively light analysis of this session from the previous chapter (4.7. Final Session Analysis and the Power of Art). For the most part, I could offer only a brief accounting of which art piece was shared, and a limited analysis of the implications of some of the more significant moments in participant dialogue. And yet, in my formulation of the program and study, this was the real meat of the process, so being hampered in my ability to dig into the dialogue of each participant by virtue of the structural logistics arrived at by FAs presents as another example of a subtle micro-aggression that undermined the aims of the study. With five groups in operation over a 45-minute period, I was conscious of wanting to spend at least a few moments with each group, but that meant that I was nearly as conscious of time as I was of the dialogues that were unfolding, and therefore purposely limited my participation with each group so that I could more easily leave to join the next group as my allotment of time passed.

If ever there was a moment that I felt the oppressive imposition of colonial mores on the course and direction of this program and study, this was it. Instead of the inclusive process of emergent meaning making that I had envisioned in originally conceiving this activity, which would have honoured the principle of knowledge as a series of concentric circles (Cajete, 1994) represented by the dialogue of each participant, and the principles of interrelationality and relational reciprocity (Wilson, 2008), I was forced to contend with an extension of the Western tendency to view experiences as discreet, rather than interconnected, so that in the end my ability to interact with participants and their ideas relationally was compromised. Further, students self-selected the small groups they formed, so their responsibility to relate to and interact with the ideas of the whole group was also compromised, leading to some of the discussion of missed opportunities below. The incumbent cognitive imperialism inherent in this tendency to affect separability (Battise, 2000) represents one of the many forms of systemic oppression enacted by higher learning institutions as they continue to grapple with the vagaries of addressing diverse approaches to knowledge and meaning making. It enforces the Western ontological perspective that the researcher should be able to get at *the* truth remotely by interpreting participant interactions after the fact through rigorously academic methodology. From an Indigenous and relational perspective, however, such a supposition belies the importance of relationship to this process, undercutting in a way the very meanings the research is intended to glean.

Several moments stand out as significant missed opportunities to help participants further unpack their phenomenological inquiry dialogues with art. In the first instance, I continue to be troubled by some of the interactions that occurred in Group A, of which Brendan and Kiley were members. While Brendan did draw out some discussion of intersectional identity politics through his participation in the discussion of Terry's selection of KC Adams' *Perception* series, his own phenomenological inquiry fell well short in addressing some of the basic considerations of the task assigned. While he accounted for his selection of *The Jade Canoe* (Bill Reid, 1996) by suggesting that as a frequent visitor to the airport both to visit his father and to pick his father up for local visits, he was naturally drawn to this centrepiece of the airport's Indigenous art collection. His research on this work, however, presented as extraordinarily cursory, evidenced during the course of his presentation when he suggested that the sculpture was actually made of jade, rather than of the cast bronze with a green patina that constitute its material construction. In addition, he was very vague about his descriptions of the creatures that populate the canoe, making no connections between them and their roots in Reid's understanding of Haida culture and mythology. My own cursory Google search of this sculpture led immediately to a YVR generated page called "20 facts about the Jade Canoe on the 20th Anniversary" (<http://www.yvr.ca/en/blog/2016/20-facts-about-the-jade-canoe>, retrieved October 31st, 2017), which addresses not only the material of which the sculpture is made, but also the connections of some of the key figures to Haida mythology. What, then, was behind the evidently lackadaisical approach of this participant to his subject?

In part, I think the answer rests in the dynamic established between Brendan and Kiley, whose active resistance to this program has been addressed earlier in this chapter. Mirroring Kiley's own shallow engagement with the mask she chose, Brendan was also willing to stay at the level of aesthetic consideration in discussing the work, rather than digging into the meat of its cultural and social significance. Their exchange about aesthetic considerations so dominated the ensuing discussion, that even those few attempts on the part of their dialogue group to make connections to the larger significance of the work were largely ignored. Further, returning to the discussion that ensued regarding the *Perception* series (Adams, 2013), Brendan agreed with Kiley's incredulity at the application of the moniker 'whore' to the subject of the portrait. While Terry, who was presenting the work, attempted to situate the discussion back into the

concerns of racism against Indigenous peoples (and Indigenous women in particular) by recounting the anti-rape signs she saw during her time in the far north, the relational dialectic between Brendan and Kiley avoided the implications of this by continuing to focus on surface considerations related to their own experiences, rather than to those being expressed by the portrait subjects. This puts me in mind of a similar finding in the work of Schick and St. Denis (2005), who note “as students like to say: ‘I am fascinated by all the cultures. I love learning about them,’ a preoccupation in which students unselfconsciously participate as consumers whose only troubling moment is in the plethora of choice” (p. 309). Together, through their adherence to surface concerns, Brendan and Kiley kept the group in the position of consumers, preventing them from digging into deeper discourses about identity, colonial resonance, and representation.

I wonder first if this discussion would have unfolded as it did had it occurred in the context of a larger group unpacking of the inquiries, and if the relative privacy of small group discussions (despite the fact that they were being recorded) made some of the less savoury implications of this exchange possible. And second, I am concerned at my inability to intervene in the direction and depth of this dialogue, and to potentially disrupt the domination of Brendan and Kiley in the tone of their discussion. I could have, for example, pushed Brendan to further consider the implications of his cursory research and muddled explanation of the work he chose, challenging him to position himself, perhaps especially as a person of colour attuned to the colonial tropes of exclusion, to become an ally of Indigenous peoples in explicating the deep cultural connections inherent in Indigenous artistic expression, and the politics of representation as well. I could have also pushed Kiley to back away from her personal incredulity and connections to her own experiences with the word ‘whore’ in order to see better the impact of that word on the consciousness of the portrait’s subject, and its broader implications for intercultural relations in Canada. To my way of thinking, these were two key moments ripe with the potential for the kind of critical intervention into the group dynamic that would have allowed us all to connect better with the process of decolonization, and with the requirements of Aboriginal education. The structure of the day I was forced to accept, however, stunted the potential for growth in these moments.

One other critical moment comes to mind from the final session, involving Group D, and their discussion of cultural appropriation connected to the inquiry of two group members into the music of A Tribe Called Red (TCR). The reader may recall from the

previous chapter that at the onset of this group's dialogue, there was considerable time given to discussing TCR's well-publicized request that fans not attend concerts dressed in costume war bonnets or decorated in a perversion of Indigenous war paint. Several members of this group had clearly deeply considered the implications of cultural appropriation at some point earlier in their education, and worked hard to get their classmates to see why attending to TCR's request is a fundamental requirement of decolonizing relations with Indigenous people's by offering the same consideration of their feelings as are offered to dominant culture members. If Gord Downie of the Tragically Hip, for example, had suggested this embargo on costumed concertgoers, would participants have been more apt to listen and care? This is an important question considering the late Canadian icon's influence in the rise of concern over reconciliation through the 2016 release of his album, *The Secret Path*. While his contribution in this area was tremendous, and well regarded by many Indigenous people across Canada, including the family of the album's subject, Chanie Wenjak, whose struggle to escape residential school and return home ended in his death, the question remains as to whether Canadians are more likely to be concerned over Indigenous issues when they are raised by white Canadians. It is good to have allies who can support one's words, but it is also good to be heard.

Upon listening to the recording and reviewing the transcript from this group's session, I am once again struck by the question of the degree to which the semi-privacy of small group discussion not only allowed this conversation to go on long enough to preclude the meaningful unpacking of other group members' inquiries, but also necessitated their complicity through the prolonged tolerance of the contributions of those who adopted the position that TCR's requests were spurious did not deserve serious consideration. My absence during the majority of this dialogue due to the structure of the session once again prevented an intercession in this group, which could have helped them unpack the locus of the resistance they were fielding, and move forward into a more nuanced understanding of what is required in navigating such moments of intercultural disconnection. Further, in the disallowance of a whole group unpacking, another opportunity was missed to really flesh out the implications of the resistance expressed by those determined that TCR was wrong in asking fans to make this concession.

In reflecting on these missed opportunities, and in looking back on this chapter, I feel it is important to acknowledge how difficult these stories were to grapple with and write about. This program and study are founded on the goal of helping non-Indigenous student teachers gain the dispositions, skills, and knowledge to both unpack their own learnings about Indigenous peoples, and to reframe how they will help their students learn about them through a more holistic lens. This work is also rooted in a desire to contribute to decolonization, in an effort to help Canada, and Canadians, move closer to recognizing that we really are all related, and that matters to how we think about this land. So, in my somewhat Pollyanna way, I was looking for moments over the study that indicated that this goal was realizable, possible. Despite being very conscious of the tropes of resistance and discrimination, having experienced both in personal and professional capacities, I was not looking to document such moments. I did not want to unpack them and their implications, for to do so felt like a threat to my fundamental optimism. And, indeed, it was sometimes painful work, connecting intuitions about particular moments to scholarly evidence that supports the existence of micro-aggressions and institutional oppression, ultimately making space for me to believe in the veracity of my own responses. But at the end of it, I can see how very important this work was. I needed to lay bare “how well intentioned colleagues may be unaware of their roles in creating and reinforcing dominant, imperialistic grand narratives” (Bhattacharya, 2015, p. 316), in ways that extend to organizational decisions and the manner in which content is included in curriculum.

Indigenous education is absolutely crucial if we are going to move towards really being able to see and hear each other in this country. We need to consider our future together, and the futures of our children seven generations forward, as Indigenous axiology suggests (Cajete, 1995, p. 75). Decolonizing education will be necessary in learning to do better, to think better, and to be better. But before that can really happen, we must first address and work through issues presented by the many forms that resistance can take, work that is impossible if we don't take the time to stop and interrogate such moments as they occur. So, despite the fact that the findings in this chapter represent an aspect of my research that I was not really looking for, in the end, I think the importance of the findings related to this theme have become just as central to the consideration of this process as a whole, as was the initial goal of my study.

In the final analysis, it seems clear that by and large, the employment of an enhanced framework for transformative education was overall successful. There was clear evidence of transformed thinking available through participant reflections, through the results of the post-pre survey, and through the cast of the phenomenological art inquiry presentations participants made to one another. I am generally pleased with the study results, and will move forward confidently with this methodology, taking with me the lessons that I have garnered from this experience, and tweaking future deliveries to try to ameliorate the occurrence of obstacles encountered in the course of this study. But in the course of this work, it is the spectre of resistance to which I will be most attentive.

I feel so deeply invested in this, and I feel the weight of it too. I, along with all those who work in Indigenous education, anti-racist education, and transformative education, am attempting to ignite nothing less than massive social change. We pick at the threads of collective narratives, showing flaws in the fabric, eventually unravelling the whole to weave the cloth anew with stronger, more fulsome threads. It is little wonder that there is some resistance. This work isn't easy. So I needed to take that into account when I consider student reactions, especially those that manifest in withdrawal and the appearance of disengagement. I need to be mindful as well of the institutional and cultural racism that can tacitly impede the progress of Aboriginal education through the continued imposition of colonial structures and mores on Indigenous academics and initiatives.

Chapter 6.

Conclusions

6.1. Summary of Main Ideas

In conducting this research I began with two main questions: 1) how might student teacher engagement in phenomenological art inquiry, informed by Ann Curry-Stevens' framework for transformative education for privileged learners (2007), impact on their perceptions of Indigenous peoples and education, and how student teachers might enact more holistic approaches to Indigenous education that avoid replicating colonial stereotypes; and 2) can art precipitate the kind of ontological uncertainty necessary for transformative education to ensue? Based on the possibilities for transformations that I witnessed with students during earlier versions of this program, I knew that art had a particular power to invoke transformative dialogues. With the addition of Indigenous and anti-racist pedagogies, as well as some instruction in phenomenologically noticing one's noticing, I believed this program could be highly effective in producing teachers who will fully engage in praxis and avoid replicating the same colonial stereotypes to which they were exposed through curriculum. I also knew that including the work of Indigenous artists in the program (and in this I include all of the performing, visual, literary, and media arts) was a strong way of including Indigenous voices and presence in schools, and therefore provided a direct response to the call raised by Indigenous educators to do so (Battiste, 1999; Dion, 2009; Smith, 1999), as well as to similar calls made by the TRC. Further, the dialogic and transformative power of art, as discussed by both Dewey (1934) and Greene (1995) was also evident in research findings. Participants were able to find a way in to their own questions about Indigenous peoples and cultures by learning to see and hear Indigenous perspectives through art.

The opportunity to teach a sessional course made space for the further consideration of these ideas, and allowed me to focus on noting and meeting students' learning needs by closely following our weekly discussions and then planning lessons that responded to those needs. Knowing that I would have far less time during the study in which to respond to emergent student needs, I tried to predict them instead, building

didactic components into the program delivery, and selecting resources that were multi-focussed and diverse in order to cover as much ground as possible. To this end, sequencing the program for the study required a framework that could help move participants along a little more quickly than the rambling unfolding of a semester long course. Ann Curry-Steven's pedagogy for the privileged (2007) provided a good foundation with its two stage framework for first shaking confidence, and then rebuilding it to praxis. Based on my earlier work, however, I knew that one of the biggest difficulties facing teachers when it comes to Indigenous education is that they have to relearn history to include Indigenous stories, and also have to reconsider Indigenous peoples as peers. The development of an intermediate stage to Curry-Stevens' framework offered participants' a chance to engage in dialogue with Indigenous ideas via the introduction of Indigenous perspectives through self-representation in art. They had the opportunity to learn and synthesise new versions of the Canadian narrative from a decolonizing perspective, to consider their own relationships to Indigenous peoples. And they had the opportunity to co-learn with one another, finding comfort in the feeling that they were not alone in their fear and care regarding this work.

In gathering and analyzing data from the study I used the post-pre measure to provide a structured self-assessment tool for participants to ensure that I was receiving the kinds of data from participants that related directly to my research questions. In the analysis of this measure, there is distinct evidence of an increase in the comfort and confidence level participants had about approaching Indigenous education by the end of the program. While I am certain that even more could have been accomplished in this area if there had been additional time available for the program, or at least greater opportunity for direct contact with participants, these findings are encouraging, and will continue to inform my own praxis moving forward.

I also employed a reflective measure in the form of post-session written reflections that could allow for other, perhaps less predictable, themes to emerge. The emergence of Angst, Action and Art as central themes in participants' writing linked closely with the findings of some earlier researchers in this area. Angst, in particular, confirms findings in Indigenous and anti-racist education studies by both Ladson-Billings and Donner (2005), and St. Denis (2011), offering further evidence that this remains an area in serious need of on-going study and the development of ameliorating strategies and dispositions. In some cases, the admissions of ignorance made by study

participants were really a bit heartbreaking, and their frustration at not having been exposed to much (if any) of the information and ideas we covered together early in their schooling was palpable.

My interest in this area is, I suppose, two-fold. Initially, I was drawn into Indigenous thinking and knowing through personal relationships that helped me sort out my identity; finding my face, as it were. But as I became more involved in not just the delivery of education, but in the examination of how it is structured and deployed to deliver colonial messages, I knew I'd also found my heart, my purpose and focus for my energy. The second part of my interest is related to my foundation. Growing up in a Settler home and community, I understood first hand how difficult it could be to discuss these matters with people who'd never been asked to consider them before. Even raising the notion of decolonizing education provoked intense anxiety that I was somehow making accusations of racism to my nearest and dearest. While one can easily walk away from an uncomfortable conversation at a cocktail party, working through such conversations with family (and still coming out liking one another in the end) can be a delicate matter, requiring patience, deep listening, and love. This, then, becomes a significant part of the foundation for my work. In developing this program, and in continuing on with my work, I carry these with me, patience, deep listening, and love, and I work to make space for them to inform my work daily.

6.2. Strengths of the Study

Because of the breadth of data gathered for this study, it was possible to examine several issues and themes in detail from multiple angles, such as what participants were willing to contribute during our sessions, versus what came out during their reflections. Here, the use of both written reflections and session recordings could be employed in unison to get at more detail in analysing what participants were experiencing during the sessions. In addition, the framework employed for sequencing the program built on earlier successes in transformative education, so deeper consideration could be given to the content of the program, and to responding to participants' needs and concerns when they arose. For example, the use of the dream catcher anecdote highlights the flexibility available in this program, as it presented an on-going real world connection to practice that students were privy to and engaged with during each session. This also gave me a chance to model for students how I, as a

mentor, might react to and help a colleague who is seeking guidance, offering participants insight into both sides of the story, ideally resulting in deeper consideration of how they will undertake their own practice and need for support and resources. Because the findings were composed of both a static measure (the Post-Pre survey) and dynamic measures (session participation and reflections) a more holistic picture of participants' experience of the program was achieved. In particular, allowing the session reflections to be open-ended and entirely up to the whim of each participant meant that units of meaning and themes emerged organically and were solidly grounded in each individual's own interests and concerns, in their selection and attention, in a way that would not have been so easy to get at had I insisted on a particular structure. This also allowed me to use my own teacher/researcher instincts as I examined their writing for evidence of learning, of the need for clarification, and of the need for redirection.

In examining the findings in relation to the research questions, it seems clear that transformative education, specifically a pedagogy for the privileged, is a more than apt approach to foundational Indigenous education. The introduction of an intermediate stage also gave participants space to reconsider what they thought they knew about Canada, and to develop new understandings through repeated exposure to Indigenous perspectives. Further, the study offered clear evidence that art can indeed play a powerful role in initiating the kinds of dialogues that can lead to productive ontological uncertainty.

6.3. Study Limitations

As a beginning researcher, the biggest challenge I faced was wading through what felt like an interminable amount of data. I also sometimes struggled to keep my analysis within the bounds of the thematic or MSSDA methodologies, wanting to ensure that I was doing a thorough job of the analysis while battling my life-long preference for big picture thinking and aversion to details. While it did not take terribly long to arrive at the themes explored here, it was challenging to limit the discussion of those themes to fit the requirements of a doctoral dissertation. For the most part, indications of bias and stereotyped thinking in participants' reflections were left aside, as to address them would have lengthened my analysis by at least half again. I had to remind myself over and over that I was not looking for evidence that racism and unconscious assumptions were at play (that was a given), but rather I was searching for evidence that there were

methods that could combat and transform such thinking. Having said that, while in the end it became clear that there was a significant need for discussing instances of resistance during the course of the program, I still needed to be selective in drawing forth such moments, mindful of keeping them connected to the bigger picture.

I was also very conscious of the effect of my own presence in each of the sessions we undertook. If fear of offending emerged as a theme through written reflections, then it was also necessarily an undercurrent in both our in-person sessions, and in participants' post-session reflections. While there were several participants who seemed quite self-aware in this regard, and who demonstrated real thoughtfulness in detecting and tracking their assumptions, I think it is fair to say that there were also several participants who actively repressed their real thinking, both in dialogue and in their writing. Indeed, this may be a considerable factor in the uneven return rates of reflections, and therefore also suggest the impossibility of a truly complete understanding of the program's impact. On the other hand, I am also conscious, given Lauren's intervention towards the end of session four (see section 4.3.4.), that there is also a degree to which the presence of FAs during each session may have been an inhibiting factor on participants oral contributions. Though it may be impossible to determine which factor is more critically pertinent, both possibilities exist, and therefore suggest limits to the scope of my analytic abilities.

Additionally, I am keenly aware of the necessarily subjective nature of this analysis, and of the alarms this raises for those more attuned to quantitative research findings. I take solace, however, in the fact that in many ways, this research and its incumbent subjectivity are accommodated by Indigenous research methodology. Self-reliance on one's own skills at tracking, in this case, tracking ideas, is an important part of Indigenous thinking and knowing. In this case, comprehending the interrelationships between what participants brought into the program with them, what they began to learn while we worked together, and what that might mean for their practice was a vastly complex task. But as Cajete (2015) reminds us, "Indigenous views of the nature of reality build on relationships – reality is wholly interrelated – knowledge emanated from an Indigenous worldview has to be understood relationally. Nothing exists in isolation or can be understood apart from all its relationships" (p. 207). That is, I could not have done it any other way.

6.4. Reflexivity

From the perspective of an educator, especially an Indigenous educator, the other significant limitation of the study also has to do with building relations and learning over time. While this is not a traditional academic consideration in the way of limitations, it warrants some discussion for the impact it had on this work, and could be considered as an impediment to rigour. The teacher education program at SFU responded to the Teacher Regulation Branch policy (P5.C.03.1) that specifically mandates the inclusion of Aboriginal pedagogy and both historic and current contexts of Aboriginal learners (TRB, N.D., p. 31) equivalent to a three-credit course, by embedding this content into the already jam-packed first term course. This meant that the 30 required hours of content FAs were expected to deliver (only ten of which I was able to offer myself) were buried within the larger matrix of pedagogical and practical concerns that needed to be addressed before STs were sent out into the schools.

This meant that my two-hour time slots with participants always occurred just before lunch, or towards the end of the day. Participants were often engaged in, or moving on to, other activities both before and after my arrival, so there was often a sense of nervous transience in the room when I first arrived. Rather than planning just a few things and letting participants interests emerge to be fed, I felt I had to be more thorough in my planning, to ensure that we covered the topics I knew such a program should be concerned with, whether they emerged as interests naturally or not. While this was not necessarily at odds with the general teaching climate in PDP, it felt distinctly uncomfortable to me as a teacher. I was not able to connect personally with students before or after the sessions, and could not create space to unpack some of the ideas and topics that arose during our sessions. It also meant that participants were moved along from topic to topic as well, frog-marched by the volume of content FAs needed to cover too. In effect, all of this rush and tumble of daily academic life in PDP undermines one of the central principles of the Indigenous teaching and learning, which is that learning takes time. The resultant lack of open dialogic space in the program, therefore, remains a concern of mine as a researcher, knowing that more time could have led to even deeper and more profound transformative changes in participants' thinking.

Further, the limitation of time and access to the thinking and questions of participants also meant that I was not as well able to realize the goals of Indigenous

research as I had set out to do. If, as Shawn Wilson (2008) suggests, research is ceremony, and ceremony is about making stronger connections, then I must admit to feeling that I fell short in developing the kinds of trust relationships with participants that I have been able to build with other student groups in the past. But, it must also be conceded that the inhibition of my ability to create relationships with students was less due to a lack of social and professional wherewithal on my part, but rather to some of the institutional and cultural concerns, manifested as modes of resistance, that arose along the way. And this does not mean that my reading and consideration of Indigenous methodologies and research considerations was not central to my thinking about how to interpret the data from this study. In fact, as suggested in the literature review, doing this work allowed me to find face, heart and foundation (Cajete, 1994), and allowed me to find mooring for the intuition that learning happens in circles and cycles, patterns that bespeak the interconnection of things (Kovaks, 2011), both of which things I will carry forward with me into future work in this area. Resistance is simply another part of all of this.

In analyzing the written output of participants, I was conscious of considering both how I was trying to help students peel back the constructed layers of their own prior learning, and of how they themselves were reacting to what they were exposed to in each session, deliberately searching for patterns of growth, and for the disconnections that would indicate new directions for guiding them. In this way, I was also trying to honour the principle of reciprocity in research (Wilson, 2008), and to immerse myself in the spirit and intention of Indigenous ways of knowing and thinking in a meaningful and considered way, aware, as van der Wey (2007) suggests we ought to be, of the limits of my own knowing. In the context of this research, however, my feelings of wanting to ensure reciprocity were divided between considering my relationships with the pre-service teachers with whom I worked, and my obligation to do my very best to help them in their learning, and my sense of obligation to do my best for the benefit of all Indigenous peoples Canada, especially as a response to the TRC's calls for action on reconciliation.

I would not exist were it not for the genetic contributions of both Settler and Indigenous Canadians, so it is in some ways logical that my loyalties feel equally divided between the concerns and needs of both. But here I find another reason that it was both right and important to keep Indigenous research considerations ever in my mind as I

worked through this process. If we are, as Wilson (2008) points out, not only in relationship to all of creation, but that we are the relationships we form, then there is room within Indigenous thought for me to feel this way. I am, and will always be, in relationship with both Indigenous and Settler Canadians, in both personal and professional ways, and I hope to keep honouring that position in my work, seeing that I do the best to help others to see themselves as being in relationship with both as well.

6.5. Practical Implications for Teacher Education

Two key ideas have emerged for me as central implications as a result of this study. The first is this: because of the evident knowledge deficits STs arrived with, it is clear that more considered measures of delivering Indigenous education within teacher education need to be considered. Rather than providing illumination and support, the embedding of this crucial discourse within a larger program of pedagogical introduction leaves learners little time for the deep consideration that is required to take Indigenous education on with conscience and confidence. In my estimation, it also tacitly sends the message that Indigenous education either does not require, or is not worthy of, the special attention and study offered by a stand-alone course. Several teacher education programs at major Canadian universities already feature required stand-alone courses in Indigenous education, such as the University of British Columbia, the University of Calgary, and the University of Saskatchewan, and have in fact yielded some of the research cited in this study. If students, faculty and the community at large are to believe that teacher education programs are genuinely responding to and taking on board the calls to action of the TRC, and the calls raised in support of Indigenous education by experienced Aboriginal educators and researchers, then a stand-alone course would offer ample proof. In its absence, however, the true level of their commitment to this discourse is circumspect.

The second key implication directly relates to the above call for increased attention to Indigenous education, in that it needs to be taught by Indigenous instructors. As discussed in the introduction to this study, the model employed at SFU to staff PDP relies on the secondment of practicing teachers from BC school districts. Considering the reactions and responses of my FA colleagues to discussions of Indigenous

education in 2010 and 2011, during which many were encountering decolonized modes of Indigenous education for the first time, leaving this crucial and very sensitive discourse in the hands of the relatively uninitiated, seems a disservice to the intentions of the project of decolonizing education through the inclusion of Aboriginal education overall. Certainly, I don't mean to cast any aspersions at all on my former FA colleagues, or on any practicing FAs, but given the adage that we cannot teach what we do not know, I have to ask why SFU continues to employ FAs in this regard to teach what they do not know, when there are qualified Indigenous professors, lecturers, and graduate students within the faculty whose practice and interests are already centred in Indigenous and decolonizing education. While there are other approaches to the project of Indigenous education and decolonization, such as collaborative teaching that teams Indigenous and Settler educators together to take up this work, another factor considered in drawing this conclusion is the need to continue to indigenize the academy; that is, we need to continue to make space for Indigenous presence and voices so that Settlers can hear first hand narratives of Indigeneity in Canada before they take up roles as allies and collaborators.

Extending both of these implications to the broader context of the university as a whole, it seems to me that there is also an argument to be made for a university-wide requirement that all students across all faculties be required to take at least one course in Indigenous culture and history. I suggest this in light of the fact that the majority of teacher candidates entering PDP arrive having already earned at least one degree. While this study focussed mainly on knowledge deficits about Indigenous peoples produced by K-12 curriculum and education, clearly, there is a dearth of such information and resources at the post-secondary level as well. While certainly K-12 should be the central cite for the delivery of decolonized Indigenous education, given the fact that learning is a recursive activity, in which knowledge builds over time, it is incumbent upon all faculties to consider this in the development of programs and courses.

6.6. Concluding Thoughts and Future Directions

Teaching is not easy. Sometimes learning isn't easy either. Teaching is not neutral, but rather insidiously hegemonic in its construction of the social realities that form curriculum. Decolonizing practices in education seek to shed light on this fact, and

to develop in teachers the kind of praxis necessary to reframe hegemonic influences into a more holistic picture of what is real about the world and about our ideas of Canada. Bringing pre-service teachers to a place of understanding that their perspectives on Indigenous people may have been limited by the calibre of their early exposure challenges their notions of themselves as good and honest people. The heavy nature of this work can cause the truly entrenched to withdraw from such learning, to curl up within themselves, deliberately taking little in, while externally mouthing the words instructors need to hear to satisfy learning outcomes and standards. It happens. But that does not mean that giving up is an option.

To quote one of the participants in the study, “throughout this experience I have been challenged, pushed, and humbled [...] I did not understand the importance of digging deeper and what that would mean for me both personally and as an educator” (MABEL5, R5). We all enter into new activities and challenges knowing that we have a lot to learn, but never really grasping the full scope of necessary learning until we are waist deep in it. I, too, have been challenged, pushed and humbled by this work. I have waded through oceans of data and ambiguity, mincingly explored the attic of my own anxieties about it all, and gamely scaling mountains the size of which I could not have foreseen upon embarking. I have learned.

Indigenous education...decolonizing education...anti-racist education...arts education. These are more than just marginal discourses to be appended over the real meat of traditional curriculum, a fashionable garnish at the feast. Rather, they are modes of considering both learning and learners that first and foremost acknowledge our collective humanity, our foibles, and our strengths. They are revolutionary in approach and evolutionary in practice. As the historic atrocities that continue to inform Indigenous contemporary realities continue to be brought to light, the need to address these matters in our classes is critical.

Attending to Indigenous education within teacher education, developing decolonizing practices, in faculty, in pre-service teachers, and in in-service teachers, influences educational factors far beyond the scope of those concerns limited to Indigenous students. Indigenous pedagogies, such as place-based and story-based learning benefit all students, offering multiple and often non-traditional points of entry into all manner of subject matter. It is an issue, as Kovaks (2011) suggested in a quote

within the literature review, of re-humanizing education, which is precisely the goal of Indigenous research methodologies as well. The development of sensitivity around how curriculum produces identity, whether through misrepresentation or through erasure, also affects Chinese-Canadian, Japanese-Canadian, Afro-Canadian and Indo-Canadian students, along with new Canadian students and Settler students as well. Learning to see curriculum as constructive of Eurocentric ontological certainty makes space to ask the question, well, what else is there? And finally, considering the classroom first as a relational space rather than an instructional space creates a disposition of co-learning, which is both inclusive and accessible to students and teacher. In this way, developing a practice in Indigenous education offers benefits to all students, making it a truly democratic project.

I could not end all of this discussion without at least a few words about art, which has remained the backbone of my practice and thinking, both consciously and subconsciously, all along the way. Art, by bringing to bear the ontology of the other through an act of self-representation, can create ontological uncertainty in the viewer. It can also help the viewer detect moments of cognitive dissonance, revealing knowledge gaps that can then be filled through the development of praxis. Art is very practical that way. But it also offers evidence that Indigenous people are resident and resonant, modern, successful, talented, and present. Although many Indigenous artists root their work in the narratives of pain, degradation, and cultural loss that are the real life experiences of many Indigenous people, the artists themselves are examples of persistence and grace in the face of the colonial legacy. Indeed, it was Louis Riel who predicted the profundity of art's impact when he declared in 1885 "my people will sleep for one hundred years, but when they awake, it will be the artists who give them their spirit back" (as quoted in Wyman, 2004, p. 85). Given the rise in Indigenous artistic expression leading up to the 500th anniversary of occupation in 1992, as evidenced in exhibitions such as *Beyond History* (Vancouver Art Gallery, 1992), and *Indigena* (Canadian Museum of Civilization (now Canadian Museum of History), 1992), I'd say he was right about that. And it has only become a richer area of artistic production and influence since then.

Conducting this study and considering the findings, as I likely will for years yet to come, I am assured that art does have the power to transform thinking, and to retell the stories we tell ourselves in ways that reflect multiple ontologies, offering opportunities for

hybridized thinking. I will continue to keep my eyes open, alert to new work and new directions emerging from Indigenous artists in Canada and abroad. I will continue to work within teacher education, keeping the imperatives and utility of Indigenous education at the forefront of pre-service teacher's minds and practices. And I hope that in this work I will continue to be challenged, pushed, and humbled. I will give the late, great literary artist Richard Wagamese the last word:

"I am a warrior of conscience. A warrior of heart and mind. You don't need to be an Indian to assume that role – just human" (from *A Quality of Light*, 1997, p. 319).

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