

What Does Food Sovereignty Mean to the Homalco Community?

**by
Caitlyn Harrison**

B.A. (English Literature & Psychology), University of British Columbia, 2014

Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Urban Studies

in the
Urban Studies Program
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

© Caitlyn Harrison 2019
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Spring 2019

Copyright in this work rests with the author. Please ensure that any reproduction or re-use is done in accordance with the relevant national copyright legislation.

Approval

Name: Caitlyn Harrison

Degree: Master of Urban Studies

Title: What Does Food Sovereignty Mean to the Homalco Community?

Examining Committee:

Chair: Patrick J. Smith
Professor, Urban Studies and Political Science

Karen Ferguson
Senior Supervisor
Professor, Urban Studies and History

Meg Holden
Supervisor
Professor, Urban Studies and Geography

Kamala Todd
External Examiner
Indigenous Cultural Planner and Filmmaker

Date Defended/Approved: January 23, 2019

Ethics Statement

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

- a. human research ethics approval from the Simon Fraser University Office of Research Ethics

or

- b. advance approval of the animal care protocol from the University Animal Care Committee of Simon Fraser University

or has conducted the research

- c. as a co-investigator, collaborator, or research assistant in a research project approved in advance.

A copy of the approval letter has been filed with the Theses Office of the University Library at the time of submission of this thesis or project.

The original application for approval and letter of approval are filed with the relevant offices. Inquiries may be directed to those authorities.

Simon Fraser University Library
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

Update Spring 2016

Abstract

Colonization and urbanization have had devastating impacts on Indigenous food systems, the repercussions of which are still salient today. However, research shows that food sovereignty has the potential to strengthen Indigenous communities and improve health outcomes. This thesis explores how the idea of food sovereignty is conceptualized by the Homalco Nation in the city of Campbell River and what opportunities and barriers exist in realizing this model of food sovereignty. For this research, I engaged in open-ended conversations with Homalco community members in order to hear their food stories. Participants' stories demonstrated the significance of land, specific foods, customs and values for Homalco food sovereignty and served to highlight key barriers and opportunities relating to this conceptualization of food sovereignty. This research contributes to the larger body of literature surrounding urban Indigenous food sovereignty by providing insight into what this idea may look like at the community level.

Keywords: Indigenous food sovereignty; Indigenous food systems; Homalco First Nation; traditional foods; Indigenous self-determination; decolonization

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I acknowledge that Simon Fraser University is situated on unceded Coast Salish land, including the traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples and that I conducted this research on the unceded territory of the Homalco, K'omoks and Kwakwaka'wakw Nations.

I would like to thank the Homalco Nation for collaborating with me on this project and welcoming me into their community. In particular, thank you to Ella Paul and Chief Blaney for their support, as well as the community members who generously shared their food stories. I am truly grateful for this opportunity.

Special thanks to my supervisor Karen Ferguson for her feedback, encouragement and support during this experience. I would also like acknowledge the Urban Studies faculty, staff and students who consistently challenged and inspired me throughout my degree.

Finally, I am so grateful to my family and friends for always loving and supporting me (special shout out to my mom for being both a sounding board and proof-reader throughout the entire process) - I love you all!

Table of Contents

Approval	ii
Ethics Statement	iii
Abstract	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Table of Contents	vi
List of Figures	vii
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
Chapter 2. Literature Review	5
2.1. The Effects of Colonization and Urbanization on Indigenous Food Systems	5
2.2. Indigenous Food Sovereignty: A Living Concept.....	8
2.3. Barriers and Opportunities for Indigenous Food Sovereignty.....	11
Chapter 3. Methodology.....	15
3.1. Indigenous Research Methodologies	15
3.2. Conversations with Community Members	28
Chapter 4. Connections: Food and Community	30
4.1. Stories of Home: The People of Fast Running Waters.....	31
4.2. Stories of Community: Sharing, Service and Humility in Homalco Culture	35
4.3. Stories About Food Traditions	39
Winter is here... ..	41
Spring is here... ..	46
Summer is here... ..	47
Fall is here... ..	53
Chapter 5. Health and Healing Through Food	57
Land at the Center.....	59
5.1. Barriers to Food Sovereignty.....	62
5.1.1. Sustainability	63
5.1.2. Economics.....	69
5.1.3. Health	75
5.1.4. Generations and Youth	83
5.2. Opportunities for Food Sovereignty.....	88
5.2.1. Urban Opportunities	89
5.2.2. Leadership and Community Initiatives	93
5.2.3. Towards the Future: Engaging Youth in Homalco Culture	97
Chapter 6. Conclusion	103
References	107

List of Figures

Figure 1	Medicine wheel depicting the components of Indigenous food sovereignty.....	24
Figure 2	Map depicting Campbell River in relation to the Bute Inlet (in green) and Church House.....	31
Figure 3	Seasons booklet cover (old picture of Church House in the center).....	40
Figure 4	The layers of food sovereignty.....	55
Figure 5	Medicine wheel depicting the components of Indigenous food sovereignty.....	58
Figure 6	The Bute Inlet.....	59

Chapter 1.

Introduction

Indigenous peoples in Canada have practiced sustainable food harvesting methods for thousands of years. At the center of Indigenous food systems¹ has always been a relationship of reciprocity and responsibility to the earth that has provided for them. Knowledge of these food systems and the cultural practices and traditions associated with them is passed down through generations. However, colonization and urbanization have had devastating impacts on all aspects of Indigenous life, including the degradation of Indigenous food systems (Morrison, 2011; Côté, 2016; Matties, 2016). These effects are still salient today: Indigenous peoples suffer disproportionately from food insecurity issues including limited access to healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food, and higher risks of certain diseases related to diet (Morrison, 2011, Cidro et al. 2015; Mosby & Galloway, 2017). Furthermore, many Indigenous people now live in cities, often away from their traditional land, which adds another set of challenges to accessing adequate food that is culturally relevant (Patrick & Budach, 2014; Cidro et al, 2015). However, research shows that food has the potential to help strengthen Indigenous communities and improve their health outcomes (Cidro & Martens, 2014).

This thesis explores the efforts being made by urban Indigenous communities to assert control over their own food production and consumption. This idea is now being referred to as Indigenous food sovereignty (Morrison, 2011). Indigenous food sovereignty is part of the larger, growing movement of food sovereignty around the world and offers a framework for addressing issues of Indigenous food security. Although the language surrounding the idea of food sovereignty is relatively modern, “the living reality is not a new one in Indigenous communities” (Morrison, 2011, p. 97). The movement ultimately strives for “policy driven by practice” that allows Indigenous peoples to once

¹ A “food system” simply refers to the path that food travels to get to your plate. It includes the growing, harvesting, processing, packaging, transporting, marketing, consuming, and disposal of food.

again “respond to [their] own needs for healthy, culturally adapted Indigenous foods” (WGIFS, n.d.).

This research contributes to the larger body of literature surrounding urban Indigenous food sovereignty by providing insight into what this idea looks like in a specific community, something that is currently lacking in the academic literature (Desmarais & Wittman, 2014). While the idea of food sovereignty is a flexible one, with different meanings depending on who is using it, very little is actually known about these differences or what food sovereignty can look like or mean in a community context in Canada (Ibid). Indeed, it is difficult to find concrete examples in the literature of how specific Indigenous communities are asserting sovereignty over their food systems or what these communities experience as barriers or opportunities in this regard. Through this research I demonstrate how one community conceptualizes the concept of food sovereignty, in order to gain a better understanding of how this concept can manifest or be understood in a specific context. While this information may not be generalizable to other Indigenous communities, it has the potential to be a helpful step for understanding Indigenous food sovereignty from a community perspective. This understanding is important for developing meaningful and appropriate food initiatives and policies in this country that address the needs of Indigenous peoples (Desmarais & Wittman, 2014; Morrison, 2011).

With this in mind, my research question is: How is the idea of food sovereignty conceptualized by the people of the Homalco First Nation band in the city of Campbell River and what opportunities and barriers exist to realizing this model of food sovereignty?

The Homalco First Nation are Coast Salish people and their language is the K’omoks language. The band has almost 500 members and while the Homalco people live in various parts of the province, around 200 community members live on reserve within the larger municipality of Campbell River on Vancouver Island. The Homalco people were originally from the Bute Inlet area, but were forced to relocate a number of times due to the impacts of colonization and urbanization of their traditional territory. During the 1980s the Homalco band negotiated for land in Campbell River, where they reside today. Unlike their traditional territory, this piece of land is small, residential and completely land-locked. The reserve is also relatively isolated from the rest of the city of

Campbell River. Both Homalco's colonial history and its current geographical position within Campbell River have disrupted the community's relationship to the land and traditional food sources and thus, pose barriers to their food sovereignty. However, in their own way, the Homalco people are striving for control over their own food systems.

For this research, I engaged in open-ended conversations with small groups of Homalco community members in order to hear their food stories, both past and present. In the following chapter, I review the literature associated with Indigenous Food Sovereignty in order to provide context for this project. In Chapter 3, I lay out my methodological approach. Chapter 4 seeks to answer the first half of my research question: "How is the idea of food sovereignty conceptualized by the people of the Homalco First Nation band?" Here I compiled the food stories told to me by community members that I felt provided an overview of the Homalco food system. In Chapter 5, using information from the interviews, I strive to answer the second part of my research question: "What opportunities and barriers exist to realizing this model of food sovereignty?" In the final chapter, I conclude by rearticulating my key findings and their implications and discuss policy recommendations and avenues for future research on Indigenous food sovereignty in urban settings.

Proponents of Indigenous research methods stress the importance of researcher self-location in research involving Indigenous peoples and knowledge (Drawson, Toombs & Mushquash, 2017; Gillies et al., 2014; McIvor, 2010; Kovach, 2009). Therefore, I will disclose a bit about myself before proceeding. I am of Scottish and English ancestry and was raised in an upper middle-class family. I have always had access to healthy food that has met my needs culturally and nutritionally. Because of this, I have never had to think about food sovereignty on a personal level, as many do daily.

I do not really remember when I became interested in food beyond simply eating it. Maybe it was when I was in seventh grade and I saw a movie about factory farming and its relationship to animal rights and the environment. I immediately decided to become a vegetarian and gave a presentation about slaughter houses that must have scarred a few of my classmates. From then on, I was interested in learning about where my food came from. Later, I tried my hand at gardening. When I have the chance, growing my own food still brings me joy like nothing else.

Throughout university, I started thinking more about how privilege and justice connect to food. I became more aware of the food related issues facing Indigenous Canadians in my early twenties when I worked as a lifeguard on a local reserve during a number of summers. This was a joyful experience, but I also saw first-hand the issues of food security and food sovereignty in that community. Mostly, I developed a deep admiration for the strength and resilience of the community members I had formed relationships with. This fostered my desire to act as an ally to Indigenous communities and the issues facing them.

Thus, I began this research journey with a concept that I cared about deeply: Indigenous food sovereignty and a desire to learn more about this topic in the urban context of my hometown, Campbell River. I wondered what this concept looked like on a community level. I thought about Homalco on the outskirts of town and living away from their traditional territory and wondered what this concept might mean for them as a community. While anecdotally I speculated that the topics of Indigenous food sovereignty had relevance for Indigenous peoples in Campbell River, I found there to be a lack of information on the topic within the context of Campbell River. I could not find any policies or strategies from the city of Campbell River that addressed the idea of Indigenous food sovereignty and hoped that pursuing this research could begin to fill this gap.

Chapter 2.

Literature Review

*sometimes late at night
when all the world is warm and dead
I wonder how things might have been
had you followed, had we led
so consider as you live your days
that we live ours under the gaze
of generations watching us
of generations still intact
of generations still to be
seven forward
seven back*

– Thomas King, “I’m Not The Indian You Had In Mind”

In this research project, I explore two questions: how the idea of food sovereignty is conceptualized by the Homalco people and what opportunities and barriers exist to realizing this model of food sovereignty. To contextualize these questions, I have engaged with three bodies of literature. I begin by exploring literature about the impact of colonialism and urbanization on Indigenous food systems to help ground my thesis in the historical context. I then look at literature about Indigenous food sovereignty that shapes and informs the direction of my research. Finally, I examine barriers to and opportunities for Indigenous food sovereignty to demonstrate the current context and future outlooks of Indigenous food sovereignty in British Columbia.

2.1. The Effects of Colonization and Urbanization on Indigenous Food Systems

For thousands of years Indigenous peoples in Canada have practiced sustainable food harvesting methods (hunting, fishing and gathering), “that have shaped, supported and sustained distinct cultures, economies and ecosystems” (Morrison, 2011, p. 97). At the core of these cultures has always been the symbiotic relationship between Indigenous people and the land and ocean. Indigenous food systems are based on the values of respect, reciprocity and sustainability, the knowledge of which is passed down through generations of storytelling, ceremonies, customs and ecological principles (Morrison, 2011; Turner et al., 2000). However, “since the time of colonization,

traditional harvesters have witnessed the rapid erosion of the health and integrity of Indigenous cultures, ecosystems and social structures that are integral to maintaining Indigenous land and food systems” (Morrison, 2011, p. 98).

Indeed, Indigenous peoples of Canada have faced and continue to face the effects of colonization, including widespread discrimination, inequality and violence. “Genocidal policies, disease pandemics, forced removal and relocation, Indian boarding school assimilation policies, and prohibition of spiritual and cultural practices have produced a history of ethnic and cultural genocide” (Cote, 2016, p. 2) that has devastated Indigenous communities. Inherent to this cultural genocide has been the systematic erasure of Indigenous food systems.

Matties (2016) examines how food has been used as a tool and weapon of colonization. She discusses the link between colonization and agriculture and how understanding this link is important for understanding the current Western food system as colonized. Indeed, she explains, the word “colony” comes from the Latin word for “farmer”. Since first contact, European settlers failed to recognize and acknowledge the legitimacy of Indigenous food systems and claimed Indigenous land as their own, cultivating it in the European way. In particular, Matties discusses policies that were aimed at dispossessing Indigenous people of their land. She states that “such denial of Indigenous practices initiated over five centuries of policies dedicated to eradicating Indigenous peoples from the land in order that settler peoples could take their places” (Matties, 2016).

What came to be was an industrial food production model aimed at “civilizing” and “modernizing” Indigenous people and eradicating their “systems of food production, consumption, celebration, and identity” (Grey & Patel, 2015, p. 437). This imposed system stripped Indigenous peoples of their independence, forcing them to rely on government programs and/or Western diets and severed the critical link between Indigenous peoples and their homelands (Grey & Patel, 2015). Colonization also brought with it the widespread urbanization of Indigenous land, which led to the dispersal and displacement of Indigenous people, disrupting and destroying important food sources and peoples’ connections to them (Patrick & Budach, 2014).

Grey and Patel also discuss how food colonization goes beyond production and also seeps into the preparation and consumption of food. For example, colonial interference directly disrupted the transmission of traditional knowledge from generation to generation, in particular by attacking the roles of Indigenous women. Women's traditional knowledge around food, which involved highly specialized understanding "about the harvesting, use, stewardship (for sustainable gathering over lifetimes), and promotion of medicinal and nutritive plants" was critical for sustaining their environment and their cultures. The imposition of European, patriarchal values led to a drastic change in Indigenous women's roles, devaluing and erasing the knowledge held by these women. Furthermore, generations were torn apart by residential schools that were imposed to force cultural assimilation and the systematic erasure of Indigenous languages. This "did much to break the linguistic and affective bond between grandmothers and granddaughters, fracturing the intergenerational transmission of women's knowledge" (Grey & Patel, 2015, p. 438).

The trauma of residential schools has had a lasting impact on Indigenous communities and families. Indigenous children were forced into residential schools where they were separated from their family, culture and traditional diet. Instead a European diet was imposed as part of the process of cultural genocide (Kingston, 2015). Many children in these schools were not fed nutritious food and suffered from extreme hunger and malnutrition, which research shows has had lingering trans-generational effects on survivors and their descendants. These effects include obesity, cardiovascular disease and diabetes, from which Indigenous people suffer disproportionately (Mosby & Galloway, 2017).

These are just a few examples that illustrate the direct relationship between food, colonization and urbanization, the effects of which are still visible today. Indeed, Tarasuk et al. (2013) found that simply being Aboriginal in Canada is connected to a higher risk of food insecurity and discovered the rate of food insecurity amongst Indigenous people to be more than double that of all non-Aboriginal households. While food insecurity for Indigenous people is usually discussed within a remote or rural context, Cidro et al. (2015) explain that Indigenous people in urban communities also suffer from food insecurity, a fact that is often overlooked in the literature. Colonization and the urbanization that has resulted from it have led to a high percentage of Indigenous people who now live in cities (Patrick & Budach, 2014). These individuals face many issues

relating to food insecurity, including but not limited to, the inaccessibility of healthy and affordable food in the city, food deserts and the lack of culturally appropriate food sources (Cidro et al, 2015).

The dominant way of addressing these concerns has been through a lens of food security. Food security is described as a situation that “exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (World Food Summit, 1996). However, the framework of food security for addressing Indigenous food crises has been criticized. Critics state that it fails to address the importance of traditional, culturally appropriate food, that the discourse around food security was developed in non-Indigenous contexts and that it fundamentally fails to address issues of colonization, power, control and self-determination (Power, 2008; Martens et al., 2016). Wiebe and Wipf (2011) assert that it is critical to acknowledge these issues in the aim of producing a food system based on equity. As an alternative to the limiting lens of food security, many proponents of Indigenous rights have turned to the concept of food sovereignty as a solution to issues of food insecurity, because it “works to challenge social determinants by addressing how people eat, taking into account history, geography, politics and power” (Rudolph and McLachlan, 2013). Thus, food sovereignty can be seen as a way of achieving long term food security, while addressing the legacy of colonization on Indigenous food systems (Morrison, 2011; Cidro et al, 2015).

2.2. Indigenous Food Sovereignty: A Living Concept

The concept of food sovereignty began with the transnational agrarian movement, La Via Campesina, which coined the term in 1996. La Via Campesina is made up of farmers across the globe that describe themselves as “an international movement, which coordinates peasant organizations of small and middle-scale producers, agricultural workers, rural women, and indigenous communities from Asia, Africa, America, and Europe.” It serves to confront the threat of the global food system, which they claim is causing worldwide malnutrition, hunger, environmental degradation and inequality (Wiebe & Wipf, 2011).

La Via Campesina defines food sovereignty as “the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable

methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems” (La Via Campesina, 1996). Inherent to the concept of food sovereignty is the recognition of the power dynamics that exist within the current food system (in production, distribution and consumption) and it serves to challenge and question those dynamics. Food sovereignty exists in direct opposition to the dominant industrial model of food production and consumption and advocates that all nations and peoples should have control over their own food systems at all levels. Indeed, this control extends to the definition of food sovereignty itself, which by its very nature must be “home-grown” (Wiebe and Wipf, 2011, p. 5) Therefore, food sovereignty as a framework provides the flexibility to adapt to the user. It is “a living concept” and will have different meanings for different nations and communities, whether rural or urban, reflecting the diversity that exists in local food systems (Kneen, 2011). In the Canadian context, Wiebe and Wipf (2011) describe food sovereignty as a “radical alternative to our current Canadian food system” that is both practical and sustainable. Indeed, the definition is plastic and has stretched far beyond its origins; however, at its heart is a contempt for modern, capitalist agriculture and a spirit of decolonization (Grey & Patal, 2015).

Director of the B.C. Food Systems Network Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty, Dawn Morrison states that “while the language and concept of food sovereignty has only recently been introduced into communities and policy circles around the world, the living reality is not a new one in Indigenous communities” (Morrison, 2011, p. 97). She explains how, while Indigenous nations have distinct cultures, they share similar worldviews regarding their relationships with the land and food sources. Morrison demonstrates that Indigenous food systems and practices have always embraced the values of food sovereignty – for example by fostering reciprocal relationships to the land and environment that sustains them. For these reasons, she believes that the concept of food sovereignty has the power to resonate with Indigenous Canadians and is an appropriate framework for discussing Indigenous food related issues.

As I have illustrated above, the effects of colonization have been devastating for Indigenous communities. These have included the decline in the health of Indigenous food systems and food sources, resulting in a dependence on a Western food model and poor health outcomes for many (Morrison, 2011). In opposition, “food sovereignty is a day-to-day mode of resistance” against the colonial legacy that continues to threaten

Indigenous food systems (Grey and Patel, 2015). In this way, we see that food has the potential to be a source of empowerment and healing for Aboriginal people (Cidro & Martens, 2014). Indeed, the B.C. Food Systems Network Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty explains that:

Indigenous food sovereignty provides a restorative framework for health and community development and reconciling past social and environmental injustices in an approach that people of all cultures can relate to (WGIFS, n.d.)

With this in mind, Morrison sees Indigenous food sovereignty as the best fit approach for accomplishing long-term food security for Indigenous communities. She explains how Indigenous food sovereignty deliberately rejects a strict, universal definition, in order to better reflect and respect the distinct rights and power of each nation, who have their own unique culture, history and food systems. However, she notes that Indigenous people of BC all share similar worldviews in terms of their relationship to food and the land (or, as she calls it, an eco-philosophy). She offers a loose description, stating that, at its core, Indigenous food sovereignty revolves around the idea of upholding a sacred relationship of reciprocity with the land, plants and animals that supply us with the food we depend on.

Morrison describes the four guiding principles of Indigenous food sovereignty. Firstly, is the view that food is a sacred gift and that we have a responsibility to the earth that sustains us. Secondly, that active participation from the community and from all generations is integral to the movement. Thirdly, that self-determination is a fundamental element of food sovereignty. Indigenous people have the right to determine their own food systems. Finally, food sovereignty is about developing legislation and policy that directly reflect these core values. It is not difficult to see how these values stand in direct opposition to the current, capitalist model of food production and consumption, which prioritizes lowering costs, mass production, convenience and favors Western palates. Morrison describes how Indigenous food sovereignty “also provides a framework for exploring, transforming and rebuilding the industrial food system towards a more just and ecological model for all” (p. 98).

Indeed, beyond the benefits of this movement for Indigenous communities, Morrison offers Indigenous food sovereignty as an answer to the myriad of food/environmentally related problems caused by Western culture that are affecting the

health of all people, not just those who are Indigenous. She implores Canadians to look to Indigenous people, who were the original inhabitants of this land, for guidance on how to best protect and sustain it and the food that it provides to everyone.

2.3. Barriers and Opportunities for Indigenous Food Sovereignty

Many of the barriers to Indigenous food sovereignty have already been discussed above. These include the systematic oppression of Indigenous people in relation to their food systems through colonization, which has had negative outcomes beyond simply physical health. Colonization has forced many Indigenous peoples to become reliant on the global food system, which stands in direct opposition to the idea of food sovereignty because it acts as a barrier to the goal of self-determination, severs individuals from their cultural practices and leads to negative health outcomes (Morrison, 2011). Furthermore, the mainstream, capitalist economic system clashes directly with and even threatens notions of Indigenous food sovereignty because this system views land and food sources as commodities, rather than as sacred. This economic system is driven by profit, development and growth, which directly threatens Indigenous land and culture (Morrison, 2011). Indeed, the concept of Indigenous food sovereignty stands in contradiction to virtually all of the mainstream ideology surrounding food production and consumption.

Despite the systematic inequalities and challenges in the food system that Indigenous people in Canada face, Indigenous communities are fighting for food sovereignty. The Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty was created in 2006 to promote the idea of Indigenous food sovereignty and to carry Indigenous perspectives into the B.C. food security movement. The organization includes representatives from many different spheres and cultures, including traditional harvesters, Aboriginal community members, academics and political advocates. It promotes cross-cultural participation and includes non-Indigenous advocates. WGIFS “seeks to apply culturally appropriate protocols and ancient ways of knowing through a consensus-based approach to critically analyzing issues, concerns and strategies as they relate to Indigenous food, land, culture, health, economics and sustainability” (Morrison, 2011, p. 100). Born from the WGIFS, the Indigenous Food Systems Network acts as a liaison

between individuals/communities and regional, provincial, national and international networks (Morrison, 2011).

On a more local scale, Charlotte Coté describes the efforts of various Indigenous communities in British Columbia to reconnect with and reclaim their food systems by actively engaging with the notion of food sovereignty. She gives a variety of examples, including the efforts of her home community of Nuu-chah-nulth-aht, who in 2009, after a decade long battle with federal government, won the legal right to control their fisheries (Coté, 2016). The Nuu-chah-nulth argued that, long before first contact, fisheries were at the foundation of their trading economy “which translates into the right to conduct a modern commercial fishery and not just a subsistence food fishery” (CBC, 2014). This convinced the Supreme Court of Canada and they were granted that right.

Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council president, Deb Foxcroft described it as a historic event and explained that “the Nuu-chah-nulth are fishing people, dependent on sea resources for our food and our economies. Canada must work with our nations to design fisheries that meet our community needs, using our preferred means to fish, and in our preferred fishing areas” (CBC, 2014).

Another example of Indigenous peoples exercising their right to food sovereignty involves the resource wild rice (manoomin in Ojibwe, meaning gift from the creator). Wild rice grows in lakes, tidal rivers and bay in the Great Lakes region of the United States and Canada and is actually a form of aquatic grass (Jackson, 2016). Wild rice has been a staple food source for Indigenous peoples in the area for thousands of years and is linked inextricably to their cultures and knowledge systems. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, an Indigenous studies scholar and a member of Alderville First Nation explains:

Wild rice has always been a really important being for Anishinabee people - as a food source and as a part of the economy. In late August and early September, people would gather together at the rice beds and harvest it in canoes. We have traditional stories about ricing. We have ricing songs and dances as part of our system of governance. It's a cornerstone of our way of life. (Jackson, 2016)

Wild rice is considered to be a sacred resource and gift from the creator and is so essential that “losing rice would be like losing our language” described Roger LaBine of the Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (Carney, 2018). Indeed,

colonizers nearly wiped out the species and Indigenous knowledge surrounding the plant was eroded as colonizers strived to forcefully assimilate Indigenous peoples into Western culture, via residential schools (boarding schools in the U.S.) (Canty, 2018).

However, there are currently many restoration projects at work in the Great Lakes region in both the U.S. and Canada aimed at revitalizing the wild rice (Canty, 2018). For example, James Whetung of the Curve Lake First Nation in Ontario (an Ojibwe community that is part of the Anishinaabe Nation), is on a mission to restore wild rice in his local area and make it accessible to his community members. "I knew that our rice was in trouble. I have spoken to the elders about the places they went to gather wild rice, where they planted wild rice, and how their lives had been impacted by the decline of the rice beds. The plants speak. Somehow, I heard their call for help," he explained in an interview with *Aljazeera* (Jackson, 2016). Feeling he had to do something about the problem, Whetung started planting the rice in the lakes surrounding his local community. He then began harvesting the rice and formed the company Black Duck Wild Rice to sell it. However, he states that his company is not about making profit. Rather, it provides educational opportunities for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and is part of a larger effort to revitalize Indigenous culture and food sovereignty. "I have that fleet of canoes, and I take people out when they want to learn about wild rice," Whetung told *Aljazeera*. "I'll show them what it looks like in the fall [season]. How to gather, bring it back to the shore, and turn it into food." (Ibid) By restoring the rice to the area, Whetung is helping local Indigenous peoples reclaim their knowledge about growing, harvesting and using the resource and in doing so they also reconnect with their cultural identity and heritage.

Finally, another example of Indigenous food sovereignty from an international standpoint is from New Zealand. Hua Parakore is an Indigenous food verification and labelling system, awarded to food producers whose practices are in line with Maori values. So far there are 30 successful food producers who can display the Hua Parakore label on their products, ranging from small vegetable farmers to the larger businesses such as BioFarm yoghurt, a prevalent organic yogurt brand in New Zealand (Hutchings et al., 2012). Hutchings et al. (2012) illustrate the importance of Hua Parakore in relation to the idea of Indigenous food sovereignty:

Hua Parakore aligns with closed systems of production with zero or minimal inputs, works in harmony with nature and promotes self-reliance and self-sustaining practices, thereby contributing to indigenous food security and food sovereignty in Aotearoa. As an innovation Hua Parakore contributes to well-being and supports the potential of Māori communities to transform and re-invigorate; rangatiratanga (self-determination); te oranga o te whānau (family well-being); community development; kaitiakitanga (cultural and environmental sustainability); and creates a pathway for Māori growers and producers to tell their kaupapa Māori production story.

These are just a few of countless examples of Indigenous peoples exercising their right to food sovereignty. It is important to note that Indigenous food sovereignty is being practiced in every day ways by Indigenous communities. However, there is a lack of academic literature surrounding specific examples of community food sovereignty in British Columbia and much of the research is from a broad context. Furthermore, information surrounding Indigenous food sovereignty in an urban context is particularly limited (Cidro et al, 2015). More research is needed to find out how food sovereignty is defined for different groups, including Indigenous people in urban environments (Desmarais & Wittman, 2014). My research strives to address this gap in the literature.

Chapter 3.

Methodology

“I think that the thing I most want you to remember is that research is a ceremony. And so is life. Everything that we do shares in the ongoing creation of our universe.”

– Shawn Wilson, “Research Is Ceremony”

This chapter investigates Indigenous research methodologies in relation to my methodological approach. The reason I spend a significant amount of time discussing Indigenous epistemologies and Indigenous research methodologies in this thesis is out of respect for Indigenous knowledge. This project is deeply intertwined with and dependent on Indigenous cultural knowledge and therefore, to whatever extent possible, I have chosen methods congruent with this cultural knowledge. I also include a discussion regarding my place as a non-Indigenous researcher as an act of respect and transparency. Finally, at the end of the chapter I introduce the Homalco community members who participated in this research.

3.1. Indigenous Research Methodologies

Indigenous methodologies are simply “the theory and method of conducting research that flows from an Indigenous epistemology” (Kovach, 2009, p. 20). For the purpose of this thesis, I use the term “epistemology” to refer to a culture’s specific ways of knowing or their knowledge systems. It is important to consider epistemologies in research because they shape the way we see the world and determine what forms of knowledge we consider valid. They influence all aspects of life, from our policies and institutions to the way we conduct research (Kovach, 2009).

In the field of Indigenous research methodologies, there are several key Indigenous scholars who have been particularly influential. Specifically, Margaret Kovach, Shawn Wilson, Marie Battiste and Linda Tuhiwai Smith appear consistently in the literature on this topic. My main influence for this chapter has been scholar Margaret Kovach, of Plains Cree and Saulteaux ancestry. Her book *Indigenous Methodologies* (2009) was foundational to this chapter and provided a framework from which I could

evaluate my own position in research. As a non-Indigenous researcher striving to be an ally for Indigenous peoples, I have relied on the works of Indigenous scholars in Indigenous research methodologies in order to conduct my research in a way that respected Indigenous ways of knowing.

Throughout this chapter I use certain terms interchangeably. For example, I use the terms 'epistemologies', 'worldviews' and 'ways of knowing' synonymously. I also do not differentiate between 'Indigenous research methodologies', 'Indigenous research frameworks' and 'Indigenous inquiry.'

Indigenous Research Methodologies in Academia

Traditionally, academic research has favoured Western epistemologies, while disregarding Indigenous ones (Chalmers, 2017). Indeed, by privileging certain worldviews over others, the academy determines 'what does and does not count as knowledge' (Kovach 2009, 29). Western academic research, as we know it today, grew from within a Cartesian intellectual tradition, which centered around the idea of dualism, or the belief that the mind and body are distinct and that researchers can use objective logic and reasoning in order to achieve "intellectual neutrality" (Chalmers, 2017, p.101). Thus, academic research has privileged the ideals and institutions associated with Cartesian thinking and has marginalized knowledge that is non-objective and non-dualist, such as Indigenous epistemologies, which are holistic in nature and "assume relationships between all life forms that exist within the natural world" (Kovach, 2009, p. 34). Indeed, under this system, Indigenous knowledges have often been dismissed as myth, rather than valid ways of understanding the world (Kovach, 2009).

Furthermore, Western academic research has historically been used to exploit Indigenous peoples (Kovach, 2009, Smith, 2012). Research has been done *on* Indigenous peoples and communities (rather than *by* or *with* them). Knowledge was extracted from these communities for the use of the researcher, with very little benefit ever seen by the Indigenous communities involved. This research often served to perpetuate racism and discriminatory policies and attitudes about Indigenous peoples. The discipline has been so detrimental to Indigenous communities that the word "research" itself has become one of the dirtiest words known to Indigenous peoples (Smith, 2012).

However, Kovach acknowledges that academic research has become progressively more inclusive and less exploitative towards Indigenous peoples in recent years (Kovach, 2009). Indigenous scholar, Shawn Wilson (2008) explains that:

A precursor for this change has been the growing number of Indigenous people who have excelled in academia and who focus their study on their own peoples. These new Indigenous scholars have introduced Indigenous beliefs, values and customs into the research process and this in turn has helped research to become more culturally sensitive to Indigenous peoples (p.15).

On top of this Kovach believes that, in particular, qualitative approaches offer space for research *with* and *by* Indigenous peoples. Qualitative methodologies like community-based research, participatory action research, feminist methodologies and relational theory are examples of how research has expanded to include different worldviews that challenge the status quo (in particular Eurocentric and patriarchal power structures). These methodologies have served as building blocks towards Indigenous research frameworks and can stand in alliance with them. However, these methodologies are still grounded in Western epistemologies and, according to Kovach, may be insufficient for research involving Indigenous peoples.

Kovach and other Indigenous scholars believe that, in order to overcome the marginalization of Indigenous knowledge within Western academic research and address the unique needs of Indigenous communities, there is a necessity for research methodologies that have evolved from Indigenous epistemologies. This, she explains, is what she calls Indigenous research methodologies. She states that “on the methodological buffet table, Indigenous methodologies ought to be a choice” (Kovach, 2009, p. 13). With the help of other Indigenous scholars, Kovach identifies what she considers to be the main characteristics of Indigenous research methodologies. While what distinguishes Indigenous research methodologies the most from other forms of inquiry is that they are grounded in Indigenous epistemologies, other important aspects of Indigenous research frameworks (which I will elaborate on in the following pages) include: the use of a decolonizing lens, privileging story as method, self-location by the researcher and doing research in a “good way”.

Kovach believes that Indigenous research frameworks provide researchers with the tools to do better, more ethical research *with* and *by* Indigenous peoples.

Furthermore, she argues that the inclusion of Indigenous research methods in mainstream academic research has impacts beyond academia because “research creates policy and policy generates programs” (Kovach, 2009, p. 13). She explains that many of the policies that have negatively affected or failed to improve the lives of Indigenous peoples have been derived from Western research frameworks and that Indigenous research frameworks offer the opportunity to “improve relevance in policy and practice within Indigenous contexts” (Kovach, 2009, p. 13).

The Use of Indigenous Research Methodologies

Something that I have struggled with throughout this research is my place as a non-Indigenous researcher working with Indigenous research methodologies. I know I am not alone in this challenge. Is it even possible for me to use Indigenous research methodologies, given my Western background? And if so, how do I engage respectfully? There is not a definitive answer to these questions – entire theses could be written on this highly debated subject. It is particularly challenging because Indigenous research methodologies are a relatively new approach in academia – having yet to be widely accepted – and there is not a lot of information on specific ways for researchers to use them (Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike). However, a number of prominent Indigenous scholars, like Wilson and Kovach, have offered some guidelines on their application, at times addressing researchers who identify as non-Indigenous allies (or settler allies), like myself.

For example, Wilson believes that an Indigenous research framework “can be used by anyone who chooses to follow its tenets” (2007, p. 93) and Kovach states that, “the most effective allies are those who are able to respect Indigenous research frameworks on their own terms. This involves a responsibility to know what that means” (p. 13). To me this means that I have a responsibility to make appropriate and educated decisions regarding how I apply Indigenous research frameworks to my research.

Kovach explains that many researchers (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) will find themselves doing a mixed-methods approach (using both Indigenous and Western methodologies), given that researchers are still working within the bounds of a Western system and often must find a balance between meeting the needs of the Indigenous community they are working with and those of their institution. She states that, “researchers wishing to use Indigenous inquiry may use it alongside a Western

approach that organizes data differently (e.g., grounded theory, phenomenology), thereby using a mixed method approach,” as long as the researcher acknowledges when the methods they are using are not Indigenous (p. 35). Similarly, Kovach stresses the importance of acknowledging Indigenous research methodologies when Indigenous research methods are being utilized. She explains that, “the point is that if Indigenous methods are being utilized, an Indigenous research framework with [an Indigenous] epistemology ought to be recognized, as opposed to assuming that Indigenous research methods can be subsumed under a Western way of knowing” (p. 35). According to Kovach then, Indigenous and Western ways of knowing can coexist in research as long as the researcher is transparent and open about their usage. If a researcher is doing work with Indigenous cultural knowledge and methods, it is vital that the researcher recognize and acknowledge the epistemology behind them. Furthermore, I would argue that the researcher has a responsibility to consider the respectful use of Indigenous research methodologies in their research, because it is only through their usage that these frameworks will become widely understood in academia (Kovach, 2009).

Throughout the chapters of her book, Kovach broadly defines what it is to engage in Indigenous research methodologies, but makes it clear that there is no exact way to do so. Rather than prescribing an exact formula, she offers some broad characteristics of Indigenous research frameworks. However, she leaves it up to the individual researcher to determine their own place within them. Below, I describe Kovach’s characteristics of Indigenous inquiry and reflect on them in the context of my own methodological approach. It is important to understand that these characteristics of Indigenous research methodologies are not standalone, rather they are in constant conversation with each other. For this reason, there may be some repetition among the sections.

Five Characteristic of Indigenous Research Methodologies

1. *Indigenous research frameworks place Indigenous epistemologies at the center*

Kovach explains that Indigenous researchers are recognizing Indigenous epistemologies in their research in two main ways: “(a) they acknowledge the breadth of [Indigenous] epistemologies, their relational and holistic qualities, and their necessity; and (b) they use [Indigenous] epistemologies in preparation for and conducting their

research, in documenting the sources and methods of their knowing, and in acknowledging their influence on their research” (p. 63). While Kovach is referring specifically to Indigenous researchers in this passage, I believe that these actions can be applied to any research with or by Indigenous peoples. While I cannot hope to ever fully understand an Indigenous worldview, there is no doubt that my own limited understanding and interpretation of Indigenous epistemologies have significantly informed my research process.

For example, participants informed me that Homalco culture is grounded in the values of sharing and being of service to one’s community. I therefore, have dedicated a section of the thesis to acknowledging this “worldview”. My participants also emphasized the significant role of storytelling and the seasons in Homalco tradition and so I have used both as lenses to explore the idea of Homalco food sovereignty throughout the thesis. In short, to the best of my abilities I tried to honour what my participants considered to be important. If something was important to my participants with regard to my topic and questions, it was important to my research. That being said, I also try to recognize and question my own limitations throughout the thesis, with the understanding that my personal worldview and background will inherently impact my interpretation of the stories I was told.

2. Indigenous research frameworks apply a decolonizing lens

A decolonizing lens in Indigenous research is one that unpacks the inherent power imbalances in settler colonialism, acknowledging the impacts of colonization on Indigenous lives. Decolonizing research in an Indigenous context should honor and privilege Indigenous knowledge and place Indigenous voices at the center. It should also be relevant to the community involved and must aim to benefit Indigenous peoples in general (Kovach, 2009).

From the beginning of this research journey, I knew a decolonizing agenda was vital to the project. As I have illustrated, colonization is at the core of the obstacles facing Indigenous food sovereignty. The term “Indigenous food sovereignty” itself is a reaction to the colonial legacy on Indigenous food systems and stresses the importance of Indigenous peoples regaining sovereignty over these systems (Morrison, 2011). Thus, I believe that decolonization is inherent to the concept of food sovereignty. This project

has relevance for Indigenous peoples of Canada because it was inspired by the work of Indigenous Canadian scholars who have stressed the importance of Indigenous food sovereignty in both a broad and local context. I reached out to the Homalco community to learn if such a project would be of interest to them and proceeded with the guidance of Ella, my community liaison. I feel a strong sense of responsibility to the Homalco community, who have entrusted me with their stories, and I believe that such relationships are at the heart of decolonizing research.

3. *Indigenous research frameworks privilege story as a method (certain methods work best for Indigenous research frameworks)*

It is not surprising that story is the primary way of passing on knowledge in Indigenous traditions “because it suits the fluidity and interpretive nature of ancestral knowing” (p. 94). Kovach identifies two types of story in Indigenous epistemologies: mythical stories (formal teaching stories) and personal narratives. Both forms of story act as vessels for teaching important lessons and cultural knowledge to the listener, indeed, in Indigenous epistemologies, story and knowing are completely interconnected. Prominent Indigenous writer, Thomas King (2003) muses that: “There are no truths. Only stories.” I think this beautifully articulates the contrast between Indigenous and Western ways of knowing. Separating the truth from the story is often the goal in academic research, however, from an Indigenous perspective, the two cannot be disentangled.

For this reason, according to Kovach, narratives (both mythical and personal) are the most powerful method to honor Indigenous epistemologies in research. However, she acknowledges the challenges of using story in research, in particular because Indigenous storytelling is traditionally oral in nature and academic research is generally communicated in written form (eg: this thesis). Story is also holistic by definition, whereas research often involves separating data from its source and then coding and organizing it into themes.

Kovach discusses how story can be used as a method, stating that “the privileging of story in knowledge-seeking systems means honouring ‘the talk’” (p. 99). She explains that this can be achieved through a variety of methods, including in-depth interviews, conversations and talking-circles. The less structured the method used, the more power the narrator has and the more the story can emerge. Story as a method can

be a way to highlight marginalized voices, shifting the power back to the participant, which helps to decolonize research and keep it in line with the needs of the community.

For this reason, I decided to use the conversational method (Kovach's version of unstructured interviews) for interviewing, as recommended by Kovach and the Urban Studies faculty. This method is open-ended, flexible and allows for storytelling, thus making it congruent with Indigenous epistemologies. In my experience, while I had written out a few preconceived questions (just in case), I found myself abandoning these questions and letting the conversation flow naturally. Though our talks sometimes strayed off topic, we always found our way back to the subject of food. I believe that using this method allowed for participants' stories to come through more than they would have in a strict, structured interview style. Looking back, it has also become clear to me that certain parts of our conversations that seemed off topic at the time, were actually relevant. In these moments, connections between food and culture were highlighted that may not have surfaced with the use of more structured methods.

I also found the conversational method to be helpful for establishing rapport between myself and participants because it allowed for a more natural dialogue, which in turn, made people more comfortable to share their stories. It also made me more relaxed as a listener because it alleviated the pressure of trying to achieve a specific outcome or generate answers to inflexible questions. In this way, I found that Homalco community members guided the direction of the conversations.

After the "conversation" stage of research is complete, Kovach explains there are particular challenges in store for the researcher when it comes to the interpretation of the stories. Specifically, she believes that analysis, which preserves Indigenous stories and honours Indigenous knowledge can be one of the most challenging aspects of Indigenous research. She explains that the concept of analyzing stories conflicts with the teaching method of storytelling itself, because, while Indigenous stories are often didactic in nature, the interpretation is meant to be left to the listener. In a way, the stories are meant to speak for themselves and will have different meanings depending on the listener. Therefore, she explains, the Western tradition of coding (or thematic grouping) and then analyzing data to produce objective "truths", conflicts with the process of Indigenous storytelling. To address this issue, rather than using the word 'analysis,' to describe the process of interpreting stories in Indigenous research, Kovach

employs the term ‘interpretive meaning-making.’ In the case of this project, interpretive meaning making meant reflecting on the stories I was told to gain a subjective understanding of Homalco food sovereignty, rather than reducing those stories into fragments in order to *prove* something about Homalco food sovereignty. Indeed, in an ideal world, interpreting meaning from stories in Indigenous research does not “fragment or decontextualize the knowledge [the stories] hold” (p. 131). The researcher can avoid doing this by presenting their findings in story form and including the actual stories told by participants within the research. The researcher then reflects on the stories. Such reflection is congruent with Indigenous ways of knowing because “[Indigenous] knowledge systems value the interpretative and the subjective” (p. 131).

However, Kovach is quick to explain that this type of interpretive meaning making is not necessarily an easy task within the Western academic system, where it may not be viewed as credible. As I mentioned above, Kovach states that for this reason, many researchers will find themselves doing a mixed-methods approach. For example, this may manifest in some degree of thematic coding, while still presenting participants’ stories as holistically as possible, in their own voices.

This was certainly the case for me, as I found myself struggling to balance Western and Indigenous research methods. While the interview aspect of my research was particularly conducive to storytelling, I found the “meaning making” (or analysis) process to be more of a challenge in terms of honoring story and Indigenous research methodologies. In my case, I struggled to fit the stories I was told into the linear, written format that is the thesis. While I knew from the onset that I wanted to preserve the stories (for example by frequently using large, direct quotations, rather than snippets of dialogue or summarizations), I had not really questioned the idea of using thematic analysis in my research. I made many attempts to organize the data I had collected into themes, headings and subheadings that made sense of the story I was trying to tell. I would try and fail, then try again, but it never felt quite right. I believe the reason I was struggling was because applying thematic analysis to the stories without adequately considering Indigenous epistemologies did not allow my writing to reflect the holism and interconnectedness that were embedded within the stories. The natural design of a written thesis forces the writer to put things in a particular order (and by default this implies a hierarchy) and yet, in this case, it felt like an impossible task. The order was never right because there was no logical chronology to the ideas I wanted to discuss –

they were completely interconnected. While I suspected that I had identified some important patterns, I did not know how to articulate them in a suitable way.

The problem I was facing is at the heart of the disconnect between Indigenous and Western research methodologies. While there may not be a way to completely address this concern within the Western academic context, I was able to mitigate the issue somewhat by seeking out guidance from Indigenous ways of knowing. For example, I found wisdom in the image of a medicine wheel below, representing the main components of Indigenous food systems:

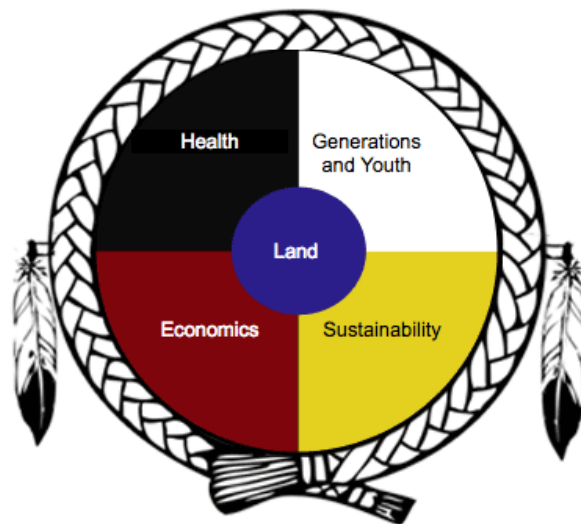


Figure 1 Medicine wheel depicting the components of Indigenous food sovereignty.

Source: <https://www.indigenousfoodsystems.org/> Reproduced with permission.

I came across this image on the Indigenous Food Systems Network webpage at the early stages of my research. The webpage does not contain much of an explanation about the graphic, stating only that “the medicine wheel is a powerful learning and teaching tool. It represents balance, wholeness and interconnectedness between all four quadrants.” However, when I saw this image later, while I grappled with the process of thematic analysis, it became more meaningful to me. It articulated something that I had been struggling to put my finger on throughout analysis: that I was trying to fit something holistic and cyclical – stories about Indigenous food systems, into a format that is linear – the thesis. The medicine wheel above highlighted the very themes that I had come to find in my own research, but in a way that I had not been able to articulate (or perhaps

even conceive) through writing. There is no hierarchy in the medicine wheel, instead it demonstrates the interdependent nature of all things, in this case, a healthy Indigenous food system.

Using the medicine wheel as a framework, I was able to write the sections I had been struggling with. I found that the medicine wheel helped to create a balance between Western and Indigenous methods. However, it is worth mentioning that I still rely heavily on thematic analysis (categorizing the information into sections and subsections by theme) in the meaning making chapters of this thesis. So, while the medicine wheel helped to mitigate some of the struggles described above, it did not completely alleviate them. It is also important to note that the medicine wheel itself originates from prairie First Nations groups and does not necessarily resonate with all Indigenous peoples (Verwood, Mitchell & Machado, 2011). However, the medicine wheel is premised on elements of a broader Indigenous worldview, such as the cyclical and relational nature of the world and the importance of balance in all aspects of life. Because of this, many Indigenous peoples from different backgrounds have used and adapted the concept of the medicine wheel for their own teachings. Thus, while not necessarily universal, “the use of the medicine wheel is one educational tool that can support the cultivation of Indigenous knowledge” (Ibid, 2011, p. 51-52). I found this statement to be true in the meaning making portion of this research project and therefore found it to be an appropriate framework in this particular context. With this in mind, I explore the above image of the medicine wheel more deeply in the meaning making chapters that follow. I also use another iteration of the medicine wheel – the cycle of the four seasons. I offer a more thorough explanation of these ideas in the following chapter.

Finally, Kovach discusses how the transcribing process can be an important part of Indigenous methodologies. This was absolutely true for me, as I found the act of transcribing the interviews to be extremely important for my research, in particular, the meaning making portion. Transcribing is a long and intimate process and taking the time to do it myself increased my understanding of the conversations significantly. Furthermore, because I alone understood the context and nuance of the interviews, my transcriptions were likely more accurate than if a stranger had done them.

4. *The researcher should use self-location to some extent in Indigenous research frameworks*

Kovach stresses the importance of locating the self within one's research. This includes identifying self, culture and purpose. It is critical for the researcher to expose their purpose and motivation for their research because of the exploitative history of research involving Indigenous communities and the fact that Indigenous epistemologies are relational in nature (Kovach, 2009; Baker, 2009; Wilson, 2007; Menzies, 2001). The researcher must articulate their relationship to the research that they are participating in. This can be achieved by honestly reflecting upon one's own story, including one's motivations and limitations. However, there is no exact formula for how this might manifest within the research project – it is left to the researcher to decide. Kovach explains that self-location “is about being congruent with a knowledge system that tells us that we can only interpret the world from the place of our experience” (p. 110). Therefore, as with Indigenous epistemologies, this method embraces subjective knowledge and contextual knowing because, “we cannot be separated from our work, nor should our writing be separated from ourselves” (Wilson, 2007, p.194). Self-locating in research is an act of transparency that holds the researcher accountable to both themselves and to the community (Kovach, 2009).

My version of self-locating occurs mostly in the Introduction of this thesis, where I introduce myself and explain my motivations and limitations as a researcher. Furthermore, I am an active participant throughout the thesis and speak in the first person quite often, thus acknowledging the subjective nature of knowledge.

The more I learn about self-locating, the more I understand its value in research. Indeed, as a non-Indigenous person learning to be an ally, it is crucial that I am able to say who I am and where I come from because this research would be different had it come from someone else (for example someone from within the Homalco community or an Indigenous person). I have a certain background and privilege that informs my voice and I need to be open about that with the reader.

5. *Indigenous research must be done in a “good way” (Indigenous research ethics and reciprocity)*

Finally, Kovach discusses the importance of doing research in a “good way” (p. 141). To Kovach this means engaging in cultural codes of ethics, for example by following community protocols and through “giving back” (p. 147). She describes in great detail many protocols that exist for conducting research with and by Indigenous peoples. Unfortunately, they are too extensive to repeat them here. However, following protocols often involves having community and/or leadership approval before proceeding with a research project. The researcher needs to educate themselves on specific community protocols and respect both the protocols and the epistemologies behind them in their research.

The concept of “giving back” can manifest in different ways depending on the context, but Kovach offers some guidelines. For example, she states that the research should be relevant to the community in question and that the data collected should belong to the community. Furthermore, the researcher should strive to build a relationship with the community; one which is based on trust and reciprocity.

In order to pursue this research, I aimed to make the project relevant to the Homalco community. I also knew that I needed community approval to proceed (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, & Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2015, Ch. 9). I collaborated with Ella Paul, my community liaison from Homalco, to establish how/if the topic related to the community and the best way to proceed. She was interested in the topic and felt that it was relevant to community members as well. With Ella backing the project, Homalco Chief and council gave permission for the research to proceed under the condition that the research belonged to the community. To meet this condition, Homalco received every transcript and recording of the interviews and reviewed the thesis upon completion. Throughout the project, Ella acted as gatekeeper and oversaw who in the community I spoke with, which, given my limited time in the community was only a small group of individuals. Given more time, a longer, more involved project would have allowed me to meet with more people and gain broader perspectives on this topic, which would have offered a more holistic understanding of Homalco food sovereignty.

Kovach also mentions that while anonymity in research has an important purpose, in Indigenous research, participants should have the option to be named whenever possible. This is because from an Indigenous perspective validity (or truth) is “bound with the integrity of the person sharing knowledge” (p. 148). In other words, the meaning of stories is tied up with the person telling them. For this reason, participants were given the option to be named in the thesis and, indeed, every participant chose to have their identity stated along with their stories.

3.2. Conversations with Community Members

I knew from the onset of this project that I wanted to research in a “good way.” Specifically, I only wanted to pursue this project if it proved to be valuable and relevant to the Homalco community. After reaching out to the Homalco band office, I was put in touch with Ella Paul, a Homalco community member working as a Family Support Worker for the band, who is passionate about food related issues in her community. Ella became a community liaison for me. Having a keen interest in the topic of Homalco food sovereignty, she was a champion for the project, setting up interviews and directing me on appropriate protocol within the community.

In February 2018, I went to Campbell River to have conversations with community members about Homalco food sovereignty. Ella scheduled all the interviews during a one week period, so I was able to collect the majority of the information I needed in one trip to Campbell River. Having Ella with me throughout was essential for my research, as she was both a participant in the research and a collaborator and helped to establish trust with participants. Essentially, I shadowed her around the community for a week, meeting with various community members and discussing food sovereignty. I ended up meeting with 9 people (including Ella), 8 of whom are Homalco community members living on the reserve. With permission, I audio recorded all of the interviews.

On Monday, we started by interviewing the newly elected Chief, Darren Blaney and the band manager, Sue Hanley (the only participant who is not a member of the Homalco nation). This is Chief Blaney’s second time being elected Chief for the Homalco nation. His last term was from 2002–2008.

On Tuesday, we spoke with Bill Blaney in his home over coffee. He is Chief Blaney's uncle and an Elder in the Homalco community. He has been very involved with sustaining Homalco's cultural heritage and is a well-respected carver in the community and beyond. In order to distinguish between them, I refer to Chief Darren Blaney as *Chief Blaney* and Bill Blaney as *Bill* throughout the thesis.

On Wednesday, I was invited to participate in a traditional language class (the K'omoks language) that Ella organizes for community members. There were three Elders participating in the class that day: Maggie Paul, Caroline Wilson and Ricky Francis. Maggie is Ella's mother. Ricky and Caroline are husband and wife. During the class, we listened to pre-recorded audio tapes of language lessons, while we discussed Homalco food sovereignty. We also made Valentine's day crafts as we chatted. All three Elders lived in the traditional territory in Church House before eventually relocating to Campbell River.

On Thursday, my final day in Campbell River, we met with Marselis Carmichael and Antony Paul, two Homalco youths who work for the Homalco Wildlife Tours. Both are in their early twenties and grew up on the reserve in Campbell River. They discussed their experiences working as guides for Homalco Wildlife Tours, a company that gives wildlife and cultural tours of the Homalco traditional territory. I discuss Homalco Wildlife Tours in great detail in Chapter 5. Unfortunately, I had a mishap with my recorder during this interview and therefore lost the audio from this conversation. However, Ella and I took thorough notes and reconstructed the interview as accurately as possible. For this reason, I will not be using direct quotations when discussing my conversation with Antony and Marselis.

It is important to note that I only met with a very small group of the Homalco population and, therefore, I cannot make generalizations about the Homalco community at large. This thesis depicts the thoughts and opinions of the above people; they do not speak for the entire community. Had it been possible, it would have been valuable to speak with more people, in particular, more youths of a variety of ages, whose insights and perspectives could have contributed to a more well-rounded and thorough understanding of the meaning of food sovereignty in the Homalco context. However, I was not able to speak to do so, given the scope of this project. For this reason, there is a bias towards non-youth perspectives throughout the thesis.

Chapter 4.

Connections: Food and Community

“Food will be what brings the people together.”

– Secwepemc Elder, Jones Ignace

In this chapter, I begin to answer the first part of my research question – what does food sovereignty mean to the Homalco community – by introducing the Homalco community and their food system through stories, both old and new. In the first section, I share a brief overview of Homalco’s history and relocation to Campbell River to provide important context for the question of Homalco food sovereignty. In the second section, I explore the core Homalco values of humility, welcoming and sharing and their relationship to Homalco food sovereignty. Finally, I use the last section of this chapter as a place for stories about significant Homalco foods and food traditions, both past and present, through the lens of the four seasons to provide a framework for understanding food sovereignty in the Homalco context.

I refer throughout the following chapters to Dawn Morrison’s four guiding principles of Indigenous food sovereignty. As discussed in more detail in the literature review, they are: 1) Sacred or Divine Sovereignty - food is a sacred gift and that we have a responsibility to the earth that sustains us; 2) Participation - active participation from the community and from all generations is integral to maintaining Indigenous food sovereignty; 3) Self-Determination - Indigenous people have the right to self-determine their own food systems; and 4) Legislation and Policy - food sovereignty is about developing legislation and policy that directly reflect these core values. These four principles were identified through collaborative discussions, meetings and conferences with Elders, traditional harvesters and community members, facilitated by the B.C. Food Systems Network Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty. They are intended to act as a guide for communities striving for Indigenous food sovereignty.

Based on the conversations I had with participants, their idea of Homalco food sovereignty aligns with the four guiding principles described by Morrison. While the community members I spoke with did not use the same language that Morrison uses to convey the concept of food sovereignty, I found that their stories consistently evoked the

four principles. Furthermore, Morrison's four principles are purposely left broad with the idea that they will manifest differently to meet the specific needs of diverse Indigenous communities. Indeed, Homalco participants' stories pulled Morrison's four principles from the theoretical realm to the living reality. With this in mind, the following sections focus on the four principles of Indigenous food sovereignty as they apply specifically to the Homalco community and demonstrate that these principles are an important aspect of food sovereignty in the Homalco context.

4.1. Stories of Home: The People of Fast Running Waters

Gaining a detailed understanding about how the Homalco people came to reside in Campbell River and, more specifically, on the particular parcel of land that they occupy now proved challenging through written documents. I found bits and pieces through online research, but soon realized that I needed to hear the story first hand to form a better understanding of the events. Through the conversations I had with various community members and in conjunction with publicly available information, I pieced together a rough timeline of Homalco's recent history.



Figure 2 Map depicting Campbell River in relation to the Bute Inlet (in green) and Church House

Licensed under CC-BY-NC-SA from Scribble Maps. Map and data attribution: Google, Open Map Tiles, Open Street Map.

As I briefly mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, the Homalco First Nation are Coast Salish people, whose traditional language is the K'omoks language. Their traditional territory is in the Bute Inlet, on the West Coast of British Columbia. They are known as the "people of fast running waters," after the turbulent waters of the area. Chief Blaney gave me a brief overview of Homalco's settlements:

Homalco started out in what is called, Old Church House [on Sonora Island] and before that [our people] migrated in and out of the Bute Inlet, and out here to Campbell River and down to Denman Island for different food resources throughout the year or even just [to get] away from the Bute Inlet's winters, cuz the winds blew pretty strong. That's why we moved from the first Church House, it's called Old Church House. The wind blew it down and our people moved because it knocked over the homes and the canoes were flying and [so] they moved to [new] Church House. They were there for maybe a little over a hundred years.

In many ways, Church House proved to be an advantageous location for the Homalco people, as it provided shelter from the strong winds and abundant fishing opportunities. However, by the 1850s, the government of Canada had confined most B.C First Nations to reserves as part of the Indian Act (Harris, 2002). The reserve system sought to destroy Indigenous cultures and assimilate Indigenous peoples to Euro-Canadian society while simultaneously making room for settlers to occupy the vast expanses of remaining land (Hanson, 2009). The Canadian government shrunk reserves over time, arbitrarily dividing up lands and disrupting long-established food systems and networks:

From the late 1860s, Native leaders [in British Columbia] had protested their small reserves in every way they could, claiming, fundamentally, that their people would not have enough food and that their progeny had no prospects. In retrospect, they were right. The spaces assigned to Native people did not support them, although the mixed economies they cobbled together, the revised diets they ate, and the accommodations and settlements they lived in had allowed some of them to survive. (Harris, 2002, p. 291)

While the reserve system probably limited Homalco's ability to access their seasonal resources, it is unclear to what extent Homalco's food system was disrupted during that time. It was also around this time that Catholic missionaries came to the territory, seeking to convert Indigenous peoples to Christianity. Chief Blaney told me about how the Homalco people were coerced into adopting Christian rituals:

... [An Elder was telling me that] around 1870, after the last wave of smallpox, our people were given the choice. [The missionaries] said: we can give you the remedy for smallpox – we were down to about 87 – [if] you become Christians, so we became Catholics... We had one last potlatch and he said we had it for a month in Bute Inlet. They went all up and down the coast, invited people up to Homathko and they had a big potlatch up there... so they invited people from up and down the coast and then that was our last potlatch and we became Christians and they didn't do the songs anymore after that.

Christian values and rituals were strictly enforced, cultural practices like potlatching and traditional dancing were banned and there were harsh punishments for those who did not follow these rules (Kennedy & Bouchard, 1983).

By the 1930s, the Church forced Indigenous children in the area to attend residential schools. Residential schools disrupted family units and interrupted the transmission of language and traditional knowledge between generations, making it impossible for the community to sustain their traditional ways of life (Homalco First Nation, 2011). Thus, the Homalco people were forced to live in the “modern world.” However, modern life could not be sustained in the remote Church House area because of a lack of services and “a faltering fishing economy” (City of Campbell River, 2013) which Chief Blaney describes below:

In 1969, the Davis Plan² came out... and the fishing licenses were reduced... Homalco had 26 licenses and we lost 24 of them in that plan, so we lost the fishing... so most of the people that were in Church House, some of them did transfer over to Sliammon and lots of them left to Vancouver and to here [Campbell River] and to Powell River.

Individuals and families started moving away to more urbanized areas, where there were the resources needed to survive in modern society. Bill described how this set into motion a domino effect. There was not enough work and so families started moving, making it so that there were not enough children to keep the school running. Then grocery stores started closing because they were not getting enough business. Most of the young people eventually left Church House, however some of the Elders remained.

² Introduced in 1968, the Davis Plan aimed to control and decrease fishing capacity, by reducing fishing licenses in British Columbia (Schwindt, Vining & Weimer, 2003). The plan was part of a broader trend of limited entry licensing with the ultimate goal of enhancing the profitability of Canada's fisheries. However, the discriminatory criteria to qualify for fishing licenses disproportionately affected First Nations peoples and contributed to their exclusion from the commercial fishing industry (Jones, Shepert & Sterritt, 2004).

The Elders had depended on the young people for survival and therefore could no longer sustain themselves, so they were ultimately forced to move away as well. “That’s how come Church House has just become a ghost town,” Bill told me. Indeed, this was an all too common situation for Indigenous British Columbians:

Disruption of traditional networks, marginalization from the capitalist economy, as well as discriminatory legislation that outlawed resource distribution and severely limited Aboriginal people’s ability to fish and hunt, led to a rapid increase in poverty on reserves. Many Aboriginal people living on reserves suddenly found that they were unable to sustain themselves or their families. However, leaving the reserve meant facing discrimination and assimilation in urban centers, relinquishing one’s Indian rights, and losing or jeopardizing connections to family and territory (Hanson, 2009).

In fact, by the early 1980s, Church House was completely deserted and the Homalco people were dispersed around different areas of the West Coast (many in urban centers like Vancouver and Campbell River), without any suitable land to make a new home for themselves. Many residents had settled in Campbell River at the time, including Bill:

In 1972, my wife and I moved to Campbell River and we were renting... a lot of our people were moving away and coming to Campbell River. So, when we did move there were almost 20 years of, you know, nothing happening with our band. It was kind of a dead period. Cuz our people were all spread out and it wasn’t like a community anymore. Until we started this village [in Campbell River].

Homalco leadership started negotiating with the government to purchase lands for a new community in Campbell River. Chief Blaney explained to me that there were two other land options available to the Homalco people, one closer to the centre of Campbell River and another that was further out of town, but close to the water and a bus route. However, “our Chief at the time didn’t want us too close [to the town center], but he felt the other one was too far” Chief Blaney explained, “but that one had bus service! And it was down by the water.” In hindsight then, it seems like these other land options may have been more aligned with the needs of the Homalco community. Regardless, leadership settled on the current area (which may have seemed like a happy medium – not too close, but not too far from the center of town) and construction began in 1992 (City of Campbell River, 2013). Many Homalco community members now live on reserve in Campbell River. While the band still has claim over parts of their traditional territory, the Bute Inlet is only accessible by boat. Regardless, the Homalco people are

making efforts to reconnect with their ancestral lands, which I explore in more detail in Chapter 5.

4.2. Stories of Community: Sharing, Service and Humility in Homalco Culture

During our interview, Antony told me the story about the origins of cedar – one of his favourite stories that he learned to tell while working for Homalco Wildlife Tours. He told me how, long ago Cedar was a young boy who was very helpful in his community.³ He helped everyone willingly for his whole life. At the end of his life, Cedar, now an old man asked his people to bury him on the high mountain. He told his people to come back to where they had buried him in one year's time. "You will see" he said. The people went back after one year and saw the first cedar tree. So now the Homalco people cherish the cedar and only use what they need and always give an offering before a harvest. Thus, Cedar continues to be of use to his people, even today.

The Story of Cedar lays out a good foundation for thinking about Homalco food sovereignty because it articulates the deep, reciprocal connection to the land that the Homalco people share. In particular, this story highlights the sacred or divine sovereignty principle of food sovereignty because it emphasizes the belief that the earth's resources are a sacred gift.

This story also demonstrates the importance of being of service to one's community within Homalco culture. Indeed, Kennedy and Bouchard (1983) describe how Homalco stories and myths model behavior considered to be exemplary in their people. These stories exemplify behaviours such as, "being hospitable, unselfish, modest, hard-working, [and] respectful of one's elders" (p. 98). The story of Cedar reflects such didacticism. As a man, Cedar is helpful to his community and in the afterlife, he becomes the Cedar tree, which is sacred and provides for the Homalco people. Cedar is rewarded for his helpfulness in life by remaining of service to his community even in death, revealing how deeply these qualities are valued within the Homalco community.

³ Story is paraphrased due to recorder malfunction.

Throughout our conversations, community members told me stories about food that featured the virtues of openness, helpfulness and sharing exemplified by Cedar himself. For instance, Maggie described how her mother demonstrated the qualities of giving and welcoming that are taught within Homalco culture:

[Another Elder in the community said] ... that her parents were alcoholics and they were always hungry and she said the place [they] always went to was *my* mom. My mom always fed them. She said they were never... they *were* hungry, but they knew where to go was my place and my mom always had something for them. I don't remember this, but that's what she said. I know my mom would see a boat coming from the island - right away she's got the tea on.

Maggie's mother's generosity and hospitality are reminiscent of the lessons learned from the story of Cedar and the value of being of service to one's community, by sharing and helping others. In this case, Maggie's mother expresses those values through food. Traditionally, qualities like sharing and being of service to one's community may have been essential for everyday survival, especially for the Elders in the community. Bill explained to me that "a lot of people worked together to survive... a lot of people helping cut wood for the Elders." In Indigenous cultures, it is important to look after one's Elders, who are deeply respected for their experience, knowledge and wisdom (Stiegelbauer, 1996). Indeed, Ella told me that in Homalco tradition, when it comes to the sharing of food, the Elders in the community should always be given top priority.

I also heard modern-day stories that reflected the same ideals of service and generosity. For example, Maggie explained how in a recent time of need, Caroline and Ricky supported her:

They're good people these two. Cuz when I was struggling before my pension kicked in, before I started getting pension, and I had no groceries... I was telling Caroline about it and I look out my window and here they're coming with boxes and bags. Gave me about five bags of groceries... they didn't ask for anything, you know, in return.

Stories like these demonstrate how the Homalco values of sharing and helping are reflected in their interactions with food. People express these values through the sharing of food and by welcoming others using food. In the same vein, Antony and Marselis told me how one major aspect of the cultural tours they provide through Homalco Wildlife Tours is the sharing of a big, traditional feast with their visitors. This is both an act of sharing their culture and welcoming their guests. As the epigraph of this chapter

articulates, food provides common ground for people from different backgrounds to connect with one another. Dawn Morrison too understands food to be a place of common ground and believes that the Indigenous food sovereignty movement can benefit *all* peoples because the earth provides all of us with our food. By sharing a feast with their guests, the guides of Homalco Wildlife Tours establish common ground and connect with others through food.

While the story of Cedar demonstrates the importance of sharing and being of service within one's own community, Antony and Marselis' description of sharing a feast with their guests extends past the local context. Indeed, Chief Blaney explained to me that these values and teachings go beyond helping one's own people:

We've always welcomed people, we never had a problem welcoming people. When the Spaniards first came we welcomed them, we helped them. The Chilcotin came down, they had no fish, we welcomed them...

Here we see that the value of hospitality extends to all people in need, not just community members. In particular, Chief Blaney illustrates the Homalco people's willingness to share land and food sources.

While sharing and being of service are important Homalco values, Chief Blaney explained to me that an imposed European belief system has interfered in some ways with the expression of these ideals. Colonization and urbanization have interrupted the ways in which Indigenous people manage and interact with the land and each other, for example by confining communities into reserves that did not reflect Indigenous ways of life or their respective territories and uses (Harris, 2002; Hanson, 2009). To Chief Blaney, even the idea of land claim, which addresses the control over much larger portions of land than do reserves, is flawed. Bands, like Homalco, have had to adapt to the Western legal system in order to assert control over their territories. In a legal sense this means proving exclusive use and occupation of lands in order to have claim to the land and thus, control over its use (Miller Titerle + Company, 2014). However, according to Chief Blaney the idea of private ownership and having exclusive use and occupation of lands contradicts Homalco teachings:

...Declaration of Title says that you have to have, for that case, exclusive use and occupation and that doesn't quite fit with Homalco because we welcome people, we share it [land/food sources] with people and that's just our teachings, it's sharing. If the people from Comox came, we shared with

them. We shared with Sliammon and Klahoose, we shared with them and pretty much we're willing to help anybody, and that's just the teachings and it doesn't fit that square hole of exclusive use and where you have to fence off your territory. That's not the way it works. So that kind of legal understanding is cultures not fitting properly and I think we have to get this legal jargon to fit so that there's an understanding of the sharing and the kind of stuff that we did...

The Homalco people have had to adhere to a Western idea of ownership and exclusivity in order to have any claim over a place that they have called home for thousands of years, when in reality, the Homalco people moved between places throughout the season and shared the bounty the land had to offer with their neighbouring communities and those in need. While Chief Blaney may agree that there needs to be a way for Indigenous peoples to express sovereignty over their lands within a Western context, he sees the current system as imperfect. Indeed, he implies that colonial laws inhibit Homalco's core values of generosity and service to others, values which he inherently links to Homalco's food system. This draws on the policy and legislation principle of Indigenous food sovereignty because Chief Blaney believes that policy and legislation should reflect the ways in which his people use the land and its food sources. Chief Blaney's words also link to the principle of sacred or divine sovereignty because he expresses the sentiment that "the right to food cannot be constrained or recalled by colonial laws" (Morrison, 2011). The Homalco belief that land and food sources are to be shared by all clashes with the current system of land and food distribution, which is based on the capitalist notion of private ownership.

Similarly, Chief Blaney sees the impact a colonial legacy has had on band leadership by imposing European, hierarchal power structures on Indigenous communities. "Our people they could all share the beaches there was no private fishing spots for [leaders], everybody just shared it," he told me. According to Chief Blaney, in Homalco tradition it is the Chief's job to be of service to the community. "As a leader, you're supposed to be serving the people, not taking the best for yourself. That's like a European concept and it's totally off the mark." Indeed, for the Homalco people, "one of your teachings is you have to be humble" and this extends to leadership. Being humble allows you to be of service to your community and Chief Blaney worries that these teachings, within a leadership context, are being undermined by more individualistic ideals, like wealth and power, typically associated with Western culture. That is not to say that a person's status was of no concern in traditional Homalco society, however

status was achieved through displays of modesty and generosity. Those with affluence frequently held feasts and gave gifts in order to maintain support within their community (Kennedy & Bouchard, 1983). Once again, we see that generosity displayed through the sharing of food is a highly valued cultural practice within Homalco history for leaders and citizens alike.

While these are just a few examples, it is noteworthy that food is a central theme in the above stories depicting the core values of generosity and welcoming embedded in Homalco culture. From sharing food sources with neighbouring communities and European settlers, to making sure the community's children and Elders are provided for, or even the simple act of welcoming guests with food, these stories illustrate a completely different understanding of land and food than our current, capitalist, industrial food production model. In these stories, the land and its food sources are not commodities, rather they are "a source of life, culture and relationship" (Matties, 2016). Morrison states that "food is a gift from the Creator. In this respect, the right to food is sacred and cannot be constrained or recalled by colonial laws, policies and institutions." The Homalco ideals of sharing and welcoming others, displayed through the means of land and food, align with this principle, because food is seen as a gift that it is meant to be shared. Based on the stories of participants, I believe Homalco food sovereignty can begin to be understood from such a perspective. In my understanding, to the Homalco community members I spoke with, food sovereignty embodies the core values of sharing, community service and welcoming illustrated above. Thus, Homalco food sovereignty will foster a food system that allows these values to flourish.

4.3. Stories About Food Traditions

During one of our first meetings, Ella handed me a little booklet that the Homalco band had made as a learning tool. It had an old picture of Church House on the front and the names of the four seasons bordering it in different coloured blocks, reminiscent of the medicine wheel. Inside, there were three pages dedicated to each season, showing their respective traditional activities, the overwhelming majority being food related. Each activity had a page with a photo and a simple word or phrase, in both English and the K'omoks language. The sections were titled "Winter is here" and "Fall is here" and so on. Ella gifted me the booklet and upon re-examining it during the meaning making process, it revealed itself to be a good framework for imagining Homalco food sovereignty. I had

already found inspiration in the teachings of the medicine wheel (which I explore further in the following chapter) and noticed similarities in this simple booklet about the seasons. Indeed, constant and cyclical, the seasons can be envisioned using the metaphor of the medicine wheel. Below is an image of the cover of the seasons booklet and, while rectangular due to its book shape, it is not difficult to imagine it as a circular medicine wheel, depicting the cyclical nature of the four seasons.



Figure 3 Seasons booklet cover (old picture of Church House in the center)
Reproduced with permission.

Indeed,

For First Nations, seasons embodied the cyclical nature of life: birth, youth, adulthood and death. Seasons meant changes in lifestyle, food, social activities, religious and spiritual practices and economic pursuits. Many First Nations noted the changes in their lives that were influenced by the seasons by naming the months of the year after major events occurring during these periods. It was important for their survival that they observe and keep track of these changes (McCue, H. A., et al. 2000).

This statement is relevant to the Homalco people. “It’s like that 13 Moons thing,” Chief Blaney told me, referring to the traditional calendar used by the Homalco people. The 13

moons of the calendar represent different months (and their seasons) and each one has specific activities and food sources associated with it. The moons and seasons of the calendar greatly influenced Homalco day to day life (Ballard, 1950; Galligos, 2012). Indeed, as I have already mentioned, Chief Blaney told me how, traditionally, the Homalco people migrated along the Bute Inlet with the changing seasons to escape bad weather and access different food sources.

The seasons are an appropriate framework for imagining food sovereignty in the Homalco context because they highlight the holistic, cyclical and connected nature of Indigenous food systems and specifically, the Homalco food system described to me by my participants. Indeed, while perhaps somewhat idealized, the following food stories, told through the four seasons come together to represent a holistic, interconnected, participatory and self-sufficient Homalco food system that is indicative of food sovereignty itself.

I based this section on a framework that has been preconceived by the Homalco community – the seasons booklet – both with the aim of making Homalco knowledge the foundation of my analytical research and to make this research useful and meaningful to the community. Please note that I have used this framework rather imprecisely. I did not formulate the conversations I had with Homalco community members around the seasons and indeed, I took some liberties interpreting which stories belonged in which season. Just because a food related activity is mentioned in one season, does not mean that it does not take place in another season; they are not mutually exclusive. Rather, this is quite simply a story about Homalco food traditions, both past and present, as understood through the changing seasons, which in turn provides a framework for imagining Homalco food sovereignty.

Winter is here...

Winters were hard times in Church House, but they were also a time for celebration.

Though the winter months in Church House were sometimes associated with food scarcity, some food sources were still available to the Homalco people, especially in early winter. For example, Chief Blaney described the herring run in December:

The herring would come in December... so you'd get all kinds of herring you can access. I used to go down to the dock with my triple hook on lines and then I'd just throw it out and I'd be just yanking and then [I'd] fill up a container for my grandmother. Either she'd fry us some or she'd put them on stick. My grandmother smoked those as well if they needed to make them last.

While the herring were available in December, Bill explained that, "December wasn't bad, but January, February, we really had tough times in Church House." Indeed, many of the community members I spoke with discussed the difficulties of life in Church House in the winter. Bill described the very real struggle for his people to survive during the winter months:

Church House... [there] were good memories of it and there were a lot of hard times as well, you know, cuz the North wind blows out of the inlet... When I first quit school, when I turned 16, I didn't like the residential school and I stayed home and your grandfather (referring to Ella) was the Chief – Simon Paul – and [the wind] blew out of the inlet thirty-one days straight. We couldn't go anywhere – you could see the people just starving... It was quite the tough time...

Bill's words indicate just how much of an impact the winter weather had on the Homalco people in Church House. Chief Blaney too explained the effect of the violent winter weather and darkness on his people, explaining that it sometimes prevented them from accessing important food sources. For example, he told me that "[in] winter you can't always go dig clams because it's either too windy or it's nighttime... your digging at nighttime it's hard to get out there, especially up in [the] Bute [Inlet]."

As the weather often prevented people from accessing food resources during the winter, many relied on food they had preserved and store-bought foods they had stored away. Maggie described for me a typical meal during those times:

We didn't have much, eh? We used to get always the same pretty much every day. Boiled potatoes with fish or my mom used to jar the deer... we'd have that with our boiled potatoes.

Despite the hardship people faced during the winter in Church House, I also heard stories about the resilience of the Homalco people during those times. For example, Bill remembers how the community would come together to brighten the winter months:

A lot of people worked together to survive. A lot of people helping cut wood for the Elders. Church House used to be a leader at that time, in the early 30s and 40s. Because the other reserves came to Church House for Christmas and New Year's. Cuz then the party would start like in December after Christmas Day and go until New Year's Day. They'd dance every night. The people were pretty good at providing because, you know, they would go hand log and sell their logs and what money they get all goes for the party. My dad was always involved in that and your grandfather [referring to Ella's grandfather]. He had a gillnetter, he would tow his logs. There was a log-buyer in Redonda Bay. They had a nice fir, number one fir. They would go sell that and the money all goes for the party. And that's how they really had entertainment. A lot of entertainment came from Church House. Like there was my brother Fred and my brother Walter. Fred, my brother played the accordion and my brother Walter played the guitar. And everybody would take part, you know, like every night... you make a big mess with Japanese oranges, apple cores. People would help one another to go clean it out for the next night.

Bill paints a picture of a vibrant community, despite the hardship described earlier. I heard similar stories from Maggie who remembered the joy of holiday celebrations in Church House. Like Bill, Maggie reminisced about how the sharing of music was a quintessential part of the Christmas/New Year's parties. The Homalco musicians even shared their music with neighbouring communities.

It was [in the] great big hall, about the size of the hall here. It [had] a wooden floor and [at] one time, [a] big wood stove in there... they didn't have electricity so there was no music coming from the radio or anything to dance to. They had guys play, like Billy (Bill Blaney) was one of them... My sister's husband was a saxophone player. My dad was banjo. There was another one... accordion player. [Another Elder] was telling me, she said that these guys that had all these instruments, they'd all pile up on - it's a like a canoe I guess they had, a long boat like a canoe - all the guys that had instruments got on that boat and they rode to different places and played for the different dances. They said they'd travel a long way.

Maggie also spoke fondly about the treats people would receive at the parties:

We mentioned about the Christmas parties we used to have in Church House. Like I said, my dad was Chief at the time and he had my sister as a secretary and other ladies and they'd go around door to door and get donations. Ten cents... because in those days I guess money would go farther. And they collected and whatever they made they went a got the bologna, the bread and the candies, candy canes and oranges, apples. They used to come in wooden boxes those oranges, Japanese oranges. And we'd all go to the party and we had pillow cases. Peanuts, those shelled peanuts and those candies - you don't see them anymore - they come in little pieces, there's one that twirly. I don't know if you've ever seen them? Everybody would go to the hall all dressed up in their pretty

dresses and we all had the pillow cases with us cuz that was our bag, because they'd go around. We all sat against the wall, went around the hall and the guys would come with the box of oranges, box of apples and they'd put it in our bag.

Maggie describes how the community would all come together to contribute to the Christmas parties. She also told me that people would donate different food items for example: smoked fish, boiled potatoes with vegetables, fried bread (bannock), jarred deer or fish, fish sandwiches and tea. Her description makes it clear that this was a joyous occasion, where food and music were to be shared by all.

Traditionally, before colonization, ceremonies (like the one described above) would have been potlatches, rather than Christmas celebrations. The word “potlatch” come from the word meaning “to give” in the Nuu-chah-nulth First Nation’s language. Indeed, a potlatch is a gift-giving ceremony practiced by Indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest, which is a cornerstone of their governances, cultures and economic systems (Joseph, 2018). One key purpose of the potlatch was to assert one’s status through the distribution of wealth (displays of generosity), but they were also used to acknowledge a status change of the host (such as a marriage), to restore someone’s reputation and to honour the dead, among others. These ceremonies were often large events and generally included a feast and/or the sharing of food (Kennedy & Bouchard, 1983). However, potlatches were banned by the government of Canada from 1885-1951 (Joseph, 2018). As I mentioned above, Chief Blaney told me about how the Homalco people were coerced into adopting Christian rituals, even before the potlatch ban, in exchange for the cure for smallpox.

While the Homalco people were no longer legally allowed to practice their traditional ceremonies, Chief Blaney drew my attention to the importance of the Christmas celebrations, described by Bill and Maggie above, as acts of resilience and defiance against the colonial power:

When I was a kid in Church House... we'd get ready for our Christmas and New Year's gatherings. It felt like, when we had no more potlatches, the way they packed all the stuff in like - the gifts and the food and stuff - all piled in the middle and when I went to the potlatches it's the same thing they do. So, our people just kind of snuck this old tradition into our Christmas.

Chief Blaney illustrates how cultures adapt and change to their environment. While potlatches were forbidden by the government, in an attempt to eradicate Indigenous social structures and cultures, the Homalco community found another way to, at least partially, express their social structure, cultural beliefs and traditions within the confines of a traditionally Christian celebration.

It is also noteworthy that, while my conversations with Homalco community members revolved primarily around traditional foods, some of the foods described during these holiday celebrations are not traditional. Bill and Maggie mention Japanese oranges and candies alongside more traditional foods like salmon and deer meat. This demonstrates how, like the celebration itself, Homalco food traditions adapted to incorporate untraditional foods that were made available through colonization. This exemplifies how food systems are not stagnant, rather they change with the environment. Foods that were not traditional in the past, for example the bannock (a fry bread originating from Europe, but adopted by Indigenous Canadians) mentioned by Maggie, have become an important part of many Indigenous communities' food systems. Thus, while traditional foods are an indisputably vital part of a community's food sovereignty (Morrison, 2011), these stories indicate the adaptability of food systems and even the flexibility of the term "traditional" to describe a food.

The fact that participants mentioned non-traditional foods during our conversations made me ponder the relationship between non-traditional foods and Indigenous food sovereignty and wonder whether or not these non-traditional foods can even fit in to the concept of Indigenous food sovereignty. Thinking about this relationship reminded me of the words of Indigenous writer, Thomas King. King (2013) states that, "the fact of Native existence is that we live modern lives informed by traditional values and contemporary realities and that we wish to live those lives on our terms" (p. 266). King's words are important because they suggest that movements like Indigenous food sovereignty cannot simply be about idealizing the past, but must also recognize that Indigenous peoples are navigating the modern world. As King articulates, it is vital that Indigenous peoples have the right to live their lives on their own terms, in other words, to self-determine.

Spring is here...

Spring is a time of “birth and renewal”. People spoke fondly of harvesting salmonberry shoots and clam digging.

During our conversation, Maggie told me about the rhubarb she grows in her backyard. Her grandson noticed it growing there and started harvesting it and eating it. “He just loves it,” she smiled. I told Maggie about how as a child I had rhubarb in my backyard too. “I used to eat it straight from the garden and dip it in sugar,” I recalled.

Maggie: That's what we do with that – briars, they call it briars – the salmonberry shoots. In Church House we used to be picking them and we all came out and everybody was so excited. Everybody would be out. They're green and they turn red... They're sour. That's why they dip them in sugar.

Salmonberry shoots were mentioned often during my conversations with people, regardless of their age or where they grew up. Chief Blaney remembers picking them and eating them as a child and Marselis too reminisced about the sour shoots. Like Maggie, Marselis has fond memories of picking them, dipping them in sugar and eating them as a treat.

Maggie, Chief Blaney and Marselis are all from different generations and yet they all have similar stories about this particular food source. Based on the prevalence of stories surrounding salmonberry shoot picking from people of varying ages, it appears that it is an activity that continues to be passed on through the generations and which is accessible in the Campbell River area, thus highlighting the importance of participation in the food system from all generations for food sovereignty in the Homalco context.

On top of picking salmonberry shoots, spring is also a particularly good time for digging clams, in Homalco tradition (although it is possible to dig for clams most of the year). Caroline and Chief Blaney both spoke about their memories digging for clams. Below Chief Blaney reflects on a time spent digging for clams with his grandfather as a child:

I remember when I was a kid I went with my grandfather to Surge Narrows and we dug up all of these clams and then we just kind of heated up these rocks and dumped our clams on there and then he put the kelp over it and poured water and then just kind of steamed them all up. They all steamed open and then we took them out and put them on sticks and this thing called oceanspray – it's like little straight branches, like ironwood – and we BBQ'd

them on a type of giant shish-kabob, cooked them all up right on the beach there and we took them home. My grandmother, if she wanted it to preserve longer, she'd take it and put it in the smokehouse and smoke it until it's totally dried out and then it's good for... it's dehydrated basically and then you can cook it up later on in the winter months... That's why Church House was chosen, because there are clam beaches that are within walking distance or you can paddle out there on a little dugout and at that time you used to be able to get a bucket in 5 to 10 minutes.

This story embodies the sacred or divine sovereignty and self-determination principles of within Homalco food sovereignty. It illustrates the richness that nature has to offer the Homalco people and stands in stark contrast to urbanity and the industrialized food system, because Chief Blaney and his grandfather are able to create a meal together using only the earth's bounty. In this moment, they have complete autonomy; no dependence on industrialized food networks or the modern amenities that we associate with urban life. Chief Blaney also shows how clams played such a central role in Homalco lives, that the location of Church House was chosen based on its proximity to them. It is not difficult to imagine then, how cultures, traditions and scientific knowledge emerged alongside food sources, since they were so essential for a peoples' everyday survival (Morrison, 2011). There is an inextricable link between Indigenous food and culture and thus, to pass down food knowledge is to pass down and sustain culture.

On this note, this story also demonstrates the participatory principle within Homalco food sovereignty, because it shows how knowledge is passed down through generations and how this in turn, upholds the Homalco food system and culture. It highlights the link between the moments that bond people and the food that sustains them. While Chief Blaney does not say it, it is likely that his grandfather learned the same techniques for digging and cooking clams from his own grandfather and so on. Through each transmission of knowledge, the tradition and skills associated with it are sustained. It is also a fond memory for Chief Blaney – a sweet moment shared with his grandfather and one that revolves entirely around the preparation and sharing of food. Positive intergenerational relationships like this one help to uphold the food system and thus, these relationships are vital elements of Homalco food sovereignty.

Summer is here...

Summer is the season of plenty and abundance. Reflections about berry picking and net fishing.

Seafood and in particular, fish (eg: salmon, rockfish, herring, lingcod etc.) has been one of the most significant food sources for the Homalco people throughout their history and thus fishing has been a very important cultural practice for the community (Kennedy & Bouchard, 1983). While there were options for fishing throughout the entire year, the seasons booklet put “net fishing” under summer, indicating that the summer months had particularly good fishing opportunities for the Homalco people.

In the past, the Homalco community used a variety of fishing techniques to harvest their seafood, depending on the environmental conditions. Net fishing for salmon was one main techniques: “a lot of our people were gillnetters, you know, fishing up rivers and that [open water],” Bill told me. He explained that traditionally the Homalco people also fished using traps and spears.

Ricky spoke of his memories fishing while growing up in Church House. He told me that his favourite food in Church House was “all kinds of fish” and that he used to fish almost every day with his family. “That was the good part,” he said, reminiscing about days spent fishing. Caroline agreed:

I used to love it. Rick and I used to always go fishing when we were kids... You coulda went down the wharf and you could fish [there]. Like, we used to love fishing when we lived in Church House. We used to go everyday on the boat and on the wharf. And that's what I miss about Church House, is the fishing and that.

Indeed, the residents I spoke with informed me that there are fewer opportunities for fishing now that the community resides in Campbell River and away from the water. However, some community members are still able to go fishing and they sometimes share what they catch with Elders, friends or neighbours. For example, there is a picture of Maggie in the seasons booklet with an enormous salmon, caught and gifted to her by her nephew. She told me the story behind the colossal fish:

I've never seen a fish that big or that was that fat... It was huge! My nephew – he lives next door to me – caught it at the river in Campbelton (neighbourhood in Campbell River, where the Campbell River is), like the bridge there. I don't know why he didn't keep it for himself, but he gave it to me. My son had a hard time putting it on the table. And I couldn't even flip it to fillet the other side. My grandson took a picture of it, I didn't expect it to be going in that book.

Maggie still fillets and prepare salmon and does her best to pass down this knowledge to younger generations, despite the relative availability of non-traditional foods compared to traditional foods available in Campbell River. While some of the Elders I spoke with were worried that the younger generations have not acquired a taste for traditional foods, such as salmon (I discuss this in more detail in Chapter 5), the small sample of youths that I spoke with love fish as a food source. For example, Antony remembers learning how to fillet fish from his parents and grandparents when he was a young boy. He even told me about how he recently won a fish filleting competition (a race to see who could fillet a fish the fastest) at another reserve. He didn't think he would win, but he did, demonstrating just how skilled he is at the task. Antony's story is an example of the participatory principle of food sovereignty and how education and training in an Indigenous context lead to the passing down of important food related knowledge.

Salmon, in particular, are foundational to coastal First Nations culture. While the food source may be more difficult to access for the Homalco people now that they are not living in the Bute Inlet, based on the conversations I had with community members, salmon is still an incredibly important food source that is incorporated into their diet as much as possible. Because salmon provide for the Homalco people, they are considered sacred in Homalco culture. Traditionally, ceremonies were held to welcome the salmon back each year (Kennedy & Bouchard, 1983). Salmon are also honoured and valued because they give back to the earth at the end of their lives. "Our forests are big, giant because of all the salmon that have gone up there and fed those forest," explained Chief Blaney. The salmon fertilize the forests and thus continues, even after death, to contribute to Homalco lifeways. Maggie described the effect of salmon as fertilizer on her berries:

My blackberries were huge. My son was always pouring – when I had fish – the blood of the fish in the water and he poured it over the blackberries and that's why they were growing so good.

The life of the salmon is cyclical, like the seasons themselves. By fertilizing her berries with salmon, Maggie demonstrates the interconnection between the different parts of the Homalco food system and the cyclical nature of it. Like Cedar, the salmon provides for the Homalco people both in life and in death and the Homalco people respect it deeply. Homalco's relationship with the salmon illustrates once again the sacred or divine sovereignty principle of food sovereignty. The importance of salmon is also discussed in

the context of “Fall is Here.” Furthermore, beyond their connection to the sacred and divine sovereignty principle of food sovereignty, both Maggie’s and Chief Blaney’s words exemplify Indigenous scientific knowledge and the use of sophisticated horticultural techniques in Indigenous food systems.

Maggie’s act of fertilizing her blackberries brings me to another important summer food for the Homalco people, a large variety of berries. Bill described how berry picking is a quintessential summer activity for community members. “My niece did research about where [our people] went berry picking. A lot of it [was] done through summer. You know, people going place to place looking for berries,” he told me. Caroline and Maggie spent time discussing the many varieties of berries and their uses.

Maggie: My mom always had jarred berries. We did a lot of berry picking, said Maggie. And she'd can them right away. Like salmonberries or blackberries.

Caroline: Huckleberries.

Maggie: Huckleberries. I just loved huckleberries, when they were canned. I love the juice of it.

In our interview, Chief Blaney reminisced about summer days in Church House as a child. They were days spent outside picking berries, swimming and playing.

I lived on fish, I lived on berries and fruits. My grandmother used to have a raspberry bush, like a patch behind her house, so I'd go there and eat raspberries. In the summer months I'd stay down and swim, I'd eat salal berries, huckleberries, salmonberries... and when I was a kid I thought they were blueberries, but they were saskatoons, eh? Yeah, I used to eat all those and we'd go paddling around on these little logs and then we'd swim around and then we'd go eat [more] berries and then we'd just carry on. It was healthy. There was no [refined] sugar there.

Chief Blaney went on to explain how his childhood experience contrasts with the lifestyles of Homalco children in Campbell River, who generally eat more of a processed diet. Indeed, as I have mentioned, some Elders also expressed a fear that, having grown up away from the traditional territory, younger generations have not developed a taste for their traditional foods. While the lifestyle of Homalco children may be different today than in Church House, according to the people I spoke to, berries have remained a seemingly universal treat. “I got a big raspberry garden in the back of my house,” Maggie

told me. “I was digging in my freezer looking for raspberries, all of my raspberries that I froze from my garden. The boys [grandchildren] got into them... I got no more berries!”

Based on the interviews I had with participants, berry picking engages all generations in Homalco’s food system, thus exemplifying the participatory principle of Indigenous food sovereignty. Like the picking of salmonberry shoots, berry picking was one traditional activity that every single one of the community members I spoke with, regardless of their generation, reflected upon with fondness. Indeed, “they’re still doing the berry picking stuff around here’ said Chief Blaney, demonstrating how this is a traditional activity that is still practiced. Ella emphasized the cross-generational appeal of berries:

I think it was in the summertime – was it 2 years ago – we went berry picking and then made jam with it... we had the jam-making here and had somebody come teach it. I think a couple of the youth took on that initiative to learn how.

Berries could have cross generational appeal because they are quite simply a delicious treat, that have a variety of uses. They are also easily accessible in both Campbell River and Church House. For example, Maggie, who enjoys picking berries, explained that there are many wild blackberries growing near the reserve. Anyone can access them and you do not need a boat or special tools. “Those blackberries are good,” she said, “the wild blackberries, the ones that grow on the ground. They make good jam and that.” She told me how you can even sell the berries for 30 dollars a bucket these days, thus they produce an economic benefit as well. This is a small example of how important traditional food related activities, like berry picking can contribute to Homalco self-determination.

While discussing the importance of passing down food traditions like berry picking for Homalco food sovereignty, Maggie told me the following story about her mother:

Maggie: My mom used to go berry picking around the point from our reserve there. We'd go by a row boat. She used to go by herself and then we started going cuz she was always coming home with the buckets of the wild [blackberries], the ones that grow on the ground. She used to walk up a mountain, quite steep... We decided to go with her, I did anyway. Then the girlfriends, like the other girls on the reserve started going. Mom would pack some fried bread and some tea in a jar or something – we didn't have

those thermos things or whatever – and we'd climb up... holy that was quite the hike. And she told us a story, that she said was true, that she got up there and she was picking away and she thought somebody was with her... looking around and here's this big black bear. And they just looked at each other and continued picking. Looked at her again and she was gonna leave, come back down and she looked and the black bear picked up the whole branch and put it on a stump and walked away. Fixed it up for my mom so she doesn't have to be bending down.

Me: Wow, that's amazing. That's a really cool story.

Maggie: Picked up the whole branch and sat it up on the stump and walked away. Didn't bother her. I would have been running.

(Laughter)

Ella: He was probably watching her for quite a long time and noticing her, how she was moving. I think since she'd leave some for him and took what she needed, I'm gonna help you now. I believe in those things.

Maggie: Yeah, she said [he] just walked away after, didn't bother her or growl at her or anything. They just kind of looked at each other.

Ella: I think [another community member] told me that story about grandma.

Maggie: Yeah, cuz they all started going up there with her, all the young teenage girls. Those teenagers just loved my mom. Cuz she acted like a teenager herself. That's what my dad used to say in our language. You're acting like a teenager, he'd say to her.

This narrative evokes the wholeness of the medicine wheel. It is at once a story about food traditions, about the importance of intergenerational bonds and about respecting the earth and its creatures. In hearing this story, I came to a better understanding of the deep connection to the earth and its creatures shared by the Homalco people, or in other words the principle of sacred or divine sovereignty in the Homalco food system. Maggie's mother and the bear coexist. Each leave enough berries for the other. They respect each other. Through this story, I also learn about the importance of intergenerational teaching for Homalco food sovereignty, as I do in Chief Blaney's story about digging for clams with his grandfather. In this example, storytelling builds relationships between generations, which allows for the transmission of traditional food related knowledge and encourages active participation in the food system, thus maintaining it. While Maggie's mother's "act[ing] like a teenager" it is perhaps this quality that allows her to have such a strong bond with the younger generation and in turn pass on her stories and her knowledge to them.

Fall is here...

“The big things usually happened in fall when you started smoking or barbequing salmon” (Bill Blaney).

While I discussed fishing more generally in *Summer is here*, the importance of salmon within the Homalco culture cannot be contained to one season. Indeed, fall is an significant season for catching and preserving salmon. Bill informed me that the main gill netting season was actually in the fall, “because at that time there was always an abundance of salmon around.” Kennedy and Bouchard describe fall fishing in Homalco tradition:

Every October and November, when the chum [dog] salmon return to their spawning grounds... men catch large numbers them, mostly with gill nets, but also with gaff hooks. Then, using the same techniques as their ancestors... women butcher and prepare the fish for smoking (Kennedy & Bouchard, 1983).

Like Bill, Kennedy and Bouchard explain how fall is the season for smoking and barbequing salmon in Homalco tradition. As the winters were unpredictable in Church House, adequate preparation in the fall was essential for survival. Chief Blaney spent some time explaining the process and variations of preserving salmon using Indigenous scientific knowledge:

If you take a look at before there were any refrigerators or anything our people had to smoke [our] fish. That was the reason they smoked dogfish, they preferred the dogfish – dog salmon [chum] – because it had less oil in it. When you barbequed the dog salmon in the traditional way (or butterfly style) you barbeque it until the oil stops dripping. Once that oil stops dripping then it won't go bad after, but in order to dry it up some more you take it and you put it in the smokehouse so it's good for the winter months. [Afterwards you can either] boil it up... [or] you just thin it out and you just dry it up like jerky. My grandmother, when she used to cook that up for us, sometimes she didn't boil it. All she did was just throw it in the stove (the fire) and it just had the back, where the skin is. She threw it in there... and then it cooked up a bit, then you pulled it out [and] you could just eat it that way.

Having access to traditional resources like salmon is an important part of Homalco food sovereignty, in part because it allows for self-determination and self-sufficiency. In the example above, being able to preserve their own food allowed the Homalco people to survive during the winter months. It is a food system that is completely self-contained and self-sustained. Some residents are still able to have their own smokehouses on

reserve in Campbell River. Maggie has one and will smoke fish when she gets the chance. She laughed as she told me how much her grandson likes her smoked fish: “My grandson, he'll come home from school and he'll be coming up the stairs: ‘I smell fish, I smell fish!’ He's running up the stairs. ‘I smell fish!’”

Maggie and Caroline also use canning as a method to preserve some of their traditional foods. “Sometimes, like if you're Maggie and I... we jar our fish and we jar deer meat to make it last,” said Caroline. “For the winter,” added Maggie. Preparing and preserving food was a vital skill to pass down through the generations, in part because it was so essential for survival. “Everything – that preserving, jarring peaches and stuff – I've learned from my mom. Filleting fish, smoking,” Ella told me. Ella's words once again bring to light the importance of the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, for participation in the Homalco food system.

It is worth noting that while Ella mentions skills associated with some traditional foods, she also brings up non-traditional foods, for example peaches, a more recently introduced food. Similarly, while the canning method for preserving food has been practiced for a long time within Homalco history, the technique originated from Europe (Huyck, 2012). This rearticulates the aforementioned idea that food traditions and techniques evolve and adapt, rather than remaining stagnant and the question of whether or not (and how) these new traditions can be a part of Indigenous food sovereignty. In this case, while the technique may have adapted and changed over time, the intergenerational transmission of food related knowledge endures, which is so essential for sustaining a culture and its food system.

After fall comes winter once again and the cycle repeats itself. As I have hoped to illustrate, the seasons played a key role in Homalco day to day life and the food sources they had available to them. There are a number of elements of Homalco food sovereignty that emerge from these stories, as told through the lens of the four seasons. Based on what was suggested in the stories I heard from the people I spoke to, I have come to understand their conception of Homalco food sovereignty as a circle with multiple layers. At the core is land, which is an essential element of Indigenous food sovereignty and which participants highlighted throughout our conversations (see Chapter 5). The first layer represents the specific, individual foods that are (for the most part) provided by the land and are quintessential elements of the Homalco food system.

These include, but are not limited to clams, salmon, berries, bannock and salmonberry shoots, all foods that participants mentioned often throughout our conversations. These foods provide more than just nutritional value; they are directly connected to the Homalco peoples' culture and lifeways and many are even considered to be sacred.

The next layer holds the cultural activities and traditions that intersect with these foods, including: storytelling, clam digging, fishing, barbequing and smoking, and potlatching and celebrations. These traditional activities are essential for passing down food related values and knowledge and thus help to sustain the Homalco food system. The outermost layer represents the values and principles embedded in the Homalco food stories I was told, all of which inform Homalco's relationship to and interactions with their food system. These include the four overarching, guiding principles identified by Morrison and the Indigenous food systems network (sacred or divine sovereignty, participation, self-determination, and legislation and policy), which were supported by the stories I heard. This layer also encompasses the values of humility, sharing and welcoming that permeated into participants' food stories.



Figure 4 The layers of food sovereignty

This image uses the example of the salmon to illustrate the layers of food sovereignty described above. The innermost layer is the land and sea, the next layer shows the specific food source

(the salmon), the next layer shows the traditional activity (barbequing salmon) and finally, the outer layer demonstrates the values and principles associated with the salmon (the first salmon ceremony). Allowed under the Non-commercial User-generated Content provision in Canada's *Copyright Act*. Images retrieved from: <https://ais140jlh.wordpress.com/2011/10/26/first-salmon-ceremony/> ; <https://www.fraseriverdiscovery.org/CurrentExhibits/> ; <https://www.wildsalmoncenter.org/work/science/sockeye/> ; <https://homalcotours.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/bute-inlet-bottom.jpg>

Based on this understanding, according to the people I spoke to during my visit to Homalco the ability to practice, access and sustain the elements of these layers is important for Homalco food sovereignty. In the following section, I explore the barriers and opportunities associated with this understanding of Homalco food sovereignty.

Chapter 5.

Health and Healing Through Food

Food sovereignty is an affirmation of who we are as Indigenous peoples and a way, one of the most surefooted ways, to restore our relationship with the world around us.

– Winona LaDuke

In this chapter, I strive to answer the second part of my research question: what are the barriers to and opportunities for Homalco food sovereignty? The participants I spoke with identified a number of barriers and opportunities facing the “layers” of Homalco food sovereignty described in the previous chapter, which included the land, significant food sources, important cultural traditions and the value system surrounding them. In the pages that follow, I explore the barriers to and opportunities for this conceptualization of Homalco food sovereignty. While, for the sake of clarity, I tease apart the barriers from the opportunities into separate sections within this thesis, the two are not mutually exclusive. Within the barriers identified lie opportunities for food sovereignty and vice versa. The opportunities and barriers I discuss intersect, overlap and sometimes contradict each other. I present a number of barriers and opportunities for Homalco food sovereignty in the pages that follow, but the intention is not to provide evidence that the Homalco people can or cannot have food sovereignty, or even that they do or do not have it. Instead, I understand Indigenous food sovereignty as being on a spectrum. Certain elements pose a risk to it, or make it more challenging, while others bolster it.

I have formatted this chapter around the 5 components of the Indigenous Food Systems Network medicine wheel that I introduced in Chapter 3. Using it as a guide, I discuss the barriers and opportunities for food sovereignty identified by my participants, as they relate to each component of the medicine wheel. I return here to the image of the medicine wheel that I introduced in Chapter 3:

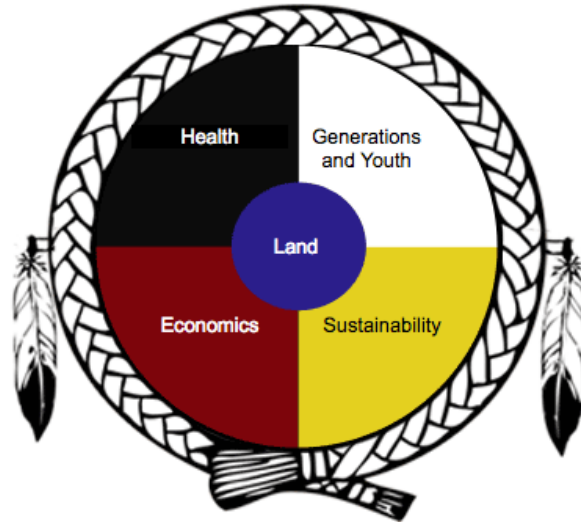


Figure 5 Medicine wheel depicting the components of Indigenous food sovereignty.

Source: <https://www.indigenousfoodsystems.org/> Reproduced with permission.

As I mentioned in Chapter 3, this Indigenous Food Systems Network image of the medicine wheel, representing the main components of Indigenous food systems, guided me through some difficult points in the meaning making process of this research. I noticed that the quadrants of this medicine wheel: sustainability, economics, health and, generations & youth complemented what participants had brought up in the interviews, in particular during our discussions about barriers to and opportunities for their food sovereignty. What stood out to me the most, was the fact that land was at the heart of the Indigenous Food Systems Network medicine wheel. This supported what I had learned from the Homalco people I interviewed, who also emphasized that land was at the heart of any discussion about their food system.

To begin this chapter, I articulate the importance of land for the Homalco people, especially in relation to their traditional territory. In the sections that follow, I discuss the barriers facing Homalco food sovereignty in relation to the four quadrants of the medicine wheel: sustainability, economics, health and, generations and youth. While I will discuss each section in relative isolation, the visual of the medicine wheel above serves to remind us of the interconnectedness between the obstacles facing Homalco food sovereignty, with land at the center. To conclude the chapter, I reflect on the opportunities for Homalco food sovereignty. While I do not explicitly use the framework of the four quadrants of the medicine wheel to discuss the opportunities for Homalco

food sovereignty (as I do in the barriers section), the themes of sustainability, economics, health and, generations and youth retain their relevance and continue to inform the discussion.

Land at the Center



Figure 6 **The Bute Inlet**

Source: <https://homalcotours.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/bute-inlet-bottom.jpg>
Reproduced with permission.

You can feel the presence and spirit of our ancestors here. There is something about this place that somehow seems to welcome people. It brings nature to its best. [You feel its] wonder and beauty, looking up on the high, snow-capped mountains and trees reaching to the sky. Orford River flowing into the bay – the turquoise colour brings magic as it runs down stream. Orford Bay is a very special place for our Homalco people, there are many stories of this place. It was the first settlement of our people. According to records of the government, there were several houses built here. Orford River brings families here to harvest the Chum salmon for the winter. [We would] smoke and barbeque salmon. In my childhood, I remember times spent here. My parents and grandparents were busy with their fish in the smoke house... it brought families and relatives together. I remember sitting around the fire as our Elders barbequed salmon around an open fire [and] we listened to the stories they shared. Many happy moments... sharing food outside, like a picnic.

– Bill Blaney’s description of the Homalco traditional territory in the Bute Inlet

Just as land is at the heart of the medicine wheel, so too can it be seen as the foundation of a healthy Indigenous food system. Without access to and sovereignty over their own land and waterways, Indigenous peoples cannot sustain their food systems (Morrison, 2011). The four quadrants (sustainability, economics, health and, generations & youth) can no longer hold and balance is lost. Land and waterways carry the soil, plants, animals and fungi “that have sustained Indigenous peoples over thousands of years” and “Indigenous cultures are shaped by [a] unique relationship to the land and food systems within [their] respective traditional territories” (Ibid, p 97). In turn, Indigenous peoples have been stewards of the land, protecting and sustaining it. Indeed, Indigenous food sovereignty “is fundamentally achieved by upholding [a] sacred responsibility to nurture healthy, interdependent relationships with the land, plants and animals that provide us with our food,” an idea that is at the core of Indigenous worldviews (Ibid, p 98). These worldviews stand in stark opposition to the longstanding, mainstream belief that land and food systems are to be managed and controlled by humans. Through colonization, settlers sought to control Indigenous peoples’ lands and waterways, dispossessing them of their land (and thus food supply) and imposing an industrialized food system, on which many Indigenous peoples are now reliant (Matties, 2016; Grey & Patel, 2015). Furthermore, for a variety of complex reasons, a growing number of Indigenous individuals, families and communities now live under urban conditions (Patrick & Budach, 2014). These events, of course, have had a direct impact on Indigenous food sovereignty.

The Homalco community is no exception to the impacts of colonization and urbanization on Indigenous food systems. Participants discussed a broad range of disadvantages facing the community as a result of being disconnected from their traditional territory and living in an urban setting, all of which I will explore in the following pages. The Homalco community members I spoke with highlighted that one of the principal issues facing Homalco food sovereignty is the fact that the nation is disconnected from its traditional territory; in fact, this was central to almost all of our conversations. Separation from the Bute Inlet has disrupted the Homalco peoples’ sacred connection to the land, limited their access to traditional food sources and hindered the intergenerational teachings that come from working and living in a place, among others.

However, while the Homalco people are no longer living in the Bute Inlet, the community still has access to land there and my participants described feeling a strong connection to the area. Indeed, almost every person I spoke with expressed that the Bute Inlet feels like home. This sentiment resurfaced again and again throughout our conversations. People's voices changed when they described the area for me. "You just totally know the air here [Campbell River] and then you go up there, it's totally different," described Ella. She recalled her first visit to the area and how she was awestruck by the beauty of the place. "When I first went up I just fell in love with it," she explained and said she felt like she had come home even though she had never been there before. The Elders with whom I spoke, who had grown up in Church House, still considered it to be their home: "when I go there I feel like I'm going back home again," said Maggie. And like Ella, Antony and Marselis, who had not grown up in Bute Inlet, described a feeling of instant connection, of knowing they were home.

It is clear from these testimonies that Homalco's traditional territory in the Bute Inlet is of utmost importance to participants. So, while the fact that they can no longer live in their traditional territory has disrupted their food sovereignty, I hope to demonstrate over the following pages, that the traditional territory still holds within it the opportunity for pursuing food sovereignty for the Homalco community.

Furthermore, while the Homalco people that I spoke with highlighted a number of food related issues brought on by living in the urban environment of Campbell River, they were also genuinely grateful for the land they *do* have in Campbell River. After years of having no home base, the reserve in Campbell River presents the opportunity for regaining community. Living in Campbell River, away from their traditional territory may certainly not be the ideal situation for Homalco food sovereignty, however, since for now they can no longer live in the Bute Inlet, participants articulated that having a community in Campbell River is better than being divided throughout the province, as they were not so long ago.

I argue that food sovereignty is best understood not as something a community does or does not have, but rather as a spectrum, with certain barriers and opportunities informing it. In Homalco's case, being distanced from the traditional territory makes food sovereignty more difficult for them. However, as I will illustrate below, plenty of opportunities for food sovereignty still exist, both in Campbell River and in the Bute Inlet.

That being said, Indigenous food sovereignty in Campbell River may not look the same as it once did in Church House. Memories of traditional life in Church House represent almost an ideal, including for food sovereignty, but the reality is that it is no longer possible for the Homalco people to live in their traditional territory and that instead they now live in the urban landscape of Campbell River. This is not likely to change in the near future and thus, the Homalco people are striving for food sovereignty within this reality.

5.1. Barriers to Food Sovereignty

*Okay, I want to talk about Ireland
Specifically I want to talk about the "famine"
About the fact that there never really was one
There was no "famine"
See Irish people were only allowed to eat potatoes
All of the other food
Meat fish vegetables
Were shipped out of the country under armed guard
To England while the Irish people starved
And then in the middle of all this
They gave us money not to teach our children Irish
And so we lost our history
And this is what I think is still hurting me*

– Sinéad O'Connor, "Famine"

One thing that was evident as I worked to create a narrative for this section was that the issues of colonization and subsequently, urbanization were at the heart of the barriers highlighted by the Homalco community members I spoke to. Colonization and urbanization were not themselves standalone categories, but rather, overarching themes informing the discussion. For this reason, in this section I do not speak about the effects of colonization and urbanization in isolation. Instead, I will delve into more specific issues. However, the lens of colonization and urbanization (which I have laid out in the literature review and throughout this thesis) deeply informs this chapter. For while the barriers facing Homalco food sovereignty are multifaceted, they would not exist were it not for the impacts of colonization and the urbanization of Indigenous land.

5.1.1. Sustainability

In her teachings about Indigenous food sovereignty, Dawn Morrison explains how for thousands of years, Indigenous peoples have been stewards of the land that has in turn, sustained and nourished them. Thus, she demonstrates, the concept of sustainability is inherent to Indigenous food systems. However, one of the impacts of colonization has been to disrupt the relationship between Indigenous peoples and their land. Not only were many Indigenous people separated from their land and traditional food sources, but much of this land has progressively been industrialized and urbanized (Grey & Patel, 2015; Patrick & Budach, 2014). These factors have threatened the health and vitality of Indigenous food systems and reduced Indigenous peoples' ability to access their traditional food sources (Morrison, 2011).

During our conversation, Chief Blaney illustrated a few examples of traditional Homalco practices that had ensured the sustainability of the community's food sources and how these practices have been disrupted by the impacts of colonization, both through the dispossession of Homalco lands and waterways and the subsequent development of these lands and waterways via industrialization and urbanization.

When the Homalco people had no choice but to leave their traditional territory due to the repercussions of colonization and urbanization, so too did they lose direct access to many of their food sources. From a sustainability perspective, this disrupted the Homalco peoples' ability to maintain a relationship with these food sources the way they had done historically. Chief Blaney used the clam gardens – which are landscapes built by West Coast First Nations in order to increase the productivity of shellfish – as an example of this issue:

When I went clam digging with my uncle out in Chameleon Harbour, we got out there and the beaches looked beautiful and we went out and dug and then could only dig about *that* deep because our people hadn't been digging there in so long, it's hardened up, the ground is compacted... but he said long time ago our people used to go and dig all the time and that's how the clam gardens happened. It's because... every time they went there and dug... they made the soil softer, but they moved the rocks down as well, so it became that garden.

As Chief Blaney suggests, research has shown that the clam gardens did not just happen. Rather, they were managed by First Nations on the West Coast of North

America, who used scientific knowledge and “sophisticated cultivation techniques to intensify clam production” (Om, 2015). Chief Blaney explains how clam gardens need to be maintained, harvested and cultivated in order to be productive, which has become a less realistic task since the Homalco band relocated away from their clam gardens.

The same phenomenon is true of favourite berry picking spots. The berry picking techniques that the Homalco people used also pruned the bushes, making them more productive. When the bushes are no longer being picked, they do not yield as much quality fruit. Chief Blaney reminisces how, even as children, they were participating in maintaining their own food system:

Well I just think about when I was a kid, we used to go pick huckleberries. We used to go and if there were lots on some branch, we'd just break [the whole branch] off and take it with us and we'd just go pick [the berries] somewhere else. And that made that bush a lot more productive, because it was pruning. You go back now and they're kind of long and stringy things and they're not very productive because the energy has grown in, all the way to the end.

Indeed, “evidence shows that the surrounding First Nations used advanced resource management techniques to sustainably cultivate clams, grow complex estuary root gardens, and fertilize and prune berry bushes” (Om, 2015). However, because the Homalco people were no longer accessing or managing these traditional sources of food, the food sources became less productive, thus illustrating the reciprocal relationship between First Nation’s peoples, their food sources and the sustainable food systems that they had developed over thousands of years.

Chief Blaney also explained that the Homalco people actively governed their fish stocks. “The families got together and said, this family go take some out of that creek, and this family go take some out of that creek,” he told me. This helped to prevent over-fishing and assured enough fish for all for years to come. Now, with land being developed for various reasons and Indigenous peoples having been stripped of many of their land and fishery rights, Chief Blaney says the losses for his people are noteworthy:

When I went clam digging with my uncle he said there was a creek that used to be just on this side there, other side of Brown's Bay. And then he said that's gone now because of the logging company. There's no fish that go up there... our people used to use that... and so it's like all these little creeks where they didn't have the laws to protect the salmon stocks in there... wiped them out. So that's what annoys me, [the] cultural teaching

for that spot is gone. There's no kids that are gonna go exercise their culture in getting salmon from that creek.

Here Chief Blaney illustrates the direct connection between the land, food system and Homalco culture. To Chief Blaney, fishing is not just about food, or the nutritional value that food has to offer, it is also about learning and exercising culture. The loss of a creek to fish in is also a lost opportunity for passing on cultural knowledge and undermines Homalco's ability to govern and sustain their own food sources.

According to Chief Blaney, another threat to his peoples' traditional food sources is B.C.'s highly contested aquaculture (salmon farming) industry. There are over 50 active fish farms in B.C. and almost all of them are in First Nation's traditional waters (Rasmussen, 2018; Gerwing & McDaniels, 2006). While coastal Indigenous peoples of B.C. have differing standpoints on the industry, many have concerns about the negative ecological, environmental and social impacts fish farms have on their communities and cultures (Ibid). Over the years, Chief Blaney has been very outspoken about his qualms with the aquaculture industry and he told me a little about his experience with this issue, as well as its effect on his people during our interview.

Blaney himself tackled this issue head on back in 2002, when he was first elected Chief. Blaney's predecessor had made a deal with the aquaculture company Marine Harvest (the largest producer of salmon in the world) that allowed the company to farm local, Pacific salmon in Church House Bay (Findlay, 2005). In turn, Marine Harvest promised economic benefits and jobs for the Homalco people. However, a few years later there was only one Homalco member working at the farm. Furthermore, the deal was not well received by many in the Homalco community, who worried about the environmental impacts of the farm on their ancestral waterways.

In April 2004, Marine Harvest applied to the provincial government for a license to farm Atlantic salmon, instead of Pacific salmon in the area (Findlay, 2005). Their reasoning for the switch was that farming Pacific salmon had not been a lucrative undertaking for the company. Atlantic salmon are considered more favourable for farming in the Pacific Northwest than the local Pacific salmon, because they grow larger, have a milder flavor and resist disease better than the local, wild salmon (Shinn, 2018). However, farming Atlantic salmon in B.C. is extremely controversial because Atlantics are not native to B.C. waters. Opponents worry that Atlantic salmon pose a threat to the

wild Pacific salmon (and other sea-life), because there is potential for them to escape from pens and spread disease, compete for resources and even breed with the wild salmon (Shinn, 2018).

The Homalco people were not notified about Marine Harvest's application to farm Atlantic salmon in their territory until months later and were blindsided when the application was approved in December 2004, without their consultation. Chief Blaney explained to me that his people did not stand for this breach of their Aboriginal rights:

And when we told them they couldn't set up there... we just said to them, you know, there's no consultation with the people, it's [our] peoples' Aboriginal rights that haven't been met. So, we said, you can't do that... it was not a benefit for our people...

Indeed, Blaney immediately filed for an injunction to stop Marine Harvest's operations in their territory, asserting that the aquaculture company and the provincial government had neglected their legal duty to consult the Homalco band before proceeding.

In a historic victory, the Homalco nation was granted the injunction against Marine Harvest and the province (Findlay, 2005). Marine Harvest was forced to cease operations on the farm and other (or future) farms in the area without proper consultation with Homalco. This was a ground-breaking case for First Nations fighting for sovereignty over their land because, while "the judgment was far from an outright condemnation of fish farming... it unequivocally acknowledged that the Homalco have a legitimate claim to Church House and that they must be involved in decisions affecting this territory" (Findlay, 2005).

Chief Blaney explained to me why he made the decision to take on Marine Harvest and the province:

They were [setting up] farms throughout the Bute Inlet - and we thought that because of... how rough it gets up there, that those salmon farms would never survive up there, they'll be busting and [the fish will] be escaping and going up our river systems. The Atlantic salmon, they are much more aggressive than the Steelhead... eventually [they'll] push the Steelhead out. They can push out our Chum, push out our Pinks and Coho, eventually they'll push them all out... and when the Atlantics go up there they go spawn and then they go [right back out] to the ocean. Our forests are big, giant because of all the salmon that have gone up there and fed those forest and so, if you have Atlantics that don't go up there and just

leave, I mean they're not giving anything to our forests like our domestic salmon do.

Here Chief Blaney emphasizes the importance of reciprocity within Indigenous food systems, law and culture. In his perspective, the Atlantic salmon that are being farmed in BC, do not contribute to Homalco's food system, rather they takeover, taking what they need and leaving. Their bodies do not fertilize the earth and create new life, the way the native salmon do. They are intruders. In this view, aquaculture can be understood as analog to the process of colonization. Just as European settlers dispossessed Indigenous peoples of their lands and food sources, so too have the Atlantic salmon invaded the Pacific salmon's waters.

Like other critics of the aquaculture industry, Chief Blaney also worries about the diseases farmed salmon can potentially spread to native species:

When they wanted to put Atlantics in there we were asking for all kinds of studies because there were studies of diseases, disease issues, lice issues and all the chemicals they were putting in there... because of the lice. [The diseases] have this prime objective to survive, they adapt to all these chemicals that are thrown in there so [the companies] keep throwing in stronger and stronger chemicals and they keep adapting and so the chemicals we're using to deal with them, we can't keep up with them because they're pretty good survivors. So now we're gonna wipe out all our clams. I mean when my uncle went up to Church House to dig clams, him and [another] Elder went up there, they went up there and dug and it was the evening and - you know the reason we picked Church House was cuz there was clam beaches there, you can fill up a bucket in 5 minutes... after that fish farm was there my uncle dug all night and couldn't even dig half a bucket. It's the chemicals from the fish farms. So, that's impacting our Aboriginal rights. And then all the fry that come out of the inlet, when they come out they stay along the shore line and then they run right into those fish farms and they become fish food. And then they're killing our rock fish, because they're killing off rock fish habitat.

In Chief Blaney's opinion, putting fish farms in his ancestral waters is just too risky. In an interview with *The Tyee* he stated: "I have no problems with trying to reduce pressure on our wild stocks but I'm not convinced that farmed fish don't pose a risk to our environment" (Findlay, 2005). One solution, he explained to me, would be to put fish farms on land. "There's huge issues, they need to just take it out of the water, put it on land and then you don't have to deal with the chemicals, you don't have to deal with the pesticides or the antibiotics and all those things that come with it... they're doing that in

Norway now,” he said. “They built a big, giant, on land fish farm. So, if it's good enough for Norway, it's gonna be good enough for us.”

While this legal challenge was a success for the Homalco people, the issue is an ongoing one and Chief Blaney continues to speak out against the aquaculture business. For example, at a recent protest against the industry in Campbell River, he told *The Campbell River Mirror* (Koch, 2018) that:

If the government wants to approve these farms, they are putting our cultures at risk. With the poverty in our communities, our access to the wild salmon is diminishing. The diseases and the sea lice and all the concoctions and the diseased bloods [that are] getting dumped into the Salish Sea are impacting our wild salmon.

The wild salmon is “one of the foundations of our cultures on the coast,” explained Chief Blaney (Koch, 2018). Chief Blaney’s words imply an inherent connection between the health of the wild salmon and the health of his people. Thus, the aquaculture industry stands in stark opposition to Morrison’s four principles in relation to Homalco food sovereignty. Aquaculture disrupts Homalco’s connection with and ability to sustain this important food source (Sacred or Divine Sovereignty), decreases participation and self-determination by diminishing the availability of the food source (Participation and Self-Determination) and fails to recognize Indigenous rights (Legislation and Policy).

While on one hand, the agendas of multimillion dollar companies like Marine Harvest can threaten Homalco rights and sovereignty, as well as the natural environment they are fighting to protect, legislation and policy that aim to protect the environment have not always had Indigenous rights at heart. Bill mentioned that some of the places where they used to harvest their traditional seafood (like clams) have been turned into provincial parks, making it illegal to continue on with their traditional harvesting practices and thus impeding Homalco food sovereignty and violating their Indigenous laws and rights.

We lost one of our places where we harvest for the clams and all that. They made it into a Provincial Park without notifying the band. So that was a loss because that area was used by our people for many years and I was suggesting we try to fight that back. I remember one of our community members was digging clams there and he got [fined] for that... I said, if that's the case I think we can... make it a political action to fight that back. So, [the government] backed down.

This is another example of how the Homalco people have asserted their Aboriginal rights. After a community member was fined for clam digging in his traditional territory, the band threatened legal action and the charge was dropped. However, I do not know the outcome of the story beyond what I have included here, or if the Homalco people were allowed to continue digging in the area. What is clear based on these stories, is that Homalco's right to sovereignty over their homeland has not been a given, as it should have been. Rather the Homalco band has had to be ever vigilant, as their Aboriginal rights have continuously been challenged, denied and violated. The need for such vigilance is amplified because the community is physically removed from the traditional territory and does not have eyes and ears in the area at all times. Thus, they cannot monitor change the way they might have been able to while living there.

Separation from their land and traditional food sources and the environmental pressures posed by the industrialization and urbanization of their land, have undermined Homalco's Indigenous laws and rights and challenged the sustainability of their food system, thus creating a barrier to their food sovereignty. Homalco's experiences demonstrate the need for improved consultation with First Nations communities in order to ensure that they have control over and access to their traditional food sources in a way that is sustainable for the future. This aligns with the Legislation and Policy principle of Indigenous food sovereignty, which "attempts to reconcile Indigenous food and cultural values with colonial laws, policies and mainstream economic activities" (p. 101). Indeed, this is one example of a barrier that is also an opportunity for food sovereignty. By taking legal action and continuously fighting for their Aboriginal rights and the protection of their important food sources, the Homalco community has defended their right to food sovereignty. While the fight is far from over, they have no plan to back down anytime soon.

5.1.2. Economics

In this section, I explain the economic barriers facing Homalco food sovereignty. I use the term "economic" loosely in order to describe issues stemming directly from poverty within the Homalco community. Interviews with Homalco community members illustrated that the community faces high levels of poverty, unemployment and food insecurity. This matches up with statistics of other Indigenous communities in Canada (NAEDB, 2016; Tarasuk et al., 2013). While this section is about the issues directly

related to poverty, I elaborate on poverty as a social determinant of health in the following section.

Prior to European contact, Indigenous peoples of North America had complex economic systems in place, which were highly dependent on their unique food systems (Morrison, 2011). Indeed, food traditions were at the core of Indigenous cultures and economies (Damman, Eide & Kuhnlein, 2008). As Indigenous peoples were dispossessed of their land, so too did they witness the erosion of these economies. This loss of land and simultaneously, the attempted eradication of Indigenous food cultures and economies, robbed Indigenous peoples of their autonomy and led to a reliance on a Western economic system and food production model. Indeed, Indigenous peoples in Canada are three times more likely to be food insecure than non-Indigenous Canadians (Statistics Canada, 2017b) and almost 30% of Indigenous peoples in British Columbia use their local food bank (Food Banks Canada, 2016). Dawn Morrison describes the economic disadvantage faced by Indigenous peoples in Canada:

Even though Canada is recognized as having one of the highest standards of living in the world, Indigenous communities experience high rates of poverty and socioeconomic marginalization, thereby being forced to live in conditions that lead to high levels of stress, economic uncertainty and loss of control (Morrison p 102).

Morrison highlights the loss of self-determination experienced by Indigenous peoples as a result of being forced to adapt to a Western economic model. She demonstrates that this economic model is not working for Indigenous people and concludes that it actually oppresses them.

This is exemplified by the Homalco nation, which had to leave its traditional territory due to economic downturn – a consequence of the imposition of capitalism through colonialism. The Homalco people were unable to sustain themselves in the Bute Inlet under this economic system and after years of dispersal, eventually relocated to Campbell River. As I continue to illustrate, the consequences of this reality, in particular in terms of food sovereignty, are drastic.

The Elders with whom I spoke had all grown up in Church House. During their childhoods, colonization had already impacted their community and many described their lives in Church House as sometimes being difficult. For example, many were forced

to attend residential schools and poverty and hunger were concerns, especially in wintertime when fewer natural resources were available, as was outlined in the previous chapter.

However, what I learned during these discussions was that while people were poor in Church House, the consensus is that people are poorer still in Campbell River and this poverty is no longer as mitigated by good-neighbourliness or access to resources as it was in Church House. According to the research participants in Church House, people leaned on their fellow community members in times of need: “a lot of people worked together to survive,” said Bill. However, “extreme scarcity was rare” and most of the year meant reliable fishing, hunting and/or foraging opportunities (Kennedy & Bouchard, 1983). The Homalco people survived and could sometimes even flourish by co-operating and sharing their bounty with one another.

In contrast, with less access to their traditional food sources in Campbell River, people have “become dependent on [government provided] social assistance,” said Chief Blaney. Chief Blaney and Sue informed me that the money received on social assistance is not nearly enough to support people. People are “just scraping by,” said Sue and many people use the food bank to supplement their diets, which has a very limited selection and a lacks culturally relevant foods for the Homalco people.

Based on this information, a fundamental characteristic of food sovereignty – self-determination – is compromised when it comes to the economics of food in Homalco. Dawn Morrison describes self-determination in the context of Indigenous food sovereignty as:

The ability to respond to our own needs for healthy, culturally adapted Indigenous foods. The ability to make decisions over the amount and quality of food we hunt, fish, gather, grow and eat. Freedom from dependence on grocery stores or corporately controlled food production, distribution and consumption in industrialized economies (p. 100).

The idea of “freedom from dependence” is key here. Dawn Morrison is not saying that Indigenous peoples should not shop at grocery stores or participate in the industrial food system; what she is emphasizing is that they should have a *choice* about what they eat and where those foods come from. Based on the conversations I had with community members, separation from traditional food sources, in conjunction with widespread

poverty on reserve in Campbell River, has hindered the Homalco people's ability to self-determine their food choices.

Another issue that disrupts Homalco's right to self-determination in their food choices stems from the lack of marine access in Campbell River and subsequently, a reduction in boat ownership. In Church House, many families owned their own boats and did their own fishing. However, a number of the people I spoke with brought up that very few residents own boats anymore. Church House was by the water, which made owning a boat simple and essential for everyday life. Boats were the main means of transportation and also offered the Homalco people access to fishing opportunities, both as a source of income and for food. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, Ricky described for me his love of fishing and the extent to which it was a part of everyday Homalco life. He used to fish "almost every day" with his parents. According to Caroline, they did so "for extra income."

As Ricky's and Caroline's words imply, through fishing, the Homalco people could feed themselves and their community members and were also able to make a living by selling fish. When I asked if there was less fishing in Campbell River because the community is not near the water, Caroline nodded and responded, "and not many people have boats." Given that the reserve is landlocked and many community members struggle with poverty, for many or most of the community it is no longer practical or affordable to have boats. This poses many challenges for those who would like to fish, since it is no longer possible for people to jump on their own boat and fish in their own backyard when they need food or income.

As I illustrated in Chapter 4, seafood has always been an essential aspect of the Homalco peoples' diet and culture – a food source which was sustained and celebrated over thousands of years (Kennedy & Bouchard, 1983). However, the lack of accessible fishing opportunities has created a dependence on outside sources (e.g.: community members with boats, other bands, the grocery store) to secure seafood for the Homalco people. Furthermore, seafood, in particular wild salmon, is extremely expensive to purchase. Thus, the accessibility of seafood for the Homalco people has been significantly reduced since leaving Church House.

Another issue that emerges from the lack of people with boats within the community is that it makes visiting the traditional territory very difficult and expensive for the average band resident. Below Chief describes how moving away from Church House affected the number of boats in the community:

Well, I think when we were in Church House with all those fishing boats... everybody... there were so many gillnetters in Church House. When I was a kid I remember wondering how come all these boats were all on the beach rotting away. There were so many of them... just swim down in front there and they were all rotting away. People had boats cuz that was the only way to get around. Here being away from the water, very few people have boats. So, for us to access our territory is really difficult.

One way to mitigate the fact that the Homalco people no longer have access to many of their traditional food sources, could be with visits to the traditional territory. Visits to the ancestral lands would offer community members a way to access the important cultural foods that are limited to them in Campbell River. However, as Chief Blaney illustrates above, accessing the territory becomes very difficult when community members do not have their own boats (the only means of transportation to the area). Without proper transportation, initiatives that aim to reconnect people with their homeland are extremely challenging to organize. For example, the band would have to provide transportation for community members wishing to visit the Bute Inlet (e.g. charter a boat), which would be very costly. I will discuss, at length, how the Homalco people are reconnecting with their traditional territory and its importance for their food sovereignty in “Opportunities” section later in this chapter.

As access to the traditional territory and important traditional food sources territory are minimized in the urban context of Campbell River due to poverty, the principal of participatory action in the food system from all generations becomes more challenging. For example, children may not develop a taste for traditional foods and thus do not consume them, do not learn the skills associated with them and may not pass on the knowledge to the next generation. I discuss the barriers associated with the intergenerational transmission of knowledge in greater detail in the “Generations & Youth” section of this chapter.

Beyond transportation to the traditional territory, participants also spoke about how the location of the Homalco reserve in the city of Campbell River in conjunction with widespread poverty within the band makes transportation within the city limits more

difficult. Given the reserves isolated location, the city of Campbell River provides only very limited bus service to Homalco. Not everyone on the reserve is able to afford their own car and are therefore reliant on the bus or the kindness of others, which makes transportation extremely challenging for these individuals and families. Sue was quick to highlight this during our interview:

But I mean on a very practical basis, we need better transportation. You know, because the bus ends at what? Six o'clock or something or whatever it is? And you know, people can't... I'm often here working later and then I go to the grocery store on the way out, but you know if you haven't got a car and you haven't got a bus...

Indeed, the closest grocery store to the reserve (which also happens to be one of the most expensive) is 7 kilometres away along a major thoroughfare – equal to 1.5 hours walking one way, or 3 hours return. This is certainly not a realistic walk for anyone with groceries in tow. The most affordable grocery stores in town are even further away. We see here that limits on transportation options have an impact on Homalco residents' ability to access Campbell River food sources. At its most basic level, this undermines Homalco's food security, which is, as I outlined in the literature review, an essential aspect of food sovereignty. At a food sovereignty level, transportation barriers compromise Homalco's ability for self-determine their food choices.

Barriers to transportation may have an even more pronounced effect on the Elders in the community, who are less likely to have access to vehicles, often live in poverty and face health concerns. Since many Elders in the community have health issues, especially diabetes, a lack of transportation options can be problematic. Indeed, it is difficult for them to buy groceries or go to appointments. Maggie explained that, "they give us rides to our appointments [doctors, etc.], but only on a certain day." Indeed, the "band is broke" and, at this point in time, cannot afford to offer unlimited rides to their Elders or other community members in need.

The urban transportation barriers facing Homalco residents also pose a challenge for band members in terms of holding down a job and earning an income. Chief Blaney described one community member who could not afford to own a car who was employed at Walmart (on the opposite end of the city from the reserve). Because she did not have a car and her shifts were often outside of bus hours, this resident was often forced to pay others for rides to and from work. Given that her position at Walmart

only paid her minimum wage, it became uneconomical for her to continue working. She could make a comparable amount on social assistance, without the burden of arranging rides. Here again we see an example of how urban life, which generally promises better access to resources and employment opportunities, may actually exacerbate the effects of poverty for Homalco community members.

Thus, we can see that a lack of boats and limited bus service to the reserve contributes to high rates of unemployment and dependence on social assistance, ultimately perpetuating a cycle of poverty within the community. Poverty impacts all aspects of Homalco life, including their food system. Community members lose their right to self-determine their food sources and choices and must rely on the dominant, commercial food system. In this way, participatory action in Homalco food sovereignty is reduced, interrupting the transmission of food related knowledge and skills from one generation to the next. Poverty is also at the heart of the Homalco peoples' health outcomes, as I will demonstrate in the following section.

5.1.3. Health

It is well documented that Indigenous Canadians experience poorer health outcomes than their non-Indigenous counterparts (Morrison, 2011, Cidro et al. 2015; Mosby & Galloway, 2017). While this issue is multifaceted, Dawn Morrison argues that the erosion of Indigenous food systems, as a result of colonization, is a major contributor to the health disparities experienced by Indigenous Canadians. Indeed, the Homalco community members I spoke with illustrated how threats to their food system have resulted in widespread health issues within their community. In this section, I explore the relationship between health and food sovereignty, rather than just describing health issues as a direct barrier to food sovereignty. Instead, I hope to illustrate how in Homalco's case, health issues can be understood as both symptoms and causes of a decline in their food sovereignty.

The term "health" is rather broad and undefined by the Indigenous Food Systems Network or by Morrison. However, I was able to develop a definition within the Homalco context, based on my conversations with band members, which were often dominated by the subject of health. I take the term to embody both the individual (physical, mental and spiritual) and the collective health of the community. These two types of health are

linked, informing each other in a constant cycle: a community that is suffering will foster people with health challenges and people with health challenges may not be able to help to heal their communities. Based on what community members told me, food sovereignty in the Homalco context reflects these two elements of health, or more simply, holistic health.

As I have discussed, economically speaking poverty is a major barrier facing Homalco food sovereignty, in particular because it limits community members' abilities to self-determine their food choices. Participants also informed me that poverty, and subsequent food insecurity, has had a negative impact on Homalco food sovereignty in terms of health outcomes. During our conversation, band manager Sue Hanley emphasized how the cycle of poverty is contributing to poor health outcomes among Homalco residents:

I mean the thing that strikes me as an outsider, is we've got a big chunk of people on social assistance and that money is not anywhere near what it should be to support a healthy diet... So, you've got kids that are not doing well at school because they're not properly nourished.

In this quote, Sue explains how the Homalco community suffers from food insecurity as a result of poverty. This is indeed the case for Indigenous communities all over Canada, who experience higher than average rates of food insecurity (Morrison, 2011; Cidro et al, 2015; Tarasuk et al., 2013). This creates a cycle, with poor health impacting children's ability to do well in school, which in turn impacts future opportunities for the children, reinforcing the cycle of poverty (Florence, Asbridge & Veugelers, 2008).

Furthermore, urban life introduced an abundance of sugary and fried foods into Homalco lives, which would not have been present before colonization. Without access to traditional food sources and, as Sue describes above, with so many people relying on social assistance to get by, the Homalco people became primarily dependent on a dominant, industrialized model of food production. In this food system, sugary, fast foods are the cheapest, while nutrient rich foods are the most expensive (Ward et al, 2013). In our interviews, many residents described the devastating impacts this phenomenon has had on the health of community members. In fact, in my conversations with people about food over the week in Homalco, one health related issue resurfaced again and again: diabetes. Type II diabetes is a huge barrier for the Homalco people and one which

affects most community members on some level. Here Chief Blaney explains how Western influence impacted the Homalco diet:

Well, when I was in school in Malaspina [now Vancouver Island University] - it used to be called at the time - they said that we relied on a lot of our salmon, our deer and all these different foods, seals, ducks, whatever, but they said that a long time ago they used to boil it and then after that they started frying it up and that's when all the diabetes and stuff started coming. That happened around 1940s, I guess, but before that people were pretty healthy. They didn't have the fried food and the lard and all that crap. It just wrecked the good food we're eating.

Indeed, Ella informed me that a staggering two thirds of the community has diabetes. That is more than 6 times the national average (CDA, 2015).

Individuals all have their own ways of managing their risk of diabetes. For example, the Chief told me that he cut out sugar entirely a few years ago. He enjoys making jewellery as a hobby and he needs his hands to be in full working order for it. He explains:

When I gave up sugar about – coming up on 4 years ago now – first few weeks my eyeballs and my forehead was really itching really badly... Just the toxins from the sugar, it was amazing. Cuz for me I do my artwork and I need my hands. And if I get cut while I'm carving I don't wanna be worried that I'll be amputated because it won't heal. And I never want to worry about that. And the guy that taught me how to do jewellery, he got diabetes and he had a stroke after that, stroke and stroke and then eventually he didn't make it. I mean... my art's gonna be what I do when I retire, so... (Blaney 13).

Here the Chief expresses his fear of getting diabetes and one day needing to amputate his hand(s), which would stop him from being able to produce his artwork. Having witnessed the devastating effects of diabetes, he has made the choice to give up sugar. It's also noteworthy that he ties this decision to the cultural expression of artwork. There is a healing power to his artwork, because it has motivated him to reject and fight against the Western food system.

While, as an adult, cutting out sugar was a personal choice for Chief Blaney, he is worried about the amount of sugar children in the community consume:

Well that was a real shocker. We had our drumming and singing down in the hall and I couldn't cook, so I offered to bring some pop and I brought this rainbow coloured Crush pop and I brought some gingerale and the kids

got in there and that thing was gone, 3/4 of it gone, in about 15 minutes and they were just running around and squealing all over.

In both of the above quotations, Chief Blaney alludes to the addictive quality of sugar and its impact on behaviour (DiNicolantonio, O'Keefe, & Wilson, 2018). The children became hyperactive after consuming the sugary beverage and literally become distracted from the cultural teachings happening (in this case drumming). Community members I spoke with worried that generations are becoming less and less exposed to Homalco's traditional foods and are showing a preference for processed, Western foods. When considering the accessibility, affordability and the potentially addictive nature of sugar and processed foods it is not surprising that community members have become dependent on them. As Sue mentioned above, this can have particularly devastating impacts on children, especially in regard to academic performance and health outcomes (Florence, Asbridge & Veugelers, 2008).

Based on the information above, it is clear that poverty and subsequently, food insecurity are key contributors to the poor health outcomes experienced by the Homalco people. In particular, as the Homalco people lost the ability to self-determine their food choices, so too did their health decline. This once again highlights the question of whether modern and traditional foods can coexist in Indigenous food sovereignty. Certainly, over time, like a bannock, non-traditional foods can and do become traditional foods in Indigenous food systems. However, bannock is a food that can be made locally. It is not imported in its whole form, like pop (or oranges and candy canes in Chapter 4) and thus can fit into a local, sustainable food system. That is not to say that foods like pop, oranges and candy canes are bad, or even that they undermine food sovereignty. Indigenous people are living modern lives as part of the modern world and it is absolutely understandable that they participate in the industrial food system. What is key to Indigenous food sovereignty is that Indigenous peoples have the option to choose healthy, traditional, local, sustainable foods over non-traditional foods whenever they want to do so. Non-traditional foods should not be the main, or only option for sustenance available to Indigenous individuals, because that eliminates the factor of choice and self-determination that is so essential for Indigenous food sovereignty. Furthermore, a dependency on the industrial food system also undermines the sacred or divine sovereignty and participation principles of Indigenous food sovereignty because these foods do not foster the relationship with the land that is at the heart of Indigenous

food sovereignty. These stories highlight the tension between non-traditional foods and Indigenous food sovereignty and suggest the need for further consultation and research with and by Indigenous peoples to understand this relationship and its impact on the health of Indigenous peoples.

Another important factor to consider while discussing Indigenous health in relation to food sovereignty, is trauma. Evans-Campbell (2008) suggests that the concept of historical trauma can be used to understand many of the health issues faced by colonized, Indigenous peoples. She defines historical trauma as the “collective complex trauma inflicted on a group of people who share a specific group identity or affiliation—ethnicity, nationality, and religious affiliation” (p. 320). It is believed that the effects of collective traumatic events, even if they occurred many years ago, are transmitted intergenerationally and thus, continue to impact Indigenous individuals, families and communities. Some examples of collective trauma experienced by Canadian Indigenous communities include the removal of children from their parents (via residential schools and/or foster care), the outlawing of Indigenous religious practices and the introduction of diseases into Indigenous communities, all of which have been experienced by the Homalco people. At the community level, historical trauma can manifest in the breakdown of traditional culture and values, internalized racism and high rates of alcoholism and physical illness, to name a few (Evans-Campbell, 2008).

The trauma of residential schools – in which children suffered neglect and abuse and were separated from their family, culture and traditional diet – has had a lasting impact. Children in these schools were forced to eat a European diet and many were not fed nutritious food, thus suffering from malnutrition and even starvation. This has had lingering trans-generational effects on survivors and their descendants, including obesity, cardiovascular disease and diabetes, all of which disproportionately affect Indigenous peoples (Kingston, 2015; Mosby & Galloway, 2017). While speaking with Homalco community members, I learned that these issues are particularly relevant to them. Indeed, generations of Homalco children were forced to attend residential schools, away from their culture, families and traditional diet.

Furthermore, Evans-Campbell demonstrates that the transgenerational effects of trauma from colonization and residential schools goes beyond food-related illness. In particular, addiction, especially to alcohol, but also to opioids was discussed as a major

health issue facing the community. Though our discussions did not delve too deeply into the causes of addiction, it is well understood that addiction and mental illness are often rooted in trauma (Kirst, Matheson & Stergiopoulos, 2017; Farro et al. 2011). When you add poverty and institutional oppression, this can create a cycle that is difficult to break (Evans-Campbell, 2008).

Community members that I spoke with were keenly aware of the devastating effects of alcoholism and other addiction on their people and described the difficulty of working towards something that resembles food sovereignty as a community, when so much of the population struggles with those issues. Maggie attributes the consumption of alcohol to the problems she perceives in the community:

It's the liquor stores close by. And that's what's wrong in our people. There's too much of that. And if they don't have it there's people that are lending you the money for it. And their whole welfare cheque is going to the bootleggers and the people that lend you the money. [An Elder] was telling me that in Church House there was no drinking.

Here Maggie describes how the availability of alcohol in the urban context of Campbell River has impacted her community. She draws our attention to the fact that the addiction is so strong that people will spend their entire welfare cheque on alcohol, which contributes to the cycle of poverty. As she implies, if someone is spending all their money on alcohol, they are not able to spend it on nutritious food, thus contributing to food insecurity amongst community members. She goes on to add later in the interview:

Mainly I would like to see change up here is the drinking and drugging happening and maybe things will get better and people will get more interested in what we're doing [cultural activities].

Here she explains that, in her opinion, alcohol (and addiction itself) stands in stark contradiction to participatory action. To Maggie, alcohol disrupts a person's ability to be participate in their culture. Maggie's thoughts are reminiscent of scholarly work pertaining to the treatment of addiction in Indigenous peoples. Indeed, according to psychologist Duran (2006) – who specializes in the treatment of trauma in Indigenous peoples– for Indigenous peoples, alcohol and other substance abuse is not simply a physical or biological issue, it is a spiritual one. Traditional healers believe alcohol to be a spirit that has wreaked havoc on Indigenous culture and which threatens the spiritual realm of those who abuse it. Therefore, healing must begin at the spiritual level and

“most Elders and Healers would agree that reconnecting to culture, community and spirituality is the way for Aboriginal people to heal” (Smillie-Adjarkwa, 2009). I understand these words to include food related knowledge and traditions, as food and culture are inextricably linked. Thus, food sovereignty in and of itself is an opportunity to heal (Morrison, 2011).

Chief Blaney too draws an important connection between alcoholism, cultural participation and spirituality. He described the all-consuming nature of alcoholism, stating that along with the multitude of other issues caused by colonization, “at the same time, all the alcoholism was coming in and then we lost all the bathing in the river and the alcohol just kind of squashed all the teachings of people.” Ella explained to me that, traditionally, bathing in the river has been an important cultural practice when someone comes of age. This practice gives the person strength in mind and body and is a healing and cleansing experience for the participant. While bathing in the river was once a regular practice, Chief Blaney implied that the tradition is not exercised as regularly since the Homalco people left Church House. This may be partly because there is not an appropriate river nearby the reserve or because this tradition is no longer being consistently passed down through the generations as a result of colonization.

Chief Blaney associates the loss of bathing in the river with the rise in alcoholism and declining health in his people, describing a vicious cycle: the loss of the custom created room for the alcoholism and the alcoholism “squashed all the teachings of people,” and so on. The practice seems to represent a gateway to health and participatory action in Homalco culture:

Before the 1940s there was no diabetes... our people were active, and if you look back at the way Church House was, there was all kinds of fit, strong people there, they were doing stuff all the time. I mean my grandfather could pick up one of those 150 pounds jacks and pick it up and hold it out like that and that kind of strength is not *here* in our community. And that was labour, but at the same time we were busy, we were active, there was always something to do... there were so many strong people around a long time ago, physically, but their mind was also strong. But part of that was the bathing in the river, we had that river that came that when they go bath in the river it gives you that strength, it gives you that discipline and gives you that spirituality and then your humility. You become of service to the community... (Chief Blaney)

Chief Blaney explains that the practice of bathing in the river allows one to become of service to their community. He also connects the ritual to both mental and physical health. Bathing in the river gives a person the mental and spiritual strength to be of service to their community, which in turn keeps them physically strong, and so forth. In this understanding mental, physical and spiritual health are one. It is an image of holistic health. It is clear then, that bathing in the river is a foundational practice in Homalco culture. However, Chief Blaney sees alcohol as taking the place of this important spiritual practice and thus, all the teaching that go with it, including food-related knowledge. Indeed, Chief Blaney explained that:

[Bathing in the river] fits in with all this stuff [food sovereignty] because it teaches you about the humility, like you pray for your community and the animals and stuff and then you pray for your family and then yourself last because you're the last, you serve people. And at the same time, when you're picking berries – my grandmother used to always tell me – you give thanks and you say a prayer for that first one you get and same with the salmon and stuff. All those things are making sure that we're offering respect to these different foods that we get.

We see then that to Chief Blaney, the loss of bathing in the river is the loss of important food related teachings, knowledge and traditions. Based on Chief Blaney's descriptions, I understand bathing in the river to act as a gateway to the principal of food sovereignty – sacred or divine sovereignty – that Morrison describes. The Indigenous Food Systems Network states that “Indigenous food sovereignty is fundamentally achieved by upholding our sacred responsibility to nurture healthy, interdependent relationships with the land, plants and animals that provide us with our food” and according to Chief Blaney, bathing in the river is an important part of this process for the Homalco people. Bathing in the river allows one to have humility and gratitude for the food sources his people consider sacred. The act is, in a sense, the foundation of a reciprocal relationship with the land and its food sources, which is at the heart of Indigenous cultures. According to Chief Blaney, alcohol interferes with these teachings.

We see then, that alcoholism is a health barrier that interrupts peoples' ability to access their culture in a variety of ways. Addiction consumes all of the attention of its user, no longer allowing them to be of service to their community and disrupts peoples' spiritual connection to the land. Because, as Chief Blaney notes in his explanation about bathing in the river, substance abuse conflicts with the traditional teachings of strength,

humility and community service, cultural engagement can be seen as both a preventative measure and treatment for substance abuse (Brady, 1995).

The Homalco community faces various health concerns that are both symptomatic of a decline in their food sovereignty and act as barriers to their food sovereignty. These health issues include diabetes and alcoholism, and stem from a variety of determinants including, poverty (and subsequent food insecurity), a lack of traditional food sources, a dependence on a Western, industrialized diet, the transgenerational effects of trauma and a loss of the important practice of bathing in the river. Participants also informed me that poor health outcomes in their community have interfered with peoples' ability to participate fully in food traditions.

Through conversations with a small portion of Homalco community members, I learned that, for them, a key element of food sovereignty is a healthy community, without the threat of alcoholism and diabetes at rates much higher than the rest of the population. It means healthy people, engaged in their food traditions, carrying them and passing them on with pride. With this in mind I will discuss community health through the lens of intergenerational relationships and teaching in the following section, "Generations and Youth."

5.1.4. Generations and Youth

As I explained in the previous section, the transgenerational effects of collective trauma have contributed to poor health outcomes among Indigenous peoples of Canada. These health issues affect the Homalco people and act as barriers to participatory action in their food traditions. However, for Indigenous peoples, the effects of the trauma brought on by colonization extend beyond the physical and mental health problems described above. Many of the people I interviewed spoke about health, not concerning the individual, but rather of the community itself, often in terms of wishing to improve cultural vitality and intergenerational relationships. Indeed, colonization impeded the transmission of Indigenous traditional knowledge from one generation to the next. For example, residential schools intentionally interrupted the intergenerational communication of Indigenous cultural teachings and knowledge by separating children from their families, languages, cultures and traditional foods, with the goal of complete

assimilation into a Western lifestyle. This made it incredibly difficult for Indigenous peoples to maintain and pass on their way of life.

This section, “Generations and Youth,” refers to the importance of intergenerational relationships in relation to Homalco food sovereignty. Youth are highlighted because youth represent the future of a culture. Based on my conversations with Homalco community members, the idea of “generations and youth” comes down to participation and connection, both in cultural traditions and in building strong relationships amongst community members from all generations. For interviewees, one major challenge to achieving this level of participation and connection is that the community was dispersed for many years after people left the Bute Inlet. Because the Homalco people were separated from their land, food system and each other, maintaining their food sovereignty became more challenging. In particular, the 20-year period of the Homalco people being scattered throughout the province and not having a cohesive community disrupted the flow of traditional knowledge. This sort of damage does not heal overnight and Bill informed me that “even today, a lot of the people aren’t connected the way it used to be in Church House.” I interpret “connected” to mean both to each other and to their cultural heritage. Community members explained, that this perceived lack of connection has had an impact on community participation in Homalco culture and of course, Homalco food traditions.

The Indigenous Food Sovereignty Network describes how participation is a key ingredient for Indigenous food sovereignty and a vibrant, engaged community:

To maintain Indigenous food sovereignty as a living reality for both present and future generations, continued participation in cultural harvesting strategies at all of the individual, family, community and regional levels is key.

This, of course, makes sense; food sovereignty relies on the maintenance of Indigenous food systems through the transmission of intergenerational knowledge and active community participation.

In this realm, one particular concern for many participants, was that they perceived the younger generations to be out of touch with their culture. Caroline expressed sadness that she did not see today’s youth engaging in Homalco cultural traditions:

[It's] almost like our traditions are dying and it's hard to see. And all the kids see up here is the alcohol and the drugs and they don't... they try to get them into stuff, but they seem to, like, don't care even... the young generation they should be trying to do something. Like when we go to luncheons at other tribes, you can see all these little kids dancing and they wear Native costumes and that...and we don't even have that.

Caroline feels a sense of loss from not seeing the youth participating in Homalco culture. She was not the only one to identify a lack of youth participation in culture as an issue. Ella explained that, in her opinion, the reason that youth are disconnected from Homalco culture is that traditions are not being passed down from parents to children the way that they used to be:

It's this generation of the kids of how they're brought up and it's totally different from my generation... learning from my mom... this next generation, I'm talking about the 19, 20 years olds that just don't have no clue of our traditional ways [to the point] where [they're] getting lost and forgotten.

Similarly, for Bill, the root of the perceived disconnect between youth and their culture is that children have grown up away from the traditional territory, which has made it more difficult for them to learn their culture:

It is important because you know a lot of our young people never knew where their roots are, you know? Most were born here or born in Campbell River. They don't know their background. It's really important to really start to pass that down.

To Bill, being connected to one's own background is an essential aspect of cultural participation. In his opinion, separation from the traditional territory acts as a barrier to knowing one's roots and thus knowing and learning one's culture and the food related knowledge embedded within it.

Indeed, according to some of the other Elders I spoke with, living in Campbell River, away from the traditional territory has had consequences on youth participation in Homalco culture. Caroline expressed concern about the consequences of living in an urban setting: "It's really hard to get into kids today... to do what we're doing [traditional food skills]. They think it's easy, you can just go downtown and get it." Caroline perceives that the urban lifestyle may hinder young peoples' motivation to learn traditional skills. If this is true, it may be because there is not the same necessity to learn these skills as there was in Church House, where there was sometimes no other source

of food available. Or perhaps, with less access to traditional food sources and an abundance of Western foods available in Campbell River, younger generations have developed a taste for Western foods over Homalco's traditional foods. For example, Maggie expressed dismay that "some of them [the younger generation] don't like our seafood." Caroline shared her personal experience in this realm:

When we do get sockeye or something, most people on the reserve, like the kids today, they don't really want to care for it or they just go and sell it... But we [Elders] use it... we freeze ours and sometimes we smoke it. But our daughters not a big fish fan, so she sometimes gives it to somebody else.

If younger community members do not have the same interest in or taste for salmon as their Elders, this could have a deep impact on the "participatory" principal of food sovereignty. Indeed, according to some of the community members I spoke to, through a lack of intergenerational participation many of the skills and traditions associated with seafood have the potential to be lost.

However, while there seemed to be a general consensus among those I interviewed that today's youths were not as engaged in the Homalco culture as they deemed desirable, I did not have the chance to interview many youths myself. The two youths that I did interview seemed very engaged in Homalco culture. However, they too felt those younger than them were not as engaged. While this may certainly be the case, it is perhaps also true that there is a disconnect between the generations. For example, some of the Elders expressed feelings of loneliness and isolation from the rest of the community, especially the feeling of not having relationships with the children and youth on the reserve. "I don't even know most of the young kids around," Caroline told me, sadly. Traditionally, Elders like Caroline would have had relationships with the younger generations and would have had a role in passing down their traditional knowledge and stories (Kennedy & Bouchard, 1983). Given more time, it would have benefited my research to interview more youths (especially those under 20) in order to learn if their experiences reflected the same disconnect described by the older people I interviewed.

Another concern raised by some interviewees was that volunteerism in the community has dwindled since the community left Church House. A number of participants noted that it is becoming less common for people to contribute to the community or to help others without first asking for payment. This perceived

individualistic attitude was particularly felt by the Elders I spoke with. There was a sense of longing among some of those whom I interviewed for a time when people were engaged in their community and one could rely on their neighbours in times of need. As I outlined in the previous chapter, people's stories about helping others and sharing often revolved around food. This demonstrates that for the Homalco community members I spoke with food has meaning beyond its nutritional value, as it is inherently connected to culture and community. However, for some of my participants, the modern-day individualism they identified as characteristic of the Campbell River community contradicts their traditional values surrounding food – for example, the notion that food should be shared and that a person should put the needs of their community above their own.

There's no volunteering anymore... my wife used to do the Christmas parties here and she never asked for any money. Now today at Christmastime everybody that goes through cooking, they all want to get paid (Bill Blaney).

As Bill exemplifies, there seemed to be some fear among the interviewees that actions based on community service are becoming rarer amongst community members. This is an example of how a lack of community participation in traditional values such as volunteerism may inhibit Homalco food sovereignty, because, as the community members I spoke with informed me and as is laid out in Chapter 3, Homalco food traditions generally embodied this core value.

Another major concern for the Homalco people, when it comes to intergenerational cultural participation is that their language is in jeopardy. Indeed, there are only 30 fluent speakers of the traditional, K'omoks language left in the community (Statistics Canada, 2017a). As the carriers of the language pass on, so do their stories, history and knowledge that they carry, including, of course, food related knowledge.

During the interviews, I learned that many of my participants felt that the language is especially difficult to regenerate because of the alphabet that is used to write it. It does not resemble the English alphabet and is therefore very challenging for English speakers to learn. Because of this even speakers of the traditional language often cannot pronounce or read the words when they are written out. For example, before I knew about the issues with the alphabet I asked Bill, who grew up speaking the language, to read a sentence for me. After struggling a bit with Ella, Ella said “see we

couldn't even read it. We have to change our lettering of how we're gonna present it.” Ella hopes that one day the language will be written out in a more accessible way so that more community members can begin to learn it and pass it down.

Language regeneration is important for food sovereignty because so many traditions and stories about food are carried in the language. If the language is lost, those stories and traditions become lost too. Sue Hanley illustrates this point below:

You know, I remember when I came out to B.C. in 2000, I was at this meeting and one of the FN health directors stood up and talked about her community and saying that the language is essential in rebuilding First Nation’s health... That cultural identity, that sense of strength and I think the more it comes, you know, you'll find people going back and doing traditional ways of smoking fish, or gathering berries, or whatever and then eating it. I mean it's all related, isn't it?

Sue articulates the connection between language regeneration and participatory action in Indigenous food sovereignty. In her understanding, if the language is regenerated, participation in food traditions will follow.

We see then, that a major barrier to Homalco food sovereignty is the disrupted transmission of traditional food knowledge from one generation to the next. The community members I interviewed expressed concerns about a lack of youth participation in culture, a divide between generations, language degeneration and about how living away from their traditional territory has made it more difficult to pass on traditional food related knowledge. However, while the community members I spoke with drew my attention to the challenges for the intergenerational transmission of cultural teachings, they also described the many opportunities that exist that are helping to restore the participatory principal of Indigenous food sovereignty (among others) in their community. I describe these below.

5.2. Opportunities for Food Sovereignty

[We] The Homalco people have not lost [our] culture... we are working hard on showing our youth our traditional ways of life and proving to our Elders that we will respect and carry on our long-lived, traditional ways of life.

-Homalco First Nation Website

While there are many barriers facing Homalco food sovereignty, the Homalco people are not passive victims of a colonial legacy. Rather, in spite of these barriers, community members are working towards Homalco food sovereignty within the Campbell River context. Through my discussions with participants, I learned that many of the opportunities for Homalco food sovereignty stem from the formation of a community in Campbell River, and the fact that the band still has access to their traditional territory, despite living away from it. This information seems to contradict the barriers I listed in the previous section. However, as I have mentioned, these barriers and opportunities are not mutually exclusive and life in Campbell River, away from the traditional territory presents both opportunities and barriers for Homalco food sovereignty. This opportunities section does not strive to negate the barriers I have discussed above, rather this section demonstrates the possibilities, *despite* the challenges on the path to Homalco food sovereignty.

5.2.1. Urban Opportunities

After the last families left Church House, the Homalco community was without a place to call home for almost 20 years. “There was almost 20 years of, you know, nothing happening with our band. It was kind of a dead period,” explained Bill. Bill implies, that without a cohesive community, very little could be done to foster Homalco food sovereignty. With people scattered throughout the province it would have been extremely difficult to launch initiatives to improve life for band members. Indeed, it would have been difficult to have any sort of leadership at all. When Homalco acquired the land in Campbell River years later, it was an opportunity to bring people together again and to start to rebuild their community. Bill describes his feelings about Homalco finally having land to form a community again:

[Before, we were] spread out and it wasn't like a community anymore. Until we started this village. And I think it took 6 years to make that pass as a status reserve... But then it became a status reserve and that was really good. We were one of the first to move here in 1992. I lived at Crawford Road... low-cost housing, you know, that rent-to-own? And I moved away from that, I wanted to live on reserve.

The creation of reserves was a component of the Indian Act, which sought to eradicate Indigenous cultures and assimilate Indigenous peoples to Euro-Canadian society (Hanson, 2009). While the reserve system is highly problematic and detrimental for

many reasons (some of which I described in Chapter 4), ironically, reserves have actually contributed to maintaining Indigenous communities and cultures (Harris, 2002; Hanson, 2009). Reserves can provide communities for Indigenous peoples to convene and practice their cultures, raise their children and be near their extended families. The reserve setting can allow for transmission of cultural values and teachings through generations of band members, thus sustaining the culture's vitality. "Reserves are, therefore, a disruptive and in many ways destructive imposition that, through the strength of the peoples who occupy them, often simultaneously support cultural survival" (Hanson, 2009).

The idea of the reserve system as paradoxical fits with what the Homalco community members I spoke with told me. The reserve system itself is one of the reasons that the Homalco people were displaced from their traditional territory, however, the reserve in Campbell River presents an imperfect mechanism for sustaining their culture, within an imperfect, colonial system. Above, Bill illustrates the significance of once again having a place to call home for the Homalco people. After so many years of separation, the prospect of a place that the Homalco people could finally gather was a very exciting one for community members and appears to be a source of hope and possibility for many. It may not be the "perfect" piece of land, but it symbolizes the opportunity for community members to come home to, to begin again, to reconnect and to heal. In terms of food sovereignty, the reserve in Campbell River provides a shared space for people to connect over and learn about food traditions that would have been more difficult when the Homalco population was scattered throughout the province.

The urban environment itself provides opportunities that would not have been present when the community was in Church House. As described in Chapter 4, the Homalco community was forced to abandon Church House due to a lack of jobs and resources needed for modern society, such as schools and groceries stores. Indeed, some of my participants explained to me that grocery shopping was a challenge in Church House. It involved a long, sometimes rough boat trip to the nearest store. Because the journey was weather dependent, it was essential to stock up on necessities too. Bill told me that this was particularly difficult for the Elders in the community, who were often dependent on others for their groceries. As younger generations started moving out of Church House, the Elders left behind could not sustain themselves:

A lot of things were closing down, like the school didn't have enough children to keep it open, a lot of the people transferred out of Church House, going to Sliammon... And so, a lot of our Elders were left there... and a lot of grocery stores were closing as well. Like Stuart Island – it turned into a resort after, but that was a general store that we bought food and got our mail. The way they shopped in those days, when they lived in Church House... you had to shop for the whole month. It was okay [before] cuz a lot of the younger people were still living there, but when the younger people moved away it became a hardship for the Elders. They were having a tough time shopping, cuz they couldn't get around very well (Bill Blaney).

The City of Campbell River then, offers the opportunity for a community closer to these amenities. While in the “barriers” section, I explain that there are barriers to the Homalco people accessing the many amenities Campbell River has to offer, there can be no doubt that grocery stores, medical care, schools and employment opportunities are more readily available now than when the community was in Church House.

For example, while mobility is a barrier to the Homalco people accessing the resources Campbell River has to offer, this issue may be easier to address near a city center than in Church House. Chief Blaney hopes to offset the barriers to transportation I described earlier, especially for Elders:

We have Elders in our community that can't really afford to drive or some of them are not allowed to drive and they're totally dependent... I think at some point when we get enough money we'll pay somebody, say three days a week, to drive them down, get groceries, get your medicines, go to your appointments for doctors... They more than anybody have doctors' appointments and specialists they've gotta see. So, we gotta help them out in that way... I think at some point we will be doing that for them.

The service that Chief Blaney wants to offer his people is certainly much more realistic given the more central location of the community comparatively to the Bute Inlet.

Another opportunity stemming from Homalco's less isolated location is their proximity to other First Nation's bands in the area. Sue elaborates:

We're going to be lucky enough to have Dr. Manley Begay come to speak and he was part of the Harvard Institute... anyway he's a very well-known, [Indigenous] governance educator [and] philosopher... and we talked at the council meeting the other day about inviting the other [First Nation's] groups that are part of Homalco's nation, but also the ones in Campbell River to kind of start to reach out a little bit and kind of see what we can do. And Darren has talked about trying to work with them on a couple of the social

issues that we all face, the policing issue and the opioid issue. There's opportunities I think....

Here we see that there may be an opportunity for Indigenous peoples to work together on shared concerns within the urban context of Campbell River. Sue mentions the opioid crisis as a unifying concern amongst local Indigenous peoples. As I illustrated above, addiction can be seen as a barrier to food sovereignty, because it disrupts participatory action. Thus, coming together to work on this issue could have positive effects for Homalco food sovereignty. Furthermore, while Sue does not explicitly mention food related concerns, I do think that they are relevant here. There are many injustices facing urban Indigenous peoples, including barriers to food sovereignty, which have the potential to be addressed in a collaborative way. Chief Blaney agreed with Sue, adding that "I think colonization impacted us all in a similar way. I think we can work together on those things." In this case, there may be strength in numbers, thus allowing the voices of Indigenous peoples in the Campbell River area to be heard louder than ever before.

On this note, Campbell River has recently become the home of another First Nation community, the Tlowitsis Nation, whose story has many similarities to the Homalco Nation's. Members of the Tlowitsis Nation had been scattered across the province, with no place to call home since the 1960s, until their recent purchase of land just outside the city of Campbell River. In an interview with the CBC, band councillor Thomas Smith explained that they needed "a place for our people to live and be able to make decisions about their territory and governing, and you can't do that unless you have a community" (Thomas, 2018). Similar to the Homalco people's story, the Tlowitsis have other reserve lands, but they are too remote to establish a viable community. Many community members were already settled in or around Campbell River. The Tlowitsis' chose to settle in Campbell River "because it's close to employment opportunities, schools and medical care." The Tlowitsis' story shares many similarities to Homalco's story and, given their struggles, it is likely that the two communities will share some of the same barriers to food sovereignty. There may be opportunities here for collaboration on the shared issues facing both communities in terms of food sovereignty.

To conclude, while the land in Campbell River may not provide direct access to the same resources that the traditional territory once did, it offers a shared space for people to connect over and learn about food traditions that may not have been possible when the Homalco population was scattered throughout the province. Campbell River

also provides a proximity to certain amenities that were not readily available in the Bute Inlet and offers the opportunity for collaboration on shared issues with other bands in the area.

Furthermore, because the band still has reserve lands in the Bute Inlet, the opportunity still exists for accessing the traditional territory, which has proven to be advantageous for the Homalco community in a number of ways. Campbell River is the closest urban centre to the Bute Inlet, so while it offers the amenities of a city, it is also a gateway to the more rural areas of the Homalco traditional territory in the Bute Inlet. This is important because, as I have illustrated, maintaining a connection to the traditional territory and its food sources is truly at the heart of Indigenous food sovereignty. I elaborate on the benefits of accessing the traditional territory in the following sections.

5.2.2. Leadership and Community Initiatives

Since congregating in Campbell River, Homalco has been able to take on many initiatives that are of benefit to the community's food sovereignty. For example, I have already mentioned the legal action Homalco has taken against fish farming in their ancestral lands as an opportunity to assert their right to food sovereignty and protect their valuable food sources. Furthermore, at the time of our interview, band manager Sue was anticipating the start of a community garden that she hoped would engage community members and offer a healthy food source for people to offset the effects of poverty and food insecurity. Sue also drew my attention to the variety of other projects being initiated through the Band Office including, applications for grants aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles and helping those struggling with addiction, both major health issues in the community:

You're doing [referring to Ella] a great job with the language and some of the activities that you do: the Building Healthy Lifestyles and the Drumming, and we're hoping to get money to start a First Voices Language application here so we've got an application in for that. We've got a Harm Reduction application that just went in, we've got a Wellness application that's just gone in, you know we've got a Digitization application that's just going in in a few hours. You know we're trying to build [the culture] up, but it's not going to happen overnight. I mean the culture was [damaged] over many years and you know [with] the move here and everything else... I mean it's not going to be fixed in a moment, but I think this Chief and Council and the staff are really committed to it.

She elaborated for me about the First Voices Language grant and its connection to language and food traditions:

We applied for this First Voices grant, and one of the things we said we were going to do, and this comes out of what you're saying, we're gonna develop little books, we're calling them little tile books, for the kids and one of them is going to be the salmon, the bear in Orford and the first salmon ceremony and you know, all of... There's lots of work to be done, but I think there's a core group of people [referring to Ella and Chief Blaney as examples in the room] that are leading it.

There are also a few other language revitalization projects on the go in Homalco, like the traditional language class I attended. Chief Blaney is in the process of creating a Homalco radio station to revive the K'omoks language. As was mentioned in the "Barriers" section, keeping the language alive is an important element of food sovereignty since so much traditional food knowledge exists within the language, which stands to be lost if the language disappears. Beyond rearticulating the significance of language regeneration, I think Sue's comments also demonstrate the importance of leadership in terms of Indigenous food sovereignty and having a Chief, council and project leaders that are engaged and in tune with the needs of their community. As Sue implies, regardless of the project, without strong leaders, things would never get off the ground.

Participants and I also discussed health related opportunities for food sovereignty within the community. Sue, Chief Blaney and I also theorized about the health benefits of community members having access to more traditional foods. For example, Sue informed me about the research of Dr. Jay Wortman, a metis medical doctor who heralds the benefits of more traditional diets for Indigenous peoples. After being diagnosed with Type II Diabetes, he treated himself by eating a traditional Indigenous diet, which tends to be naturally low-carb (Lui, 2018). He then did a similar study with the Namgis First Nation of Alert Bay and found that the adoption of a traditional diet led to a sharp decline in Type II Diabetes rates within the community (Wortman, 2008). Sue and Chief Blaney both agreed that adopting aspects of a more traditional diet could benefit the health of the Homalco people. And because culture is so embedded within the food sources, not only could accessing these resources improve physical health outcomes, it could also improve community health and promote cultural regeneration.

Community members informed me that they do have some access to traditional foods. There is some sharing and distribution of traditional foods within the community to help mitigate the fact that traditional foods are not as readily available as before. While it was not clear how often this happens, there are occasions where someone within the community may go hunting or fishing and acquire some traditional food. Whether they have access to clams, salmon, elk or cod, community members will often offer to share their bounty among band members and Chief and council try to make sure that it is equally distributed, especially among the Elders. While this may not be the same as in Church House, where all community members had equal opportunity for these food sources, it does offer at least a taste of these traditional foods to those who might otherwise not have the chance to eat them. Chief Blaney also hopes to start having fish smoked up in the traditional territory and then having a distribution program within the community. In general, Chief and council would like to give their people more opportunities to eat their traditional foods and believe that this could improve the health of their community. This would also improve Homalco's ability to self-determine their food choices, as it would reduce their dependence on a Westernized model of food production. Furthermore, having access to more traditional foods could also help to preserve and pass on the skills associated with those foods, for example, filleting and preserving salmon, thus perpetuating the participatory aspect of food sovereignty.

Another way for the Homalco people to access their traditional food sources would be for them to have more access to the traditional territory where those food sources are. Efforts are being made to get as many people as possible to the Bute Inlet, especially the Elders. A group made a visit for Aboriginal Day a few years ago. "Yeah, [they] brought us up there and we went and did a burning up there for everybody that's left over there, [at] the graveyard there, [for] the people up in the graveyard. We went and burned some food for them. Was really nice..." reminisced Maggie. However, while some Homalco residents have been able to experience the power of Bute Inlet, many have not had the opportunity. Through the interviews I learned that for many the chances to visit (either to experience for the first time or to return there) are scarce and sometimes nonexistent. Many interviewees noted that not enough community members have been able to experience what the area has to offer. Some wished they had more opportunities to do so themselves.

However, Chief Blaney has plans to make the traditional territory more accessible for his people. He dreams of one day having cabins there for community members to stay and reconnect with the area:

That's one of the things I'd like to do as Chief, is put cabins throughout our territory so people can go and stay there and access the resources and then they can start to get back to our foods a little more... cuz I think for us we've been here in Campbell River, we've kind of disconnected ourselves somewhat from our territory and that's why I'd like to put opportunities for our people to connect back with the territory so they can start to access those resources again.

For Chief Blaney, part of the importance of accessing the traditional territory has to do with accessing the traditional food sources there. Considering the link between a traditional diet and improved health outcomes for Indigenous peoples, having access to the traditional territory could improve health outcomes for the Homalco people. Furthermore, increasing the accessibility of the traditional territory could encourage community participation in traditional food related activities that are more readily accessible there, such as hunting, digging for clams and fishing.

Another important health related initiative over the last few years has been the development of the health center on the Homalco reserve. Funded in part by the federal government and built in 2011, the health center gives Homalco a degree of sovereignty over healthcare by offering medical and dental care to the Homalco community. The center offers the services of a nurse practitioner, a child and maternal health worker and an addictions prevention worker, among others. The health center also provides rides to certain appointments off reserve. Furthermore, it offers various educational experiences, including workshops on diabetes, traditional foods and traditional medicine to Homalco community members. Though we did not spend much time discussing the health center, community members told me that it is well used. The health center aligns with the concept of food sovereignty because it addresses health in a holistic sense, for example by offering traditional food workshops as a mechanism for improving overall health. This recognizes the inherent connection between health, food and culture that is so critical to Indigenous food sovereignty.

While there are many projects in the community that connect to the idea of food sovereignty, one of the community's major initiatives over the last number of years, the Homalco Wildlife Tours, is particularly relevant. This organization is run out of Orford

Bay in Bute Inlet, part of the Homalco people's traditional territory. During the summer months, local guides offer visitors cultural tours of the area. These tours include a traditional welcome, grizzly bear viewing, a canoe ride, a cedar weaving demonstration, a visit to the cultural centre and a traditional feast complete with dance performances.

The Bute Inlet is world renowned for its grizzly bear viewing and is a popular tourist destination. Ella and Bill even reminisced about celebrities who had been on the Homalco Wildlife Tours including, the duke and duchess of Cambridge, Bill Gates, Chris Tucker and Quincy Jones. While the initiative has an obvious economic benefit for the community, participants informed me that the importance of Homalco Wildlife Tours goes beyond the financial. Bill, who was one of the original founders of Homalco Wildlife Tours and does the carvings for the company, explained to me that Homalco Wildlife Tours helps to pass down traditions to the young people. Prior to the start of each summer, new guides train to prepare for the oncoming season. These guides are often local Homalco youth who are interested in returning to their ancestral lands, learning traditional knowledge and educating tourists about their culture. This training includes learning phrases and words in the traditional K'omoks language, practicing the traditional songs and dances, learning the stories that have been passed on through generations, as well as an extensive ethno-botany course. I elaborate on the importance of Homalco Wildlife Tours for passing on cultural teachings in the following section.

5.2.3. Towards the Future: Engaging Youth in Homalco Culture

I had the opportunity to speak with two young men who are currently tour guides for Homalco Wildlife Tours, Marselis and Antony. Best friends since childhood, they are now in their early twenties and grew up on the Homalco reserve in Campbell River away from their traditional territory. Antony has been a tour guide for a year, while Marselis has been at it for 3 years. As I mentioned in Chapter 3, I lost the audio for this particular interview and for this reason I do not have any direct quotes from Antony or Marselis.

I began the interview by asking the young men about their positions at Homalco Wildlife Tours. Antony explained a bit about their duties as tour guides and walked me through a typical tour. He explained how once they see the tourists coming on the boat, they wait on the dock and welcome them to Orford in their Native language (which Antony demonstrated for me). Both young men are learning many new words and songs

in their traditional language and Antony explained that he is newer to the language than Marselis, but that Marselis and the other guides have helped him to learn it. At the end of the tour the guests have a seafood feast that the guides caught themselves that day. The food for the feast is prepared by the Homalco Wildlife Tours Chef in the traditional way. The guides dance (for example The Bear Dance) for the tourists during the feast, and after eating the tourists can join in. Antony and Marselis agreed that it was enjoyable (and sometimes funny) to see people dancing and experiencing their culture in this way.

A large part of being trained as a tour guide involves learning about Homalco traditions, many of which are food related. For example, Antony and Marselis shared how they participated in an extensive ethnobotany course as part of the job requirements. All the tour guides are expected to memorize traditional plant names, uses and meanings and are tested on their knowledge. The boys described the course as difficult, but explained that they helped each other through it. Indeed, I learned that most of the tour guides are youths (in their 20s) like Antony and Marselis and all of them are learning elements of their culture and traditions through Homalco Wildlife Tours. The young men also described how an important part of the job is learning traditional stories and then teaching the guests about the Homalco people through storytelling (eg: The Story of Cedar from Chapter 4). Both Marselis and Antony said that learning about their culture and sharing it with others made them feel pride in their culture and more connected to their traditions.

Similarly, the young guides have learned to practice the important tradition of bathing in the river, the significance of which I described in the previous section. Antony illustrated the power of this practice. He explained that they bathe at two joining rivers: the Algard and the Main Orford River, both fed by the glacier. It is a cleansing and healing experience, allowing a person to let go of whatever negative emotions they are carrying, which flow away from them with the river. The custom of bathing in the river, or “spirit baths” has proven to be healing in other contexts for B.C. First Nations as well. In Prince George, Indigenous ex-convicts practice spirit baths as part of a healing ritual. “[It’s] a place to pray and be heard, and to let go of what you’re carrying,” explained one of the men. Another man, who was in his early 20s said, “When I went to prison, I started making changes. Culture and traditions were back in my life. So that’s a pretty clear message. That’s what keeps me on the straight and narrow” (Trumpener, 2015). While this example is from a different context than Homalco’s, the idea is that the custom

grounds people, especially youth, to their culture and the teachings within it. As Chief Blaney described, bathing in the river teaches the humility and gratitude that are at the center of Homalco culture and it is an important aspect of the Homalco people's connection to the land and its food sources. Thus, by practicing this ancient tradition, Antony and Marselis become grounded in Homalco tradition and contribute to sustaining this important practice. Passing this tradition on to the younger generations is of the utmost importance to Chief Blaney, who has his own sons practice the custom.

What makes Homalco Wildlife Tours even more immersive for its young guides is the fact that they live in camp while they are on shift in the Bute Inlet. Antony expressed the benefits he felt from the remoteness of the camp lifestyle. He told me that the WIFI is unreliable and often does not work at all. However, he actually enjoys getting away from his phone. Not having connection to the outside world means he can spend his spare time doing other things, for example he spends that time sitting by the fire with his friends, learning his culture and fishing. At home, everyone spends all their time on their phones and miss out on the opportunities for cultural connection that he has at camp. Based on Antony and Marselis' descriptions, Homalco Wildlife Tours is a culturally immersive experience for its young guides, allowing them to disconnect somewhat from modern life and return to their roots. Antony implies that modern day items, like cell phones, can distract and disconnect people from valuable cultural learning and human interaction. He also stresses the importance of human connection in passing down knowledge and cultural teachings.

To conclude the interview, I asked both of the young men what their favourite part of working for Homalco Wildlife Tours was. Antony said he enjoyed being outdoors in the traditional territory, which to him feels like his home. Marselis said his favourite thing about it was being able to educate the tourists about his culture – for example, that they don't live in tipis, a common misconception. When I asked how long they wanted to keep working for Homalco Wildlife Tours, both declared enthusiastically that they wanted to work there as long as possible. Antony explained the job does not feel like work – rather it is a way of life. I do not know many people who would say that about their job, especially young people. I think this demonstrates the effectiveness of initiatives like Homalco Wildlife Tours, that engage youth in an immersive and exciting way.

While I did not have the chance to speak to other Homalco youth, Antony and Marselis showed an immense desire to connect with their roots. They also demonstrated for me the healing power that this connection can have on a community, as they have truly become stewards of their culture, including the food related knowledge embedded within it. Their experience suggests that Homalco Wildlife Tours has the potential to help restore food sovereignty to the Homalco community. Not only does it offer economic independence for the community, thus contributing to Homalco self-determination, but it also increases participatory action within the community by facilitating youth engagement within their cultural heritage.

The traditional territory has a powerful draw for Marselis and Anthony. Similarly, Maggie told me about how her teenage grandson has had the chance to visit the area and feels a deep connection to the traditional territory. He hopes to one day camp there and clear a path to the graveyard so that Elders can access it more easily, in order to visit their loved ones who have passed on. Maggie told me that, “He said he didn't want to be paid. He said he would just love to live where I used to live.”

Maggie's grandson's interest in camping and volunteering in the traditional territory is significant because it demonstrates the sense of connection he feels to his culture and heritage. She believes that he is drawn to the traditional territory in order to connect with his roots and his ancestry and to give back to his community when he is there. While these are just a few examples of a youth connecting with Homalco culture, these young men's interest in the traditional territory suggests hopeful possibilities for Homalco's cultural/food sovereignty. Despite the obstacles and challenges, Maggie's grandson, Antony and Marselis demonstrate that the culture *is* being passed down. This is an essential aspect of food sovereignty because food knowledge is embedded in culture and cannot be disentangled from it. Showing interest in the traditional territory and wishing to be immersed in it, inherently involves food because the food sources are there. While not explicitly stated, if Maggie's grandson wishes to live where his grandmother lived, I think it likely that he will interact with traditional food sources as well.

While the traditional territory offers many possibilities for youth to connect with culture and food traditions, there are opportunities for this in everyday life as well. For example, Bill also sees tremendous power in the act of storytelling.

Storytelling is quite important... It's one way of really passing down the knowledge of your people and passing down history as well. Everything was passed down through the word of mouth, through generations.

In particular, Bill believes storytelling to be an important tool for engaging youth in Homalco culture. He has some experience with it himself and even has a strategy for best getting the messages across to the younger generations:

Yeah, I think [storytelling is] a real good start... what I found, [is that you don't want to] gather too many people in one room... it's best to take some of them, maybe 6, that way you're building up the knowledge for them to get to know what you're talking about. Because I think when you have too many, you get too many distractions and too [much] sidetracking...

Bill sees the importance of forming more intimate connections between the storyteller and the young listeners, a kind of rapport or trust, in order to pass down knowledge. This reminds me of the bear story Maggie's mother would tell her and her peers (from Chapter 4). Maggie's mother had a relationship with the young women and in turn could pass on her food related knowledge and the cultural teachings embedded within it.

Chief Blaney also stressed the importance of engaging youth in Homalco culture. "We're giving a lot of effort and attention to the kids, so they can be the ones that... they'll be given resilience and they'll be fine," said Chief Blaney. Indeed, I saw examples of this in Antony and Marselis, who both plan to pass down the skills and knowledge they've learned at Homalco Wildlife Tours to their own children, and in Maggie's grandson, who feels deeply connected to his ancestral roots and wants to give back to the community. One of the main takeaways from my conversations with community members about opportunities for Homalco food sovereignty is that every act that bolsters the intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge is a step closer to food sovereignty, whether or not it has a direct connection to food. The point is that everything is connected to food and food is connected to everything.

Through discussions about the opportunities for food sovereignty with the Homalco community members I spoke with, it became clear to me that opportunities for healing exist both in Campbell River and in the traditional territory. While there are many barriers that have arisen from living away from their ancestral lands and in an urban setting, the Homalco people are taking strides towards food sovereignty in the context of Campbell River. Having a place to convene as a community has allowed the progression

of various initiatives aimed at restoring food sovereignty. A key element of this is the access they still have to their traditional territory in the Bute Inlet. From the deep, spiritual connection that people have to these lands, to the possibility of healing through the traditional foods they have to offer, the Bute Inlet truly presents opportunities for food sovereignty for the Homalco people. With goals to make the traditional territory more accessible for all community members, soon everyone may be able to experience the benefits that the ancestral lands have to offer. While it is may not possible for the Homalco people to live permanently in the Bute Inlet at this time, the Homalco community is taking strides to connect with the place they call home and the abundance of food sources and cultural teachings it holds within it, while continuing to live and pass on their culture in Campbell River.

Chapter 6.

Conclusion

The goal of this thesis was to begin to understand how the idea of food sovereignty is conceptualized by the people of the Homalco First Nation band in the city of Campbell River and to learn what opportunities and barriers exist in realizing this model of food sovereignty. While there is a significant amount of academia on the theoretical elements of Indigenous food sovereignty, less is known about the concept in a local, community context.

For this research, I engaged in open-ended conversations with 9 individuals, 8 of whom are Homalco community members living on the reserve, in order to hear their food stories, both past and present. Participants' stories highlighted the significance of specific foods sources, customs and values for Homalco food sovereignty, which aligned with Dawn Morrison's 4 guiding principles of Indigenous food sovereignty. The barriers described by participants highlighted the challenges that have arisen due to the community's separation from their traditional territory as a direct result of colonization and subsequent urbanization of Indigenous lands. Participants also emphasized the difficulty of maintaining a sustainable food system within an industrialized food economy, the impact of widespread poverty and food insecurity on the reserve, the effect of negative health outcomes (especially in terms of diabetes and alcoholism) among community members and the challenges of fostering participation among all generations in Homalco food traditions. All of these issues pose a threat to Homalco food sovereignty.

However, within these barriers lie opportunities for Homalco food sovereignty. Many participants expressed a gratitude for the land the band has in Campbell River that has brought community members back together after a period of separation and thus, has made certain opportunities for food sovereignty possible. The community members I spoke with informed me of many initiatives aimed (either directly or indirectly) at promoting food sovereignty within their community. In particular, participants stressed the immense benefits of reconnecting with their traditional territory in the Bute Inlet.

These benefits included the ability to access traditional food sources and engage youth in Homalco culture, which in turn contribute to sustaining the Homalco food system.

One of the main limitations of this project is the fact that I only spoke with 10 individuals, which is not a representative sample of the Homalco community. In particular, it would have been beneficial to this research to have included more youth perspectives, as this demographic is underrepresented in my participant group. As such, the results of this project cannot be generalized to the Homalco population as a whole.

With this in mind, the discussions I had with community members indicated that opportunities for their food sovereignty exist in every cultural connection, be it through the intergenerational teaching between a grandparent and their grandchild, the thanks given for a freshly caught salmon or newly picked berry, or the act of bathing in the river. These simple, yet vital everyday connections are essential for sustaining the Homalco food system and the Homalco people I interviewed informed me they are striving to foster these connections in their community. Participants also noted that positive change does not happen overnight and that healing takes time. As this study has hoped to articulate, Indigenous food sovereignty offers a framework for “health and community development” in Indigenous communities (Morrison, 2011).

While the Homalco community must be able to strive for food sovereignty on their own terms, I believe there are potential actions from various levels of government that could help support the Homalco community in this regard. At a local level, the City of Campbell River should take a more active role in Homalco food sovereignty through collaboration and strategizing with Homalco leadership to understand the community’s food-related needs and goals. For example, participants stressed the need for better public transportation to and from the Homalco reserve, which is something the city may be able to provide and which could help make the Homalco community more food secure. The city should also strive to recruit more local Indigenous peoples into city hall, as the voices and needs of Indigenous residents are not adequately represented at this time. Furthermore, many cities throughout the country (eg: City of Surrey, 2018; City of Hamilton, 2017) are working on Urban Indigenous Strategies in collaboration with local Indigenous communities, groups and organizations, in order to create more just cities for Indigenous peoples. This is something that the City of Campbell River should implement, including a specific focus on Indigenous food sovereignty, in order to address the food

insecurity issues facing Indigenous community members. At the very least, a municipal food strategy that understands and fosters the goal of Indigenous food sovereignty could support the Homalco people in realizing their food-related goals. However, any such strategy or collaboration would always need to be on the Homalco community's terms and with their leadership and guidance.

While not a long-term solution, social programs aimed at increasing food security among Indigenous peoples should adapt to include an Indigenous food sovereignty perspective. Once again, this would involve collaborating with Indigenous peoples in order to find a best fit for addressing the food related needs of Indigenous Canadians. For example, information from my interviews indicate that food banks should provide foods that are culturally relevant to Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, government-provided social assistance for Indigenous peoples should provide enough funding to support a culturally appropriate diet. These programs should consider the unique needs of urban and rural, on an off reserve, Indigenous peoples and those who are living away from their traditional territories.

On a broader scale, the government of Canada is in the process of developing a National Food Strategy (Government of Canada, 2017). This strategy should include a strong focus on Indigenous food sovereignty, in order to adequately represent the needs of Indigenous Canadians. Furthermore, the government should provide funding for projects that support Indigenous food sovereignty at a community level, as the concept is local by nature (Morrison, 2011). For example, funding to help with projects such as Chief Blaney's idea to build cabins for his people to connect with their traditional territory could help foster Homalco food sovereignty. Finally, the government should prioritize Indigenous food sovereignty perspectives when making decisions about the use of Indigenous peoples' traditional lands and waterways that support their food systems. These decisions should put the needs of Indigenous peoples before profit for multinational companies.

Non-Indigenous individuals who would like to support Indigenous food sovereignty should take the time to educate themselves about the local First Nations groups in their community, their food systems and the effects of colonial history on these food systems. They can also make an effort to support their local food scene rather than the industrialized food system, in particular by supporting Indigenous businesses.

While consultation between Indigenous peoples and all levels of government is an important step towards Indigenous food sovereignty, Morrison believes that it is time to move from a process of consultation to a process based on action (Morrison, 2015). Indeed, Morrison believes that ultimately, more drastic measures will be needed to establish Indigenous food sovereignty. She states that “we need to shift the paradigm away from productionism and resource-based extraction, and look at more regenerative paradigms, based on holistic health models” (Gilpin, 2017). Morrison and The Working Group for Indigenous Food Sovereignty are working to establish substitutes to the current industrialized food system for Indigenous communities, for example through establishing food networks based on giving, sharing and trading. However, she explains that at the heart of this shift are land and territory. Indeed, Morrison believes that Indigenous peoples need a larger land base in order to reach true food sovereignty in their communities and protect the earth’s valuable food sources (Ibid).

Ultimately the positive impacts of Indigenous food sovereignty have the potential to reach far beyond Indigenous communities because Indigenous food sovereignty offers a framework for addressing important global problems, such as food injustice and climate change. Indeed, Morrison emphasizes that Indigenous peoples, “as the original inhabitants of the land... offer guidance in changing human behaviours and ending destructive relationships to Mother Earth and the land and food systems that sustain all human beings” (Morrison, 2011). Thus, Indigenous food sovereignty provides important wisdom to guide us towards a more just and sustainable food system for all peoples.

This project provides just a small insight into the meaning of food sovereignty at the community level. More research is needed to better understand the unique food-related needs of Indigenous Canadians in both urban and rural settings, so that policies and legislature can reflect these diverse needs and goals. In particular, the Homalco community’s story illustrates the necessity for research and policies aimed at improving the lives of Indigenous communities that have been forced to leave their traditional territories and food sources, as these communities face unique challenges in regard to their food sovereignty.

References

- 5 Vancouver Island native bands get commercial fishery. (2014, Jan 30). *CBC*. Retrieved from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/5-vancouver-island-native-bands-get-commercial-fishery-1.2517444>
- Baker, E. (2009). Locating ourselves in the place of creation: The academy as Kitsu'lt melkiko'tin. *Canadian Woman Studies*, 26(3/4), 15-20.
- Ballard, A. (1950). Calendric Terms of the Southern Puget Sound Salish. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 6(1), 79-99. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/stable/3628693>
- Brady, M. (1995). Culture in treatment, culture as treatment. A critical appraisal of developments in addictions programs for indigenous North Americans and Australians. *Social Science & Medicine*, 41(11), 1487–1498. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0277-9536\(95\)00055-C](https://doi.org/10.1016/0277-9536(95)00055-C)
- Canadian Diabetes Association. (2015). 2015 Report on Diabetes – Driving Change. Toronto, ON: CDA. Retrieved from <https://www.diabetes.ca/getmedia/5a7070f0-77ad-41ad-9e95-ec1bc56ebf85/2015-report-on-diabetes-driving-change-english.pdf.aspx>
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, *Ch.9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Metis Peoples of Canada*, 2015. Retrieved from <http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/chapter9-chapitre9/>
- Canty, C. (Interviewer). (2018, August 29). Settlers nearly destroyed Michigan's wild rice beds. Native tribes are restoring them. *Michigan Radio*. Retrieved from <http://www.michiganradio.org/post/settlers-nearly-destroyed-michigan-s-wild-rice-beds-native-tribes-are-restoring-them>
- Carney, B. (2018, June 13). Sea Grant and partners work together to restore culturally important wild rice. *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration*. Retrieved from <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/News/Article/ArtMID/1660/ArticleID/2689/Sea-Grant-and-partners-work-together-to-restore-culturally-important-wild-rice>
- Chalmers, J. (2017). The Transformation of Academic Knowledges: Understanding the Relationship between Decolonising and Indigenous Research Methodologies. *Socialist Studies/Études Socialistes*, 12(1), 97. <https://doi.org/10.18740/S4GH0C>
- Cidro, J., Adekunle, B., Peters, E., & Martens, T. (2015). Beyond Food Security: Understanding Access to Cultural Food for Urban Indigenous People in Winnipeg as Indigenous Food Sovereignty. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research; Winnipeg*, 24(1), 24–43.

- Cidro, J. & Martens, T. (2014). Eating Indigenous in the city: The limited scope of food sovereignty for Indigenous people in urban contexts. *International Journal on Biodiversity Watch*, Fall/Winter Issue, 55-64. Retrieved from https://biodiversity-watch.com/issue/Biodiversity_Watch_Vol-4.pdf
- City of Campbell River. (2013). *History of the Campbell River Area*. Retrieved from <http://www.campbellriver.ca/discover-campbell-river/our-history-heritage/history-of-the-campbell-river-area>
- City of Hamilton. (2017). *Urban Indigenous Strategy*. Retrieved from <https://www.hamilton.ca/city-initiatives/strategies-actions/urban-indigenous-strategy>
- City of Surrey. (2018). *Surrey Urban Indigenous Strategy*. Retrieved from <http://www.surrey.ca/community/18417.aspx>
- Coté, C. (2016). "Indigenizing" Food Sovereignty. Revitalizing Indigenous Food Practices and Ecological Knowledges in Canada and the United States. *Humanities*, 5(57), 57-71, doi: 10.3390/h5030057.
- Damman, S., Eide, W. B., & Kuhnlein, H. V. (2008). Indigenous peoples' nutrition transition in a right to food perspective. *Food Policy*, 33(2), 135–155. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodpol.2007.08.002>
- Desmarais, A. and Wittman, H. (2014). Farmers, foodies and First Nations: getting to food sovereignty in Canada. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 41(6), 1153-1173, DOI: 10.1080/03066150.2013.876623
- DiNicolantonio, J. J., O'Keefe, J. H., & Wilson, W. L. (2018). Sugar addiction: is it real? A narrative review. *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 52(14), 910–913. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bjsports-2017-097971>
- Drawson, A., Toombs, E., & Mushquash, C. (2017). Indigenous Research Methods: A Systematic Review. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 8(2). <https://doi.org/10.18584/iipj.2017.8.2.5>
- Duran, E. (2006). *Healing the Soul Wound: Counselling With American Indians and Other Native Peoples*. Teacher's College Press, New York.
- Evans-Campbell, T. (2008). Historical Trauma in American Indian/Native Alaska Communities: A Multilevel Framework for Exploring Impacts on Individuals, Families, and Communities. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 23(3), 316–338. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260507312290>
- Farro, S. A., Clark, C., & Hopkins Eyles, C. (2011). Assessing trauma-informed care readiness in behavioral health: an organizational case study. *Journal of Dual Diagnosis*, 7(4), 228–241.

- Findlay, A. (2005, April 5). Chief Leads Resurgent Homalco First Nation. *The Tyee*. Retrieved from <http://thetyee.ca/News/2005/04/05/ChiefLeadsHomalco/>
- Florence, M. D., Asbridge, M., & Veugelers, P. J. (2008). Diet Quality and Academic Performance*. *Journal of School Health, 78*(4), 209–215. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1746-1561.2008.00288.x>
- Food Banks Canada. (2016). *Hunger Count 2016: A Comprehensive Report on Hunger and Food Bank Use in Canada and Recommendations for Change*. Retrieved from https://www.foodbanksCanada.ca/getmedia/6173994f-8a25-40d9-acdf-660a28e40f37/HungerCount_2016_final_singlepage.pdf
- Galligos, K. (2012). The 13 Moons of the Sliammon, Klahoose and Homalco People. *SFU Archaeology & Tla'amin First Nation*. Retrieved from <http://www.sliammonfirstnation.com/archaeology/13moons.html>
- Gerwing, K., & McDaniels, T. (2006). Listening to the Salmon People: Coastal First Nations' Objectives Regarding Salmon Aquaculture in British Columbia. *Society & Natural Resources, 19*(3), 259–273. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08941920500460864>
- Gillies, C., Burleigh, D., Snowshoe, A., & Werner, D. (2014). Walking in Circles: Self-Location in Indigenous Youth Violence Prevention Research. *First Nations Perspectives, 6*(1), 5-25. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/10.1177/1476750315622542>
- Gilpin, E. (2017, October 5). How We Can Achieve Reconciliation Beyond Simple Rhetoric. *The Tyee*. Retrieved from <https://thetyee.ca/News/2017/10/05/Reconciliation-Beyond-Rhetoric/>
- Government of Canada. (2017, May 29). *A Food Policy for Canada*. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/campaign/food-policy.html>
- Grey, S., & Patel, R. (2015). Food sovereignty as decolonization: some contributions from Indigenous movements to food system and development politics. *Agriculture and Human Values; Dordrecht, 32*(3), 431–444. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/10.1007/s10460-014-9548-9>
- Hanson, E. (2009). Reserves. *Indigenous Foundations*, UBC. Retrieved October 24, 2018, from <https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/reserves/>
- Harris, C., & Harris, R. C. (2002). *Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance and Reserves in British Columbia*. Vancouver, CA: UBC Press.
- Homalco First Nation. (2011). Retrieved from <https://www.homalco.com>

- Hutchings, J., Tipene, P., Carney, G., Greensill, A., Skelton, P., & Baker, M. (2012). Hua parakore: an indigenous food sovereignty initiative and hallmark of excellence for food and product production. *MAI Journal*, 1(2), 131–145. Retrieved from <http://www.journal.mai.ac.nz/content/hua-parakore-indigenous-food-sovereignty-initiative-and-hallmark-excellence-food-and-product>
- Huyck, L. (2012, June 11). Food preservation is as old as mankind. *Michigan State University Extension*. Retrieved from https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/food_preservation_is_as_old_as_mankind
- Jackson, L. (2016, February 20). Canada's wild rice wars. *Aljazeera*. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/02/canada-wild-rice-wars-160217083126970.html>
- Jones, R., Shepert, M., & Sterritt, N. (2004). Our Place at the Table: First Nations in the BC Fishery. A report by the First Nations Panel on Fisheries. *First Nations Summit*. Retrieved from <http://fns.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/FNFishPanelReport0604.pdf>
- Joseph, Bob. (2018). *21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act: Helping Canadians Make Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples a Reality*. Port Coquitlam, B.C: Indigenous Relations Press.
- Kennedy, D., & Bouchard, R. (1983). *Sliammon Life, Sliammon Lands*. Vancouver, BC: Talonbooks.
- King, T. (2003). *The truth about stories: A native narrative*. Canada: CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corp.]
- King, T. (2013). *The inconvenient Indian: a curious account of native people in North America*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Kingston, L. (2015). The Destruction of Identity: Cultural Genocide and Indigenous Peoples. *Journal of Human Rights*, 14(1), 63–83. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14754835.2014.886951>
- Kirst, M., Aery, A., Matheson, F. I., & Stergiopoulos, V. (2017). Provider and Consumer Perceptions of Trauma Informed Practices and Services for Substance Use and Mental Health Problems. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 15(3), 514–528. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11469-016-9693-z>
- Kneen, K. (2011). "Food Secure Canada: Where Agriculture, Environment, Health, Food and Justice Intersect." In H. Wittman, A. Desmarais & N. Wiebe (Eds.), *Food sovereignty in Canada: creating just and sustainable food systems* (pp.80-96). Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.

- Koch, D.G. (2018, June 14). "Campbell River protesters want fish farms stopped." *Campbell River Mirror*. Retrieved from <https://www.campbellrivermirror.com/news/campbell-river-protesters-want-fish-farms-stopped/>
- Kovach, Margaret. (2009). *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts*. University of Toronto Press.
- La Via Campesina. (no date). *Food Sovereignty*. Retrieved from <https://viacampesina.org/en/what-are-we-fighting-for/food-sovereignty-and-trade/>
- Lui, S. (2018, March 5). "Revisiting My Big Fat Diet: How a Métis doctor lost weight with a traditional Indigenous diet." *CBC Radio*. Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/checkup/what-s-the-best-way-to-tackle-canada-s-weight-problem-1.4558944/revisiting-my-big-fat-diet-how-a-m%C3%A9tis-doctor-lost-weight-with-a-traditional-indigenous-diet-1.4562134>
- Martens, T., Env, M., Cidro, J., Hart, M. A., & McLachlan, S. (2016). Understanding Indigenous Food Sovereignty through an Indigenous Research Paradigm. *Journal of Indigenous Social Development*, 5(1), 18-37.
- Matties, Z. (2016). Unsettling Settler Food Movements: Food Sovereignty and Decolonization in Canada. *Cuisine: The Journal of Canadian Food Cultures*, 7(2). <https://doi.org/10.7202/1038478ar>
- McCue, H. A., et al. (2000). *The learning circle: classroom activities on First Nations in Canada*. Ottawa, ON: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.
- Mclvor, O. (2010). I am my subject: Blending Indigenous research methodology and autoethnography through integrity-based, spirit-based research. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 33(1), 137–151.
- Menzies, C. (2001). Reflections on research with, for, and among indigenous peoples. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 25(1), 19-36.
- Miller Titerle + Company. (2014). *Special Legal Update: Tsilhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia: Considering the Implications*. Retrieved from <http://www.millertiterle.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Tsilhqot'in-Nation-v-BC-MillerTiterle+Co-Analysis.pdf>
- Morrison, D. (2011). "Indigenous food sovereignty: a model for social learning." In H. Wittman, A. Desmarais & N. Wiebe (Eds.), *Food sovereignty in Canada: creating just and sustainable food systems* (pp.97-113). Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.
- Morrison, D. (2015, Oct 22). Food sovereignty: Indigenous food, Land and Heritage. *Young Agrarians*. Retrieved from <http://youngagrarians.org/indigenous-food-sovereignty/>

- Mosby, I., & Galloway, T. (2017). "The abiding condition was hunger": assessing the long-term biological and health effects of malnutrition and hunger in Canada's residential schools. *British Journal of Canadian Studies; Liverpool*, 30(2), 147–1. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/10.3828/bjcs.2017.9>
- NAEDB. (2016). *Reconciliation: Growing Canada's Economy by \$27.7 Billion: Background and Methods Paper*. Retrieved from http://naedb-cndea.com/reports/naedb_report_reconciliation_27_7_billion.pdf
- Om, G. (2015, May 10). Discovery of vast clam gardens suggests B.C. First Nations were marine farmers. *CBC*. Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/clam-gardens-call-into-question-hunter-gatherer-past-of-b-c-first-nations-1.3068709>
- Patrick, D., & Budach, G. (2014). "Urban-Rural" Dynamics and Indigenous Urbanization: The Case of Inuit Language Use in Ottawa. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, 13(4), 236–253. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2014.939034>
- Power, E. M. (2008). Conceptualizing Food Security for Aboriginal People in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 99(2), 95–97.
- Rasmussen, G. (2018, June 18). It's wild salmon health vs. money and jobs as B.C.'s fish farm fight comes to a head. *CBC*. Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/fish-farming-bc-leases-1.4704626>
- Rudolph, K.R. & McLachlan, S.M. (2013). Seeking Indigenous food sovereignty: origins of and responses to the food crisis in northern Manitoba, Canada. *Local Environment*, 18, 1079- 1098.
- Schwindt, R., Vining, A. R., & Weimer, D. (2003). A Policy Analysis of the BC Salmon Fishery. *Canadian Public Policy* 29(1), 73–94. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3552489>
- Shinn, L. (2018, January 3). Something Fishy: The Trouble with Atlantic Salmon in the Pacific Northwest. *NRDC*. Retrieved from <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/something-fishy-trouble-atlantic-salmon-pacific-northwest>
- Smillie-Adjarkwa, C. (2009). Aboriginal Alcohol Addiction in Ontario Canada: A Look at the History and Current Healing Methods That Are Working In Breaking the Cycle of Abuse. *Indigenous Policy Journal*, 20(3). Retrieved from <http://www.indigenouspolicy.org/index.php/ipj/article/view/74>
- Smith, L. T. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples* (2nd ed.). London: Zed Books.

- Statistics Canada. (2017a). *Homalco 9, IRI* [Census subdivision], British Columbia and British Columbia [Province] (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017. Retrieved from <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=5924840&Geo2=PR&Code2=59&Data=Count&SearchText=Homalco%209&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=Language&TABID=1>
- Statistics Canada (2017b). Household food insecurity in Canada statistics and graphics (2011 to 2012) [statistics]. Retrieved October 17, 2018, from <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/nutrition-science-research/food-security/household-food-security-statistics-2011-2012.html#s4.4>
- Stiegelbauer, S. M. (1996). What Is An Elder? What Do Elders Do?: First Nation Elders As Teachers In Culture-Based Urban Organizations. *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, *XVII*(1), 37–66.
- Tarasuk, V, Mitchell, A, Dachner, N. (2013). Household food insecurity in Canada, 2011. Toronto: Research to identify policy options to reduce food insecurity (PROOF). Retrieved from <https://proof.utoronto.ca/>
- Thomas, M. (2018, September 17). “A place to come home to”: Tlowitsis Nation establishes new community near Campbell River. *CBC*. Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/a-place-to-come-home-to-tlowitsis-nation-establishes-new-community-near-campbell-river-1.4824800>
- Trumpener, B. (2015, November 2). Ex-convicts get cultural awakening in water ceremony. *CBC*. Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/convicts-cultural-awakening-1.3300089>
- Turner, N. J., Ignace, M. B., & Ignace, R. (2000). Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Wisdom of Aboriginal Peoples in British Columbia. *Ecological Applications*, *10*(5), 1275–1287. [https://doi.org/10.1890/1051-0761\(2000\)010\[1275:TEKAWO\]2.0.CO;2](https://doi.org/10.1890/1051-0761(2000)010[1275:TEKAWO]2.0.CO;2)
- Verwoord, R., Mitchell, A., & Machado, J. (2011). Supporting Indigenous Students through a Culturally Relevant Assessment Model Based on the Medicine Wheel. *Canadian Journal of Native Education; Edmonton*, *34*(1), 49-66,103-104.
- Ward, P. R., Verity, F., Carter, P., Tsourtos, G., Coveney, J., & Wong, K. C. (2013). Food Stress in Adelaide: The Relationship between Low Income and the Affordability of Healthy Food. *Journal of Environmental and Public Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2013/968078>
- WGIFS (Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty). (n.d.). *Indigenous Food Systems Network*. Retrieved from <http://indigenousfoodsystems.org/>

Wiebe, N. & Wipf, K. (2011). "Nurturing food sovereignty in Canada." In H. Wittman, A. Desmarais & N. Wiebe (Eds.), *Food sovereignty in Canada: creating just and sustainable food systems* (pp.1-15). Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.

Wilson, S. (2007). Guest editorial: What is an indigenist research paradigm? *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 30(2), 193.

Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods*. Black Point, N.S: Fernwood Publishing.

World Food Summit. (1996). *Rome Declaration on World Food Security*. Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/3/w3613e/w3613e00.htm>

Wortman, J. (2008). My Big Fat Diet. Canada: CBC.