

**‘They Call it Progress, We Call it Destruction’:
Memory and the Construction of the
W.A.C Bennett Dam**

**by
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B.A., University of Northern British Columbia, 2010

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Abstract

This thesis discusses the W.A.C Bennett Dam Visitor Centre and how memory is presented and re-presented in visual form through exhibition and film. In this thesis, I offer the W.A.C Bennett Dam as a case study. Prior to 2015, the Visitor Centre presented a 'high modernist' story of 'progress' when describing the construction of the W.A.C Bennett Dam. This thesis explores the expansion of this narrative through collaborative efforts between designers, filmmakers, BC Hydro and First Nations communities. It places emphasis on the creation of the film 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) as a focal point of the expression of memory, comparing and contrasting this with the former featured film at the facility – 'Canyon of Destiny' (1968).

Keywords: Heritage; Film; Memory; W.A.C Bennett Dam; Kwadacha First Nation; Visual Sovereignty; Environmental Transitions

To home and family.

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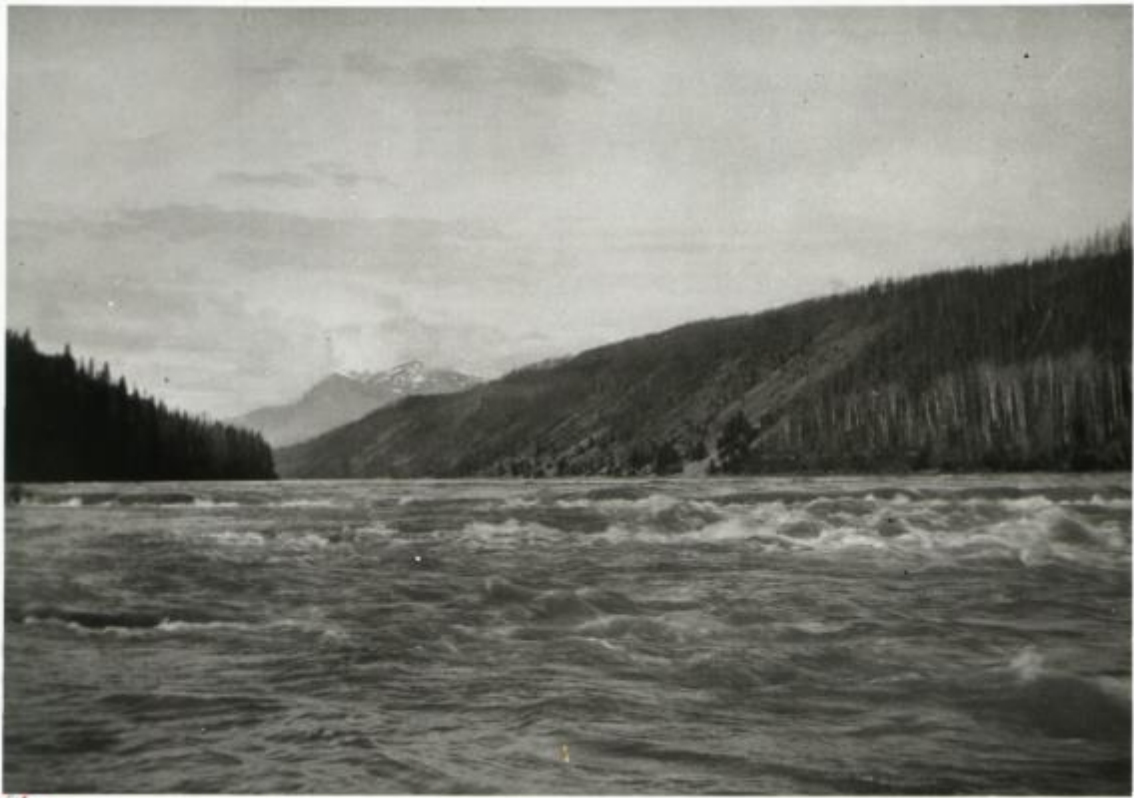
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List of Acronyms

SFU	Simon Fraser University
SIAT	School of Interactive Arts and Technology
W.A.C	W.A.C Bennett Dam; named after William Andrew Cecil Bennett, premier of British Columbia under the Social Credit Party from 1952-1972.

Glossary

Aboriginal Rights	Practices, customs or traditions integral to the distinctive culture of the First Nation claiming the right. A practice undertaken for survival purposes can be considered integral to a First Nation's culture. Examples include hunting, fishing, and gathering of plants for traditional medicines and spiritual ceremonies.
Dane-zaa	Dane-zaa means 'real people' in Dane-zaa Zaage? or Beaver, an Athapaskan Language.
Kwadacha	Or Kwadacha First Nation, also known as Fort Ware, a Canadian First Nation whose traditional territory is in northern British Columbia. Member of the Kaska Dena council.
Peace	Or Peace river, a northern river in British Columbia. This word is also used to refer to the communities near the river. The course of the water flow was changed by the construction of the W.A.C, Bennett Dam and associated transformations of the landscape.
Tsek'ehne	Dane-zaa, but are also known by their location as Tsek'ehne, 'Rocky Mountain People'. A variety of spellings exist for Tsek'ehne. This thesis uses this spelling, as utilized by Dr. Daniel Sims in his work with Tsek'ehne Elders.
Treaty Rights	Rights held by a First Nation in accordance with the terms of historic or modern treaty agreement with the Crown. Treaties may also identify obligations held by a First Nation and the Crown.



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Archival Image - Rocky Mountain Trench PEA.1981.021 Hudson's Hope Museum Archives

Chapter 1.

Introduction

The places we live in and know are sources of inspiration for identities and community connections. Our knowledge of places and our 'roots' in them are partly formed through shared stories about the past and about ways the people who lived those places have shaped communities, with implications for the present and visions of the future. Stories and traditions may come in visual form too, introducing us to places, spaces, sites and memory narratives. The silences within these stories, traditions, and memory narratives may lead us to leave other sites and stories unexamined, and ultimately, they may remain unexplored and unprotected. One way that we understand the history of communities and places is through the study of material remains of the past, an activity that I have practiced as an Archaeologist working in Northeastern British Columbia. The materials identified through archaeological assessment are identified and gain meaning in part through stories and historical records. Studies of cultural heritage in Northeastern British Columbia are often prompted by applications that have been submitted by corporations for permission to engage in primary resource extraction initiatives that may threaten or destroy documentation of the past. Reactions to these applications for permission can be opposed (to an extent). These applications for development are subject to a Heritage permitting process which includes an Archaeological Referral or Notice of Intent to all impacted parties, including First Nation's communities, both of which include a 30-day review period (Government of B.C., 2019:2) (These are featured in the Heritage Conservation Act of British Columbia, and BC Oil & Gas Commission). This review period is intended to allow time for all impacted parties and First Nations communities to identify any concerns they may have (Government of B.C., 2019:2). Thus, research on memories and history about cultural heritage can have material implications for the uses and transformations that proposed interventions to corporate applications may entail.

Material remains only tell part of the story of how past communities made, lost or retrieved and otherwise have shaped the landscape. As many scholars have maintained the stories that we create and events we commemorate shape our knowledge of

ourselves, our communities and of the land and its change over time (Zerubavel,2003; Halbwach,1992; Simpson, 2011; Coulthard,2014; Alfred, 2005; Cruikshank,1992; Ridington, 2013.

Eviatar Zerubavel (2011) suggests frameworks for the stories and events we create and commemorate. Maurice Halbwach's writing suggests that memory can destabilise 'grand narratives' of history and power, as challenged or cemented through the concept of 'collective memory' as both individual and shared (Halbwach, 1992:53). Leanne Simpson (2011) and Glen Coulthard (2014) write of a land-based ethic, or 'grounded normativity' (Coulthard, 2014) (Coulthard & Simpson, 2016) which links community, story and relationships to land through Indigenous Resurgence. Similarly, Taiaiake Alfred (2005) writes of Indigenous Resurgence, with a focus on restoring Indigenous presence on lands and waters, reinvigorating language, cultural practices, and strengthening Indigenous nationhood through decolonization of relationships. Robin Ridington (2013) has worked extensively with the Dane-zaa of the Peace Region, and writes of the importance of story as a traditional tool, as well as how media tools have been used for cultural preservation and growth through the interaction with traditional community-based practices of documentation and knowledge. Lastly, Julie Cruikshank highlights the power of story to provide adaptive strategies to cultural, social and economic change. Reflecting on her experience working with communities in the Yukon Territory, Julie Cruikshank writes how the elders "...[I]llustrated how narratives that have been passed on orally for generations continue to provide a foundation for evaluating contemporary choices and clarifying decisions...narratives do far more than entertain. If one has optimistic stories about the past, the showed, one can draw on internal resources to survive and make sense of arbitrary forces that might otherwise seem overwhelming" (1998: xii). In this case study, the elements of each the concepts presented by the authors above, and the power of stories will be highlighted and examined.

The study I present here examines the social creation of cultural heritage displays and films that attempt to portray shared social memories, as well as a study of efforts to craft them, by examining commemorations and memory narratives about a specific technological project in British Columbia that transformed the landscape and communities that lived there, the W.A.C. Bennett Dam.



Aerial view of W.A.C. Bennett Dam from upstream,
Spillway Complex on the right, - Penstock Intake
Structures on the left,
#046670

11 October 1967

**Figure 1. W.A.C Bennett Dam 1967, prior to flooding of reservoir Archival
Image 1990.002.030 Hudson's Hope Museum Archives**

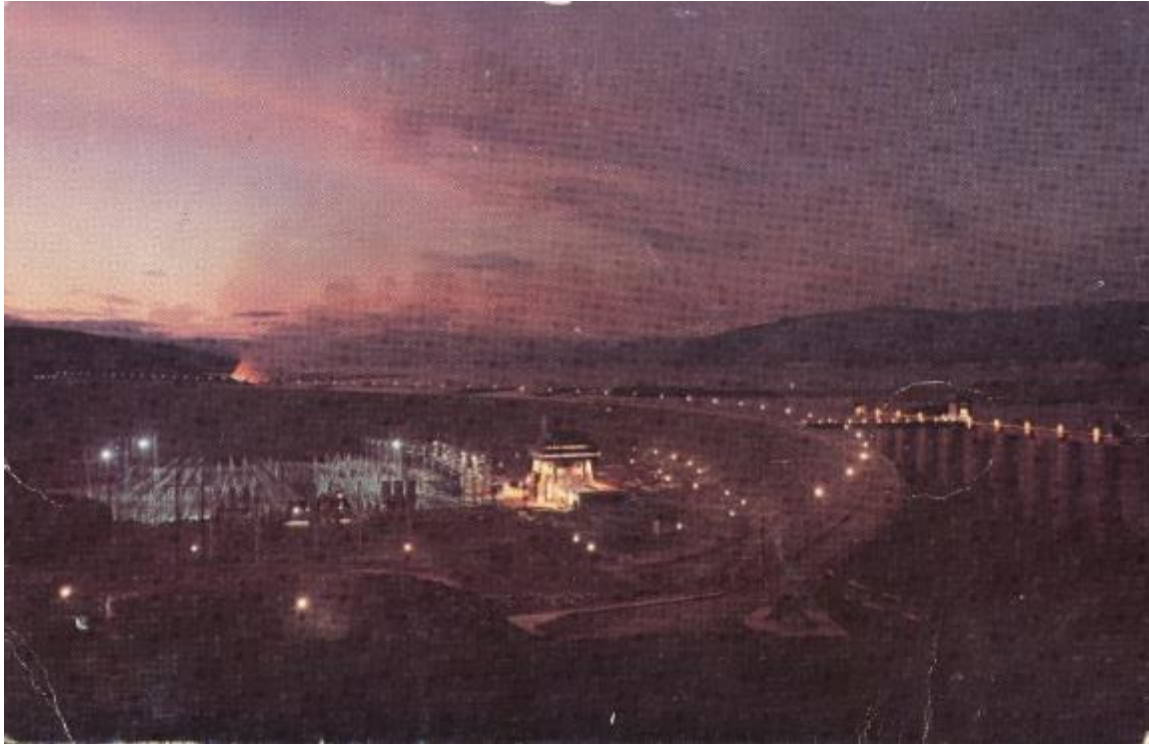


Figure 2. W.A.C Bennett Dam, after backfilling of reservoir. Archival Image 1992.WAC.021.008 Hudson's Hope Museum Archives

It focuses on two versions of displays created by BC Hydro for its visitor centre and two video projects about the project done over a period of 49 years (1968-2017). BC Hydro is a provincial Crown corporation that generates, purchases, distributes and sells electricity. It is regulated by the British Columbia Utilities Commission, a provincial government entity. Based on a study of these accounts and interviews with people involved with these projects this thesis explores the various efforts since the inception of the W.A.C Bennett Dam that were made under the auspices of BC Hydro to craft communications and create stories about the transformation of the place and communities in the region.

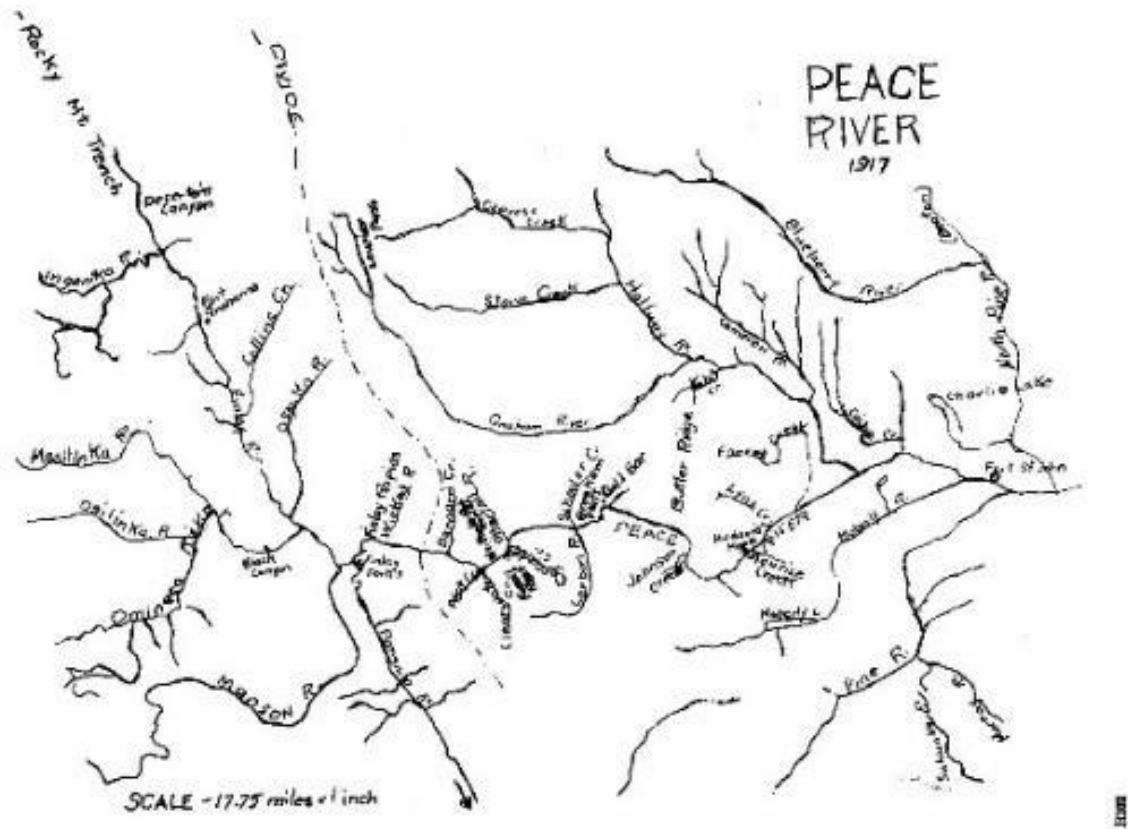


Figure 3. Peace River region 1917 Future W.A.C. Bennett Dam location East of Gold Bar Ranch. Archival Image H102 Hudson’s Hope Museum Archives

This thesis also stems from a desire to learn about collaborative and ethical memory practices. Utilizing the case study of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, its Visitor Centre, and visualizations of the structure exemplified in exhibition and films it hopes to address how competing value systems or ways of knowing can come together and contribute to a broader discussion of geographical land, nature and the complexities of history and memory of people who inhabit environments touched by large-scale industrial projects in rural areas. In regard to collaborative practice, this thesis places emphasis on the creation of the film, ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017).

This research is guided by the two questions:

- 1) What does creative collaboration look like in this context, in situations involving participants with different motives, and relationships to the land?
- 2) What is the potential for changing viewpoints as exemplified in the 2015 exhibit and the film made about the impacts of the facility to influence the

meta-narrative associated with the W.A.C. Bennett Dam and broadly engage with development of industrial projects and notions of 'progress' in the northeast region of British Columbia?

The research also seeks to examine ways communication practices intervene in shaping history and memory in this context, among them:

- What forms of artistic or creative production are used to challenge (or cement) official notions of memory and history of place?
- How can creative efforts shape perceptions and provide a space for dialogue around geographical land, nature and the complexities of history and memory?

Prior to describing the structure of the thesis, I would like to position myself within the work, as, "...[A]ll research is informed by particular worldviews held by the researcher and...his or her discipline" (LeCompte et al., 2010:57).

Positioning the Researcher

The first challenge was for me to clarify my own position or perspective as a researcher as well as someone raised in Northeastern British Columbia. I have struggled as a researcher conducting this project, as the subject matter is quite close to home (both literally and figuratively). I was raised in Hudson's Hope, B.C. and have spent the majority of my life both working and living in Northeastern British Columbia. Prior to beginning this research project, I studied Anthropology at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) in Prince George, B.C. graduating with Bachelor of Arts in 2010. My previous work experiences have also served as sources of inspiration for this project. While I was a student at UNBC, I would spend my summers (2006-2010) working as a tour guide for BC Hydro at the W.A.C Bennett Dam and its sister structure, Peace Canyon Dam located downstream and thus have familiarity with both the former iterations of the visitor center as well as the content of the tour itself. From 2011-2014, as well as for a 4-month period in 2015, and 8-month period in 2017 I worked professionally as an Archaeologist in the field of Cultural Resource Management in Northeastern B.C. and am recognized/designated by the Archaeology Branch of British Columbia as a qualified Field Director in the "Boreal Forest & Subarctic" culture area. I participated in the Environmental Impact Assessment process, conducting numerous

Archaeological Overview Assessments (AOAs), Archaeological Impact Assessments (AIAs) for oil & gas and hydro developments, and as such am familiar with current developmental processes and the amount of space required for large scale infrastructure projects. (I currently live and work as an Archaeologist in Tk'emlups/Kamloops, BC).

I am interested in stories; particularly stories that are a part of and have shaped the Peace River region of British Columbia. As the first hydroelectric structure on the Peace River, the W.A.C Bennett Dam has sometimes been treated as a story of 'progress' in and of the region, with emphasis on the leadership of politicians and industrial initiatives. There are other viewpoints and voices within the Northeast that have often been overlooked.

My research interests surround colonial legacies and how these can contrive to shape both historical narratives and practices of media. I am interested in the role of digital technologies in community and cultural preservation and growth, and how this relates to and interacts with traditional community-based practices of documentation and knowledge. The case study of the W.A.C Bennett Dam visitor center and film 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) allow me to explore these themes. I was inspired by concepts of memory, and alternative memory narratives for industrial sites like the W.A.C Bennett Dam, which feature large-scale environmental transitions. Examples of these themes, as discussed in Chapter 3 are Michael Rothberg's concept of multidirectional memory (2009) and Adele Perry's discussion of our reality effect (2005) and how stories of the past are not static but are shaped, created and change over time. Communication is integral in the exploration of these issues.

As such, this research is informed by both critical and interpretive paradigms, as the case study reflects or indicates both an historical asymmetrical relationship between Indigenous communities of the Northeast and the Provincial government, as well as an example of collaborative research and creation. Interpretive paradigms suggest that cultural beliefs and meanings are socially constructed, situated in space or related to a specific context, not fixed, negotiated, multiple voiced and participatory (LeCompte et al. 2011:70). Critical theorists are, "...[I]nterested in how the history and political economy of a nation, state or other system exerts direct or indirect domination over the political, economic, social and cultural expressions or residents...in which groups in society enjoy privileged access to knowledge and power..."(2010:63), as well as viewing "...cultural

behavior and belief as situated within a specific historical era, [and] that these behaviors and beliefs can change over time” (2010: 64).

Ethnographic approaches to collecting information and analyzing it provided a framework for my studies of representations of the history (and meanings) of/at the W.A.C Bennett Dam. The research is thus grounded in my own experiences of working in the context of visitor communications but also in an analysis of historical documents, a study of the exhibitions organized by BC Hydro (2015, 2016), and an analysis of two films which tell the story emphasizing two different narratives of the construction of the facility, and subsequent flooding of the its associated reservoir (Williston Lake). In addition, I conducted interviews with individuals involved in the creation of the commemorative materials. The following will provide an overview of the text moving forward.

Overview

In this thesis, a chapter on background context begins with an overview of the Peace River region, introduction to the Dane-zaa and Tsek’ehne peoples who live in the region, and the history of hydroelectric development and politics of British Columbia during its time of construction in the 1960s. It also touches on the role of the Visitor Centre established at the Dam site. The second chapter describes the methods employed in this thesis. The third chapter is a review of the theoretical foundations that inform this thesis. The fourth chapter draws on fieldwork to introduce the centre’s exhibitions where stories of history of the Dam are presented. In the fifth chapter, I present the films created to tell the story of the dam, highlighting the multiple, parallel and conflicting memory narratives at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam through the films ‘Canyon of Destiny’ (1968), and ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017). The sixth chapter focuses on themes of collaboration and creation seeks to address the first guiding question of this thesis and discuss questions of power within the act of making and ‘presence-ing’ (Simpson, 2017:20) in the films. The last chapter returns to the four key questions presented above, and finally, in the concluding remarks, the discussion proposes lessons from the W.A.C Bennett Dam memory narratives and research as well as implications for our understanding of debates about hydroelectric development and other interventions in the Peace River region today – notably in the context of the construction of the Site C Clean Energy project near Fort St John, B.C.

The thesis investigates transformations in the narrative of 'progress' and highlights difficulties and tensions that marked past struggles in order to illuminate the ways in which they continue to shape our present, and the future of continuing tensions in the creation of social memories of the transformation of the environment within the Peace Region. The case study of the Bennett Dam and the questions within this thesis are reflecting on the collaborative creation of visual forms of media, and therefore broadly on visual culture, mediated memory practice and the communicative capacity within context of the case study. As emphasized by Hooper-Greenhill (2000), "Visual culture raises theoretical questions about the social practices of looking and seeing, which are related to process of learning and knowing...work[ing] towards a social theory of visuality, focusing on questions of what is made visible, who sees what, how seeing, knowing and power are interrelated" (2000:14). Mediated memory refers to "Memory...operating in a new 'ecology' of media connectivity, networks, and flows" (Garde-Hansen, 2011:32). The active, created and constructed nature of how the past is remembered in regard to the case study is exemplified in the two films 'Canyon of Destiny' and 'Kwadacha by the River', and shown through the contrast between these films, and iterations of the visitor centre exhibitions.

The project focuses on these questions of what is made visible, who sees what, and how seeing, knowledge and power are interrelated – and how this relates to both landscape and place. Digital storytelling, "In a way similar to oral history...involves the more communal sharing and writing of narratives with digital practice in mind...recording the human voice, creating stories and sharing these offline and online has become an increasingly significant form of remembrance for individuals and communities (Garde-Hansen, 2011:66). This practice, which emphasizes documentation rather than personal creativity, has long been utilized within Indigenous communities of the Peace River region. As ethnographer Robin Ridington, who has worked collaboratively with Dane-zaa elders since the 1960s, has noted in *The Place Where Happiness Dwells* (2013), "...[I]t has become apparent over the years that Dane-zaa elders of the 1960s and 1970s took advantage of my presence to make themselves known to future generations" (Ridington, 2013:18-19).

The case study suggests that creative collaboration with participants with different motives and relationships to the land can be fruitful when those participants involved are able to broadly achieve their goals (despite these goals not being shared)

and benefit from the interaction. In engaging with the larger question on influencing the meta-narrative associated with the Bennett Dam and with development of industrial projects and notions of progress in the Northeastern region of British Columbia – the exhibition and film (and change in each over time) highlight the stories that have been shared and those that have been excluded. Museum spaces (and in this case Visitor Centres) primary commodity is knowledge and the distribution of this knowledge through educational practice. As such, the museum has acted as a tool of power in the creation of the structure of legitimacy for both the nation state, and larger narratives of progress. Prior to 2015, the Visitor Centre at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam used visual tools (in exhibitions and films) to present a linear ‘progress’ narrative, representative of the era of its construction and the ideology of high modernity. Through collaborative practice the contemporary exhibition (post 2015) challenges those representations and historic power relationships between industry, government and Indigenous communities. As I will describe in this thesis, the current exhibition illustrates the ramifications of the narrative of ‘progress’ in a localized context and on the land in visual form. Documentary film as an act of artistic or creative production can be used to challenge (‘Kwadacha by the River’) or cement (‘Canyon of Destiny’) official notions of memory and history of place. This has the potential to reveal the active, creative and constructed nature of how people understand the past and how that relates to the present. The act of making (off-screen production process) and the choices and collaboration involved are, as highlighted by Kirstin L. Dowell in the text *Sovereign Screens*, crucial in understanding media production as an act of sovereignty. This assertion of sovereignty (having the power to self-represent) in a space like the visitor center (or museum) which has long been a tool of power can be a healing process for communities, as, “...the production process...open up opportunities for intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge” (Dowell, 2013: 169).

The Peace River region of British Columbia is subject to historic and contemporary large-scale industrial expansion and the cumulative effect of this resource development that is rooted in a ‘progress’ narrative and encouraged by W.A.C Bennett’s policy of “defensive expansionism”. This “defensive expansionism” that will be introduced in the following chapter is met and challenged by the rich storytelling practice of Indigenous communities whose “[O]ral tradition asserts that *naache* [translated as dreamers or prophets described in following chapter], dreamed ahead to locate the trails

of game animals, predicted the coming of white settlers to the Peace River region, and the industrialization of the oil rich landscape” (Hennessy, 2012:35).

In his article, *When you Sing it Now, Just Like New*, Robin Ridington states, “To the Dane-zaa way of thinking you can only tell a story if you understand it fully” (2011:18). I cannot say that I fully understand the complexities of the situation, or variety of voices in the conflicting memory narratives in the Peace River region, however, I hope this analysis helps to illustrate the multiple nature of memory as highlighted within this case study.

Chapter 2.

Background

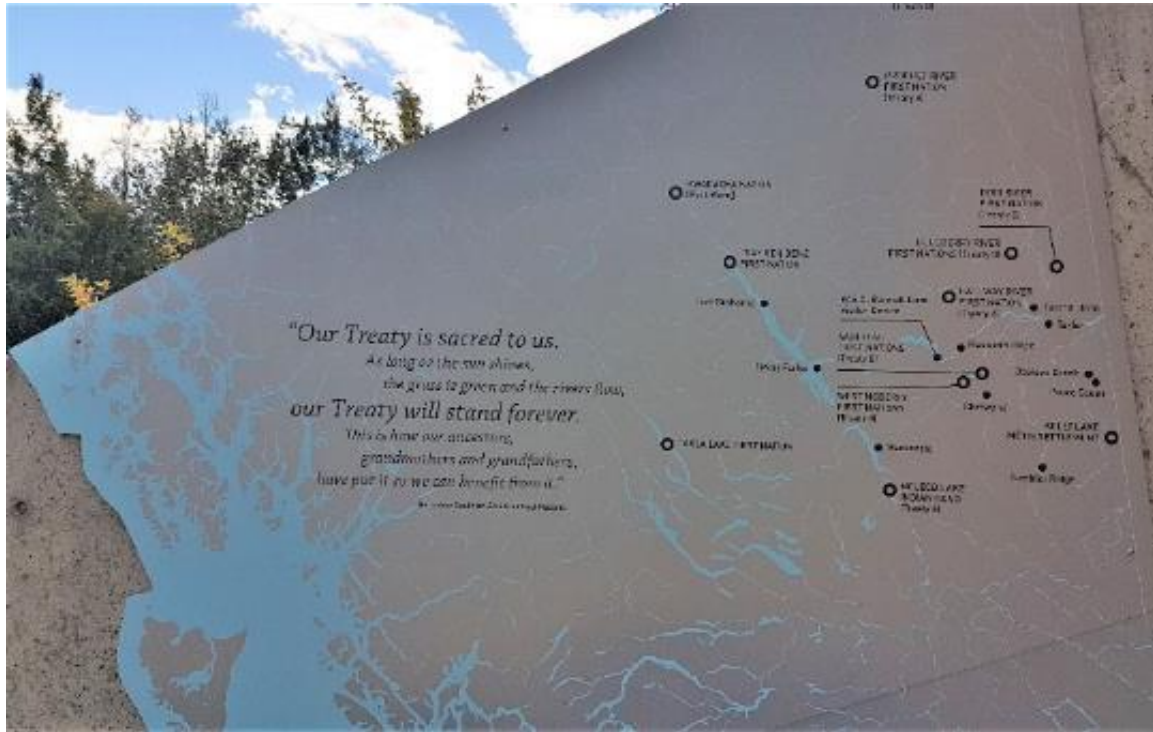


Figure 4. Peace River and Indigenous Communities Map at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam – Photo by M. Poirier

To begin, the Peace River runs through northern British Columbia and into Alberta, as a part of the Mackenzie River system. Its headwaters lie in the Rocky Mountain Trench at the confluence of the Finlay and Parsnip rivers, "...[I]t then crosses the mountains to flow north and east, the only river in B.C. to empty into the Arctic Ocean. It is normally a wide and placid river, but...where the Peace narrowed in a canyon near its junction with the Parsnip there was great potential..." (Neering, 1981:42). The Peace region (an area often referred to by locals simply as the "Peace") would play a key role in the development of British Columbia, and the realization of W.A.C. Bennett's vision for the province by providing, for some, a story of successful government interventions in the environment to ensure economic growth (in this case for the provision of hydroelectric power).

Ideology and Northern Industrial Expansion

Environmental historians have written extensively about post World War II British Columbia and the ideological environment under the Social Credit Party and premier William Andrew Cecil Bennett, commonly known as W.A.C. Bennett (Tomblin, 1990; Kuffert, 1999; Taylor, 2012; Wedley, 1990; Abbott, 2017; Wedley, 1998; Loo, 2004; Loo & Stanley, 2011). As Wedley (1990) summarized:

A major source of British Columbia's economic growth after World War II was the expansion of resource industries into the territory lying north of the 53rd parallel. New mines, sawmills, pulp and paper plants, petroleum and natural gas operations, and huge hydroelectric power projects were established in northern BC during the three decades after 1945. Their development was fueled mainly by economic conditions (receptive markets and high resource prices) and technological improvements that made northern resource use more viable than before. But northward industrial expansion was also greatly facilitated and guided by provincial government policies and promotional incentives (Wedley, 1990: 58).

This northern industrial expansion within British Columbia, particularly that undertaken by the Social Credit Party (in power from 1952-72), has been characterized as 'defensive expansionism' (Wedley, 1998:31), meaning that the infrastructure development that took place during the Social Credit era was a desire to defend and protect British Columbia's provincial interests from competition from the Canadian federal government in Ottawa and the neighboring province of Alberta, and shape the economic growth of the north (and interior of the province) in a way that protected and benefited provincial interests (Wedley, 1998; Tomblin, 1990). The Social Credit Party (1952-1972) under Bennett would push this 'defensive expansionism' in a variety of developmental projects but is particularly apparent in the development of the *Two Rivers Policy* (to be discussed later) and of hydro-electricity in British Columbia.

Industrial expansion in British Columbia increased after World War II (Wedley, 1990). This expansion was a result of beneficial economic conditions and technological improvements but also a result of the ideology of the time. Within the province's history this ideology has been associated with both the Social Credit Party and W.A.C. Bennett. I refer to this as the concept of 'high modernity', a term also adopted by others, among them Tina Loo.

As Tina Loo discusses in *People in the Way: Modernity, Environment and Society on the Arrow Lakes* (2004) high modernity is characterized by a belief in science and technology and their ability to benefit society through the domination of nature (Loo, 165). Loo cites the work of anthropologist James C. Scott, and states, “Indeed, part of high modernity’s power was its seemingly apolitical character; by embracing the apparent rationality, objectivity, and neutrality of science and technology, high modernists could present and defend their plans for change as impartial and pragmatic...” (Loo, 165). Furthermore, a perception of the domination of nature was shared across society during this period. Industrial projects were controversial, however, “...there was [little to] no public opposition to building big dams or the idea that growth was a social good that could be delivered through state-sponsored mega projects. The consensus stretched across the political and social spectrum, from the Social Credit on the right to the New Democratic and Communist Parties on the left, and from business to labour...” (Loo, 184). Loo specifically mentions big dams because in North America during this period hydroelectric development was one of the most prominent examples of the domination of nature within the ideology of high modernity.

A definition of ideology is relevant here. Ideology, refers to “a systematic framework of social understanding, motivated by a will to power or a desire to be accepted as the ‘right’ way of thinking, which has wide support from within a particular society or substantial social group...where ideologies do achieve dominance within a specific culture, they often fail to be recognized as such and pass as ‘common sense’ or as ‘self-evident truths’” (Borchers, 2011:27-28). The common sense of high modernity helped facilitate the rise of British Columbia (Mitchell, 1983), and within this ideological structure W.A.C. Bennett and the Social Credit party would build eight storage and generation facilities (dams) on the Peace and Columbia Rivers from the 1960s to the mid-1980s under the Two Rivers Policy (Loo & Stanley, 2011:401-402).

Two Rivers Policy As ‘High Modernist Scheme’

Loo & Stanley (2011) describe the Two Rivers Policy as a ‘high modernist scheme’ (404). Essentially, to achieve his vision for the province, the ‘defensive expansionism’ referenced previously, W.A.C. Bennett could not dam one river, without the other. The complicated history of the *Two Rivers Policy* is well summarized by Loo & Stanley (2011):

In negotiations accompanying the Columbia River Treaty, the federal government allowed British Columbia to accept financial compensation rather than electricity from the United States in return for allowing dams to be built on the Canadian portion of the Columbia. This 'downstream benefit' financed the development of the Peace River...The dams on the Peace facilitated the industrialization of the north-central region of British Columbia...[these choices by W.A.C. Bennett]...according to conventional wisdom, contributed to the prosperity and growth of the province (403-404).

The damming of the Peace River occurred at two points along the waterway, and construction is currently underway for a third intervention with the Site C Clean Energy Project. The first two facilities constructed in the 1960s and 1970s are known as the W.A.C Bennett and Peace Canyon Dams. The focus of our case study is on the premier's namesake structure, the W.A.C Bennett Dam.

The W.A.C Bennett Dam is an earth filled structure (alternatively referred to as an embankment dam), constructed between 1961 and 1967. Its associated reservoir, Williston Lake, is the largest lake in British Columbia, both man-made or natural. It extends approximately 250 kilometers in length, and approximately 150 kilometers wide, with depths up to 500 feet (BC Hydro, 2018). Along with a section of the Peace River, the backfilling of the reservoir flooded portions of the Finlay and Parsnip rivers. As such, Williston Lake is now referred to as having three reaches, the Peace which extends to the hydroelectric facility, the Finlay which stretches north to Fort Ware, and the Parsnip, reaching south to the town of Mackenzie. The construction of the facility, backfilling of the reservoir, and subsequent deterioration of the Peace reach displaced residents including members of First Nations communities who had long utilized that area for agricultural, hunting, trapping and other activities. In the case of First Nations peoples the impacts would include losses to intangible heritage such as traditional gathering sites, spiritual places, and impacts to mobility and community health. As is evident through the deterioration of the rivers, the ideological narrative of progress and expansion is and was challenged by the stories and lived experiences of people impacted by the 'defensive expansionism' of Bennett and the Social Credit Party. These include the Dane-zaa and Tsek'ehne people.

Indigenous Communities

The Tsek'ehne (alternatively written as Sekani) and Dane-zaa (alternatively written as Dunne-za) peoples that were impacted by the creation of the W.A.C Bennett Dam are known to have once been one people. As highlighted on the Kwadacha Nation website in their section on the Tsek'ehne Language (<http://www.kwadacha.com/language>), "Language studies and our Elders' knowledge show that the Tsek'ehne language is closely related to Beaver (Dunne-za), and our historical stories say that once we were one people", this is also addressed in the work of ethnographer Robin Ridington who has worked extensively with the Dane-zaa since the 1960s. In his work *Dane-zaa Oral Tradition: Why it's not heresay* (2014) Ridington speaks of a story he recorded from Doig elder Aku in 1966. This story is set in a river valley surrounded by mountains, which Ridington describes as "closely fits the Finlay River in the Rocky Mountain Trench". He further states, "The people who have traditionally lived there are Dane-zaa but are also known by their location as Tsek'ehne, Rocky Mountain People" (Ridington, 2014:41). In this article, Ridington is discussing oral tradition in relation to western concepts of what constitutes knowledge (as will be elaborated on further, with the work of Adele Perry in her discussion of the archive). He emphasizes,

While the focus of the story is the ability of Duuk'isachin to use the power of his vision quest to help his people, it is of historical value in placing an ancestor of the Ts'ibii Dane (Muskeg people, later known as the Doig River First Nation) in the Rocky Mountain Trench in precontact times. It documents the practice of intermarriage between these two groups prior to contact. For a Dane-zaa oral historian, information about Duuk'isachin's medicine power is more important than any reference to the story's setting. For a Western ethnohistorian, placing an ancestor of the Ts'ibii Dane in the Rocky Mountain Trench in precontact times may be of greater interest. Both are of equal validity (2014:41).

I emphasize this connection, as the following will discuss the importance of story, and there is a rich narrative tradition in Dane-zaa and Tsek'ehne communities. Additionally, when contrasting the films 'Canyon of Destiny' (1968) and 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) this discussion illustrates how written conceptions of history and lived experience of the First Nations peoples of the Peace River region are intertwined.

As described in *The Prophecy of the Swan: The Upper Peace Fur Trade of 1794-1823* (1996), the Dane-zaa and Tsek'ehne cultures were traditionally hunter-gatherers,

based on a subsistence economy and, “Like other hunters in the north, the Beaver and the Sekani [Dane-zaa and Tsek’ehne] had learned to live in harmony with, rather than opposition to their environment” (Burley et al., 1996:14). This required an intimate knowledge of the geography and resources of the boreal forest environment, as well as an “efficient technology” (Burley et al., 1996:17), developed through “skills learned though a lifetime of observation and training” (1996:17). This technology refers to the complex intellectual culture of the Dane-zaa and Tsek’ehne people. Mobility kept possessions to a minimum, but knowledge was heavily prized. Julie Cruikshank discusses the importance of oral traditions. They weigh nothing and can be taken anywhere (Cruikshank 1992:8), and the fundamental cultural reality is that stories are central to the Dane-zaa and Tsek’ehne.

A rich resource that highlights this importance is *Dane Wajich- Dane-zaa Stories & Songs: Dreamers and the Land* (2007). *Dane Wajich* is a collaborative project that manifested in an online exhibition in 2007. The project was produced by Doig River First Nation (one of the Dane-zaa communities in the Peace River Region of B.C.) in partnership with ethnographers, linguists and multimedia professionals, including but not limited to Kate Hennessy, Amber Ridington, and Robin Ridington. The goals of the project, as identified by Doig River, included language revitalization, recording of oral traditions (an expansion of the collaborative work conducted since 1959 between Robin Ridington and the Dane-zaa), and travelling to eight key places within the territory where the *Naache* or *Naachin* (translated as prophets or dreamers) dreamed. For Dane-zaa people, “[H]istory is a trail that begins in a time before measured time. It is a trail defined by the Dreamers (*Naache*), people who have shown the way when the trail ahead seems unclear” (Ridington & Ridington, 2013:5). As highlighted on the virtual museum site, “*Naache* (Dreamers) are Dane- zaa people who travel to heaven in their dreams and bring back songs. The songs provide teachings, visions and prophecies from the creator...Most of [the] Dreamers gained their abilities only after dying and coming back to life; like the swans, Dreamers can fly to heaven and return to earth” (Doig River First Nation, 2007).

In planning for the project an Elder, Tommy Attachie, spoke about Dreamers and the land, emphasizing the continuity in practice that is seen throughout the virtual exhibit. He says:

E ii k'aasenéhtah iidekéh,

I am going to tell you about what we saw in the past,

01:42

gukeh wowajiich jii hahk'íh nahhanaajuunuu,

we will talk to them about how our ancestors lived,

01:48

hóhch'ii ?éh,

how it was back then,

01:51

ii tl'q gwe náęchesne jéts'é?.

and after that, where the Dreamers were.

01:55

Kénaasjíh dah náághaghaęché? de shin hááda?ah dé.

We remember where they lived, where they dreamed the songs that they brought back.

01:59

Dane guu ts'ę dayah.

People went toward them [people went to see them].

02:01

Gwe k'éh juu?úú,

That way, too,

02:03

je hááké? nááşehjíhhdęh háákaa juuhdzenéh,

[we'll talk about] how we live still today (Doig River First Nation, 2005).

Tommy Attachies' words highlight the continuity of practice in storytelling in Dane-zaa communities today. The use of media in storytelling practice – film, virtual museum exhibits or on-site exhibitions such as the Visitor Centre – are examples of this.

“In a way similar to oral history, digital storytelling involves the more communal sharing and writing of narratives with digital practice in mind...recording the human voice, creating stories, sharing these offline and online has become an increasingly significant form of remembrance for individuals and communities (Garde-Hansen, 2011:66). Digital storytelling practice (like the virtual museum project, or documentary film) emphasizes documentation rather than personal creativity, and “...[A]llow[s]...communities to operate outside of media organizations that have ignored or not represented those who need remembering the most” (Garde- Hansen, 2011:51).

To return to the high modernist impulse of post-World War II British Columbia, as Loo & Stanley state (2011),

If scientific expertise and planning were a key characteristic of high modernist development, so too was a way of seeing that situated people in relation to the environment in a particular way – one exemplified by a...birds-eye view. This way of seeing allowed rivers to be visualized schematically in terms of their power potential, and without reference to the biophysical and social contexts in which they were built (2011:402).

The biophysical and social context in which the Finlay, Parsnip and Peace rivers were impacted by high modernist development is discussed within the work of Dr. Daniel Sims of the University of Alberta who wrote extensively on the lived experience of the Tsek’ehne people in his dissertation, *Dam Bennett: The Impacts of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam and Williston Lake Reservoir on the Tsek’ehne of Northern British Columbia* (2017), noting that previous academic works on the subject inadequately discussed the repercussions for the Tsek’ehne. Dr. Sims relies on Tsek’ehne perspectives, having conducted a large number of interviews within three of the four identified Tsek’ehne communities. As is noted by Sims and referenced later in the text within the film ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017), the heart of Tsek’ehne territory is the Rocky Mountain Trench and impacts to the Tsek’ehne included isolation both from outsiders and other Tsek’ehne communities (Sims, 2017:4).

Indigenous communities within the Peace region – include treaty, non-treaty and Metis groups. These include: Prophet River First Nation, Fort Nelson First Nation, West Moberly First Nation, Blueberry River First Nation, Doig River First Nation, Halfway River First Nation, Saulteau First Nation, McLeod Lake Indian Band, Kelly Lake Indian Band, and the communities of Takla Lake, Kwadacha First Nation and Tsay Keh Dene.

Treaty Territory



Figure 5. Treaty 8 – 1899. From *Treaty 8*, by Department of Indian Affairs, 1900. Retrieved from: <http://dgwlaw.ca/bc-supreme-court-rules-that-the-western-boundary-of-treaty-8-is-the-arctic-pacific-divide/>.

The Peace region is located within one of the numbered treaties, Treaty 8. Signed in 1899, Treaty 8 encompasses a land mass of approximately 840,000 kilometers, and is home to 39 First Nation communities, including those in the Peace (excluding Takla Lake, Kwadacha and Tsay Keh Dene discussed above, but now including McLeod Lake that became signatory to the treaty in 2000). Treaty 8 extends across areas of Northern Alberta, Northwestern Saskatchewan, the southwest portion of the Northwest Territories, and within Northeastern British Columbia (Treaty 8 Tribal Association, 2019; Treaty 8 First Nations, 2019).

Treaty 8 was originally made and concluded in 1899 and ratified in 1900. The Crown required and sought the consent of the ancestors of the 39 communities within Treaty 8 territory to open the land which the crown wanted to use and inhabit for settlement and other resource-based activities. Within the Peace region specifically, encroachments to Dane-zaa territory came from both an expanding fur trade, and later the Klondike Gold Rush (Roe, 2003:115). Treaty Rights outlined within Treaty 8 (As articulated within the *Notice of Civil Claim in West Moberly First Nations v. HMTQ et al Victoria Registry 18 0247 Section 14, 2018:4*) include:

- 1) Continue their mode of life, including patterns of activity and occupation, without forced interference;
- 2) Maintain and access teaching, cultural, spiritual and community gathering sites in order to pass on the...mode of life;
- 3) Maintain access to resources and places which have a unique and central significance to their hunting, fishing, and trapping, or other aspects of their mode of life;
- 4) Hunt, fish, gather and trap within their traditional territory, which includes travel on and access to lands, habitat, ecosystems, trails, waters and other infrastructure of the Peace;
- 5) Maintain their practical cultural and spiritual connection to the Peace, and;
- 6) Conduct traditional, cultural, and spiritual activities at or in connection with the Peace (the "Treaty Rights").

These Treaty Rights encompass and refer to more than the Peace River as a waterbody, however, the document cited is a Civil Claim filed by West Moberly First Nation in 2018 in regard to the impacts of the Site C Clean Energy Project, a third hydroelectric facility on the river system following the W.A.C Bennett, and Peace Canyon Dams. The Civil Claim states, "A declaration that, in causing and/or permitting the cumulative impacts of the Bennett, Peace Canyon, and Site C Dams on the Plaintiff's Treaty Rights, the Crown defendants have: a) failed to uphold the honour of the Crown

b) breached their obligations to West Moberly under the Treaty; and c) unjustifiably infringed West Moberly's Treaty Rights" (2018:11).

Treaty Rights are "Rights held by a First Nation in accordance with the terms of historic or modern treaty agreement with the Crown. Treaties may also identify obligations held by a First Nation and the Crown" (Province of British Columbia, 2010:5). Outside of Bennett's "defensive expansionism" in the form of hydroelectric development, the Peace region is subject to the cumulative effect of industrial development in the form of Oil & Gas, Forestry and Mining practices. Resource extraction and specifically oil and gas in Northeastern British Columbia, are important examples of the decline narrative that will be discussed in the following chapters but is also of particular historical importance to the Dane-zaa of Treaty 8 and discussion of unjustifiable infringement of Treaty Rights. The effects of industrial expansion are well articulated by Robin Ridington in *When You Sing It Now, Just Like New: First Nations Poetics, Voices and Representations* (2006),

Today Dane-zaa land is being heavily impacted by industrial development...Wells, pipelines, compressor stations, seismic roads and living quarters for oil workers now dominate the landscape. Game animals are becoming diseased by licking chemicals from unprotected well sites; their habitat has decreased dramatically. Non- First Nations hunters now have access to territory that not long ago was available only to the Dane-zaa. Charlie Yahey [Elder and Dreamer] predicted many of the changes that are now coming to pass. He said that when the white people pump up grease from the giant animals and put it into their vehicles, they make the world too small (Ridington & Ridington, 2006:48-49).

The report *Oil and Gas Consultation and Shale Development in British Columbia* (Garvie:2015) indicates that more than 50 percent of the recoverable shale gas in Canada is located in Northeastern British Columbia. Knowledge of the abundance of natural resources within the northeast and Treaty 8 territory has been acknowledged to have played a role in initial government interest in the region and led to the negotiation and signing of Treaty 8 (as above). It should be noted that oil and gas activity has been occurring in Treaty 8 territory since the late 1950s (Behn, 2015; Government of B.C., 2019).

From the period of contact with settler society the Indigenous communities within the Peace River region have been impacted by a 'clash of sovereignties' (Lowman &

Barker, 2015: 55), which includes a lack of recognition of the traditional land use, and sovereign claims to territory of those communities. As Lowman & Barker (2015) discuss in their text, *Settler: Identity and Colonialism in 21st Century Canada*, “Settler sovereignties are ‘carried with us’ until we decide to root them somewhere”. They suggest that Settler society relates to land indirectly, with the relationship being mediated through structures such as regimes of property, and that settler Canadian identities require the creation of social and cultural structures which need to be constantly rebuilt in a material sense as the land is adapted to the uses that are desired. They state, “[Settler identities require the creation of social and cultural structures in] a conceptual sense as Settler people generate histories and stories and political and legal systems that anchor them in place”. These are human-centric relationships to land and at odds with the relationship between Indigenous peoples and their sacred places and home environments (Lowman & Barker, 2015:55-56). As suggested within *If the Story could be Heard: Colonial Discourse and the Surrender of Indian Reserve 172* (2003) Roe states (as cited in Harris, 2002:52-53), “Harris points out that “the idea of progress was also an attitude towards land, because progress was seen to be manifest in the growing European ability to dominate nature. In this light, people whose marks on the land were slight and whose lives were tuned to the rhythms of nature, were obviously unprogressive and backward” (Roe, 2003: 116).

Under Treaty 8, Indigenous communities moved to reserve lands within their traditional territories. For example, “On 11 April 1916, pursuant to Treaty 8, members of the Fort St. John Beaver band [Doig River First Nation & Blueberry River First Nation] chose 18,168 acres of rolling prairie, seven miles north of Fort St John, as their reserve. Traditionally referred to as “Suu Na Chii K’Chi Ge” (the Place Where Happiness Dwells) the territory newly designated as Indian Reserve 172 (I.R. 172) had long served as an important summer gathering place for the Beaver people” (Roe, 2003:115).

Following World War II, the reserve was sought after by the Canadian Government and surrendered for soldier’s settlement. Ridington refers to this as “tricked into surrendering” (Ridington, 2006:21). A lack of understanding of the patterns of land use and practices of the Indigenous communities of the subarctic led to a belief that, “...[B]ecause the Beaver people did not dwell permanently on the reserve, it was “serving no good purpose”” (Roe, 2003:116). The pattern of land use and political structure of the Dane-zaa and Tsek’ehne was not understood, and as evident in the context of Site C (a

new industrial project in the Northeast to be discussed later) continues to be misunderstood. Also evident in Roe's article is the idolization of 'progress' during the period after World War II. While this thesis focuses on hydroelectric development in the form of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, Roe's analysis expands to those industries previously mentioned – oil & gas, mining, forestry and agriculture.

As articulated by Hugh Brody in his work in Northeastern British Columbia, the seasonal round of the Indigenous communities of the Peace suggested extensive land use, despite a lack of permanent dwelling. He says,

The fur trade and its posts have been established in the region for over a century, and Indians repeatedly have insisted that the lands they used five years ago are the same as the lands they used thirty years ago. Their hunting system, which is based above all on the skillful tracking of animals that live all year round within a general area requires a comparatively large territory. Hunters may use parts of this territory infrequently; some locations may not have [been] seen for twenty years. But no part is therefore dispensable: dependence is upon the territory as a whole. Successful harvesting of its resources requires knowledge of animal movements over the whole area, including places that are rarely, if ever, visited...The land-use maps show a pattern of harvesting that is flexible in details but surprisingly constant and extensive. The Indians say, with their maps, that they continue to use or need all of their territories (Brody, 1988:174).

Rich mineral resources are present under "Suu Na Chii K'Chi Ge" - alternatively called IR 172, discussed by Roe (2003) - royalties of which were allocated to the veterans that settled on those lands after they were taken from the Indigenous communities who had chosen to reside there under the conditions of Treaty 8. The Supreme Court of Canada would decide in favour of the Indigenous communities who "...claimed damages for the improvident surrender and improper transfer of IR 172" (Roe,2003:115), after a 30 year struggle for recognition (Supreme Court decision in 1995; restitution received in 1997). What Roe suggests in his article about the loss or surrender of I.R. 172 is that,

The patterns of colonial discourse...obscure the values of people whose ancestors had gathered on IR. 172 for thousands of years before White settlers arrived in the region. Indeed, neither the governmental correspondence nor the journalism from the mid-twentieth century recognizes the cultural significance of the Place Where Happiness Dwells. Ultimately then, the imaginary Indian of colonial discourse is not simply marginalized but imagined out of existence. In this sense, while

our analysis reveals the construction of a colonial narrative, it points to other narratives, other ways of telling the story (Roe, 2003: 124).

Essentially the colonial narrative of high modernity and the idolization of the idea of 'progress' which Roe argues includes individualism, agriculturalism, and industrialization is well established in the Peace region, in a variety of aspects and contributes to infringement of Treaty Rights and impacts to Indigenous Communities both historically, as in Roe's (2003) analysis of IR 172, and in the present. However, in reflecting on this narrative, other ways of telling the story – other voices – are revealed.

This is a brief introduction to the background and dynamics within the Peace region. The next section introduces the Visitor Centre and the communicative capacity of such spaces.

The Visitor Center



Figure 6. W.A.C Bennett Dam Visitor Centre – Exterior Signage. Image by M.Poirier

Naturalized and naturalizing rhetoric is often manifested in display technologies like visitor center installations. For example, “Tourists travelling to national parks often rely on publications found in visitor centers and gift shops to learn more about each park’s features, consulting these items during their visit or taking them home as souvenirs...the rhetorical significance of these items lies in their power to inform visitors about the park while managing their relationship to it” (Patin, 2012:119). While not a national or provincial park, the W.A.C Bennett Dam is representative of the ideology that dominated the era of its construction, as previously introduced. The visitor center at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam has long displayed and informed visitors about the history of hydroelectricity in British Columbia, and how electricity is made, however, it did not address the consequences of the construction of the dam in the displays presented with

the intention of influencing the beliefs and values of the individuals coming to the facility. At least, not until recently.

The W.A.C Bennett Dam Visitor Centre is open to the public and offers tours of the facility between May and September each year. Prior to 2015, the Visitor Centre focused predominately on how electricity is made and one narrative or story of the creation of the structure rooted in the high modernist principles of the Social Credit (1952-1972) ideology during the construction era described above. Details of this exhibition will be described in later in the text. In 2015, the Visitor Centre was renovated, and in the June of the following year a new gallery titled, "Our Story, Our Voice" was opened. "Significant contributions to the gallery and exhibits were made by an Aboriginal advisory committee consisting of members from B.C. Metis Federation, Doig River First Nation, McLeod Lake Indian Band, Metis Nation B.C., Sauteau First Nations, West Moberly First Nations and Kwadacha First Nation" (B.C. Hydro, 2016).



Figure 7. 'Our Story, Our Voices' Gallery at W.A.C Bennett Dam. Image by W3 Design Group

This gallery, which focuses on the impacts of the construction of the facility on local First Nations communities, and the collaboration of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee on it and other aspects of the Visitor Centre, presents visitors with the complexities of memory and history at the Bennett Dam not previously addressed. As described by Susan Hatfield, Elder Coordinator at Kwadacha First Nation who worked closely in collaboration with BC Hydro and Elders on many components of the project,

Standing next to this huge symbol of power, the dam itself, it's hard for people to realize that up that canyon and across the mountains, are people who lived, and thrived, and were part of the land...And that valley was flooded, taken away from them, with many of them not really understanding what was happening (BC Hydro, 2016).

This thesis highlights the parallel and conflicting memory narratives at the W.A.C Bennett Dam as presented and represented in Visitor Centre exhibitions, and through films about the structure. As introduced, these parallel and conflicting memory narratives reflect the contrast between the dominant narrative of 'progress' post- WWII and the lived experience of the residents and Indigenous communities within the Peace region impacted by the ideology of high modernity. As stated, high modernity is characterized by a belief in science and technology and their ability to benefit society through the domination of nature (Loo, 2004:165). The parallel memory narratives reflect a conflict in relationships to nature, land and place. The following chapter presents the theoretical framework that informed this thesis.

Chapter 3.

Theoretical Foundations

This chapter introduces the theoretical tools that inform this thesis and are utilized and interwoven throughout the text. It also defines key concepts and terminology. As I hope to address in this thesis, the case study of the W.A.C Bennett Dam, a site of memory, illustrates the multidirectional nature of memory (Rothberg, 2009), contrasting dominant or hegemonic conceptions of history with alternative cultural narratives ('alternative' that is to the dominant notions of memory and remembrance previously portrayed at the W.A.C Bennett Dam). The case study highlights the complexity of history and memory of people who inhabit environments impacted by large-scale industrial projects in rural areas.

To provide guidance to the reader, this chapter will focus first on those theoretical tools that inform the comparative analysis of the historical and contemporary visual representations of the W.A.C Bennett Dam including definitions of memory, ways of knowing, and conceptions of time. Following this there will be a review of concepts of sovereignty, and institutions of power and how these are related to the case study. Then, the concept of visual sovereignty is addressed. Visual sovereignty places emphasis on the act of making (Dowell, 2013) (Simpson, 2017). This theoretical tool will be emphasized when discussing the role of creative production and collaborative methodologies within the case study.

Memory and Multidirectionality

Eviatar Zerubavel's *Time Maps* (1992) will be discussed later this section (pg. 31) providing a discussion on different conceptions of time; however, it is pertinent to reference him now in the context of memory. He states, "Although historical changes usually occur over a period of time and as a result of process rather than a single event, collective memory tends to select particular events as symbolic markers of change" (1992:7).

In this thesis I propose that the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, a hydroelectric facility located in Northeastern British Columbia, acts as a symbolic marker of change or site of

memory for two parallel or conflicting memory narratives. The dominant one is a progress narrative that ties the development of the structure to the political and economic ideology of leaders at the time of construction, and what author David Mitchell (1983) describes as the foundations during the *Rise of British Columbia* (1983). The alternative narratives come from the collective social memory of the residents of the valley – both First Nations and non-First Nations-- which is intimately tied to the landscape. The alternative narratives discussed in this thesis focus on the First Nation's communities within Northeastern British Columbia who were impacted by the construction of the facility.

Groups provide frameworks to locate and transmit social memories (Marontate, 2015). As with many stories of northern development, the conflicting narratives in the Peace surrounding the aforementioned site of memory are at their core a conflict between industry and environment and are spoken of in the vernacular of those frameworks. Through this comparison of the dominant and the excluded, I hope to illustrate how social memory can challenge official memory. Furthermore, at the end of this thesis I propose to briefly discuss how reproductions of memory are used in media by both opposing narratives in a dialogue surrounding a current controversy in the Peace River valley of similar scope and size – the Site C Clean Energy Project. However, before this occurs further work on the concept of memory must be explored.

This thesis will draw from a definition of memory and concept of multidirectional memory found in Michael Rothberg's article (2009) *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*. This concept will be intertwined throughout the text and returned to in the analysis of exhibitions and films.

At the most basic level, Rothberg describes memory through the work of Alon Confino and Peter Fritzsche. They state that memory is “symbolic representation of the past embedded in social action”, it is “a set of practices and interventions” (Rothberg, 2009:9). Most importantly, Rothberg reminds us that memory, while about the past is rooted in the present and as stated above is a form of work, or active. He highlights, “Memory is not strictly separable from history, but captures simultaneously the individual, embodied and lived side and the collective, social and constructed sides of our relations to the past” (Rothberg, 2009:4).

Multidirectional memory incorporates this basic definition – of memory as active and taking place in the present – but is also described as being, “...[M]eant to draw attention to the dynamic transfers that take place between diverse places and times during the act of remembrance” (Rothberg, 2009:11). Memory is subject “to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing and borrowing; as productive...” (Rothberg, 2009:3). There can be multiple memories occurring during and within the same place and space with no temporal limitation. This multidirectional memory is found within the case study of depictions of the dam, as there are multiple, parallel or conflicting memory narratives that surround the structure in question.

Furthermore, Rothberg speaks of the connection between memory and creative action, in how memory’s anachronistic qualities “...[I]ts bringing together of the now and then, here and there – is actually a source of its powerful creativity, its ability to build new worlds out of the materials of older ones” (Rothberg, 2009:5). Memory as productive and its ability to build new worlds out of the materials of older ones are exemplified in the creation of the contemporary film ‘Kwadacha by the River’ and its use of archival imagery, as well as within the creative, collaborative efforts that went into the design of new exhibits for the Visitor Centre.

The application of the concept of multidirectional memory in relationship to the guiding questions of this thesis, as described in the introduction, is important as “...[P]ursuing memory’s multidirectionality encourages us to think of the public sphere as a malleable discursive space in which groups do not simply articulate established positions but actually come into being through their interaction with others; both the subject and the spaces of the public are open to continual reconstruction” (Rothberg, 2009:5). In pursuing memory’s multidirectionality and its ongoing negotiation throughout this thesis and case study, it is possible to reflect on one of its guiding questions - of the potential of the current exhibition and film to influence the meta-narrative associated with the W.A.C. Bennett Dam and broadly with development of industrial projects and notions of progress in the northeast. To explore the memory narratives surrounding the structure it is helpful to discuss relationships to land and establish a framework for our concepts of time.

Time Maps

In his book *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past* (2003), Eviatar Zerubavel provides us with a series of frameworks to draw on when conducting research on social memory, and as ways to structure discussions of the past. He suggests that, “We normally view past events as episodes in a story...and it is basically such “stories” that make these events historically meaningful” (2003:13). He suggests that approaching memory from a narratological perspective can allow the examination of the structure of collective narration of the past, just as would be the case in any fictional story. In utilizing the frameworks or what he refers to as *plotlines*, it is possible to examine the forms and reasons why people often reduce complex events, like the construction of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, to simplistic one-dimensional visions of the past.

There are three plotlines that Zerubavel presents that are relevant to the analysis. These include progress (2003:14-16), decline (2003:16-18), and circles and rhymes or historical rhyming (2003:24-25).

As suggested by the word ‘progress’ meanings include: “forward or onward movement toward a destination”; “advance or development toward a better, more complete, or more modern condition”; or to “move forward or onward in space or time” (Oxford Dictionary, 2019). The progress plotline emphasizes time as linear and moving forward, and “...[A]lmost invariably play up the theme of development...” (Zerubavel 2003:14). Progression-ism is a hallmark of modernity, and as suggested and emphasized by Andreas Huyssen in *Present Pasts: Media, Politics and Amnesia* the post-World War II paradigm of modernization, modernist culture was energized by what one might call “present futures” (2000:21), which privileged the future. This progressive improvement and emphasis on development would often include the movement towards a “...[D]egree of technological control over our environment” (2003:15).

This theme of development and control over the environment within the progress narrative is illustrated in the analysis of the film ‘Canyon of Destiny’, exemplified in previous iterations of the exhibitions at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, and will be reflected on later. However, it should be noted that the W.A.C Bennett Dam progress narrative is intimately linked with one man, and the discourse and ideology associated with him. This

is the structure's namesake, Mr. William Andrew Cecil Bennett. As discussed in the introduction, Bennett and the Social Credit Party were in power in British Columbia from 1952 to 1972. The Social Credit rise to power is explained as a result of the populism of the party. The themes they adopted appealed to and were reflective of the general mood of the people not only in Canada, but also particularly in corporate America after World War II (Paperny, D. and collaborators, 1996). Bennett himself saw little non-use, or existence value in the environment. The term non-use is linked to the economic concept of ecosystem services. It refers to value that people obtain without actually using a resource, which include existence and bequest values (Harris & Roach, 2013:544). Bennett regarded the environment solely as a resource and an opportunity for continued growth. He wanted to curtail it to mankind's will (or his will in this case). Environmental historian Tina Loo describes the time period best in *Disturbing the Peace: Environmental Change and Scales of Justice on a Northern River* (2007). She states, "A river, like the Peace was part of a system. Not an ecosystem, but a nervous system – one belonging to an industrial giant just waiting to be jolted into action with the help of experts" (2007:900).

Loo illustrates this through an example, "In 1965 along, 50,000 people flocked to Portage Mountain [where the material or fill for the structure was sourced], where the Bennett Dam, as it was dubbed, was being built...This was a time when environments undergoing transformation were celebrated: a particular moment in the environmental history of North America conveyed by an aesthetic that American historian David Nye has labelled the 'technological sublime' (Loo, 2007:899). 'Technological sublime' refers to the celebration of technology and scientific domination of the land in this case.

The above does not seek to exclude the fact that dominant narratives of progress are rooted in Canada's history of settler-colonialism. This will be addressed later in the text when introducing ways of knowing and value systems. Next parallel to the progress narrative, there is a narrative of decline.

Decline plotlines are the opposite of the progress plotline. Progress, as discussed above, places emphasis on the future, and privileges the future. The decline plotline emphasizes deterioration (2003:16) and nostalgia and is focused on the past. As Zerubavel highlights, "...[M]any decline narratives are in fact a reaction to the overly optimistic belief in progress..."(2003:18).The progress and decline plotlines are in stark

contrast to each other but are similar in that they emphasize time as linear, and moving in a uniform direction.

The development of hydroelectric dams has had adverse effects on ecology, economics and social fabrics of the regions in which they are constructed. As such, the progress narrative regarding the W.A.C Bennett Dam has been challenged over time, and even during its initial construction. The strength of that challenge has previously been limited due to an asymmetrical power relationship, discussed when introducing ways of knowing.

An example of the *deterioration* of the decline narrative can be seen in the text *This was our Valley* where local resident, poet and one of the authors of the text Earl Pollon (2003), writes of the aural and visual changes that occurred during and after the construction of the Bennett Dam in comparison to the sounds and sights of the region before 'progress' (183).

The last 'map' or framework that will be used in our analysis is Zerubvael's concepts of circles and rhymes alternatively called historical rhyming. In Zerubavel's concept of linear and circular time, referred to as circles and rhymes or historical rhyming events and occurrences are seen to be somewhat *cyclical*, much like while years progress (linear), the changing of the seasons remain the same (what Zerubavel refers to as cyclical or rhyming) (Zerubavel, 2003:23-25). Cyclical conceptions of time are often attributed to people and cultures who are described as having a relational worldview.

This concept is further elaborated on in *Archaeology as Therapy: Connecting Belongings, Knowledge, Time, Place and Well Being* (Schaepe et al.,2017).The authors state,

...[This] do[es] not indicate that Westerners have history and that those from non-Western cultures have cyclical time. Instead...[the] emphasis is on the experience of time and the sacred. Cyclical time and linear historical time fuse, interweaving something more lasting (tradition) with the present activity (mundane), creating meaningful activity in the present...[the] central point is that people in any culture, depending upon the situation, draw upon both modes of historical experience, linear and cyclical (506).

An example of this is found within Ridington's *Trail to Heaven: Knowledge and Narrative in Northern Community* (1988) and speaks to the following section on 'Ways of Knowing'. Within the text Ridington stresses Dane-zaa storytelling and concepts of time. He states, "Stories are windows into the thought world of Indian people. Their time is different from ours. The old man and the boy circle around to touch one another, just as the hunter circles around to touch his game. They circle one another as the sun circles around to touch a different place on the horizon with each passing day" (1988:70). He suggests that,

Historical events happen once and are gone forever. Mythic events return like swans each spring. The events of history are particular to their time and place. They cannot be experienced directly by people of different times and places. Mythic events are different. They are true in a way that is essential and eternal (1988:72).

Mythic events and storytelling are within Ridington's descriptions of the Dane-zaa Prophet tradition. An example of this is in the description of the first Prophet (Dreamer) Makenunatane or the Sikanni Chief. His name, "...means literally "His Tracks, Earth, Trail". The name suggests that his tracks circle around the edge of the world to make a circle... He and all Dreamers are also like swans, in that swans and Dreamers can fly through to heaven without dying. The stories describe them as "swan people" in their ability to migrate between the seasons and stages that make the circle of a person's life" (Ridington, 1988:78).

Ways of Knowing

Metaphors of knowledge, worldviews, ways of knowing, value systems are being used throughout this section to discuss relationships to land, and environments in transition.

As Miller and his collaborators state, "[A]ll research is informed by particular worldviews and perspectives" (2008:57). The following will introduce to the reader language and terminology that informs this research and is evident in the collaborative works within the case study and contrasting perspectives within the region.

Epistemological pluralism refers to and recognizes that in any given research context, there may be several valuable ways of knowing. In *Epistemological Pluralism:*

Reorganizing Interdisciplinary Research (Miller *et al.* 2008) this concept is further elaborated on. In this publication of a case study, the research reflects on socio-ecological systems pertaining to environmental research. What it does recognize however, is that research is limited or hampered by privileging a single epistemological perspective and acknowledges that different theories of knowledge, "...[D]ifferent concepts of what constitutes knowledge, how it is produced and how it should be applied" (Rescher 2003, Miller 2008:45) have relevant application in a variety of fields. Miller and his team identify three metaphors of knowledge which they categorize as knowledge as mechanistic, knowledge as contingent and knowledge as narrative.

In scientific study, as in narratives regarding nature and environment, two of the theories of knowledge that Miller discusses have been dominant. I would argue that these are 'knowledge as mechanistic' and 'knowledge as contingent'. Meaning that the way that people perceive of and relate to knowledge (used interchangeably in Miller's categories with nature or land) has been linked with the scientific method and a man vs. nature perspective, with origins and roots in the settler-colonial framework/project, as will be elaborated on shortly. The third metaphor of knowledge, 'knowledge as narrative', or constructed is described as "Interpretive and critical. Knowledge is inherent to object and represents values that may be shared or individually led. Nature as constructed" (2008:46).

Indigenous knowledge and scientific traditions present very different models for looking at the world. A good example of this is provided in the text *Dan Dha Ts'edeninth'e – Reading Voices: Oral and Written Interpretations of the Yukon's Past* (1991). Here author Julie Cruikshank uses the example of latitude, longitude and altitude (ways of quantifying landscape, space and place in western scientific thought) when comparing relationships to land and knowledge. She then suggests that Elders often provide a very different picture of landscape – "They tell stories of how a particular place came to be, the events that happened therein the distant past when animals and humans could still talk to one another, and the historic events that occurred there. They locate the place not by means of numbers on a grid, but by means of a narrative, like a story. And that story may flow into other stories, like a trail or a stream" (1991:11-12). Places have names and stories associated with them on the landscape. Dane-zaa elder, Tommy Attachie, is recorded speaking at Madats'atl'qle (Snare Hill), sitting in front of an oil well. Despite the changes to landscape from the time he spent in the area as a young

boy in the late 1950s, he shares his memories and knowledge of the area, and lessons for the future through personal knowledge (Doig River First Nation, 2005).

Again, in Ridington's *Trail to Heaven: Knowledge and Narrative in a Northern Native Community* (1988) and as suggested by Cruikshank and the experience as shared by Dane-zaa elder Tommy Attachie:

For northern hunting people, knowledge and power are one. To be in possession of knowledge is more important than to be in possession of an artifact...Northern hunters live by knowing how to integrate their own activities with those of the sentient beings around them. The most effective technology for them is one that can be carried around in their minds. The Indian stories they wanted to tell me were elements of their technology, not fanciful tales. Hunting people are able to create a way of life by applying knowledge to local resources. Their stories and their dreaming provide access to a wealth of information. Their vision quests integrate the qualities of autonomy and community that are necessary..." (Ridington, 1988:73).

This discussion of epistemological pluralism and the three metaphors of knowledge provides a framework for descriptive analysis when comparing and contrasting the different components of the case study, however, further exploration of ways of knowing and how this is related to nature and land need to be explored.

Worldviews and Value Systems

The notion of 'metaphors of knowledge' provides us with a beginning framework to think about relationships to nature and land. These mimic Zerubavel's *Time Maps* with emphasis on what could be thought of progress in the man vs. nature perspective indicated in knowledge as mechanistic or contingent, and relational thought and practice in knowledge as narrative, as evident in time maps with an emphasis on cyclical or rhyming patterns. As is evident in both *Time Maps* and the notion of metaphors of knowledge there are dominant views that have held more power than others – time as linear, and knowledge as mechanistic. This is indicative of a larger asymmetrical power relationship rooted in colonial practice in Canada. This disjuncture in ways of knowing and asymmetrical power relationships will be introduced through the work of Marie Battiste (2013) and Leroy Little Bear (2011), and then elaborated on. Little Bear (2011) reflects on the metaphor of knowledge, in particular on the notion of knowledge as mechanistic:

...[T]he business of science is 'reality'. The reality brought about by modern science is largely based on Western paradigms. Western paradigmatic views of science are largely about measurement using Western mathematics. But nature is not mathematical. Mathematics is superimposed on nature like a grid, then examined from that framework. It is like the land survey system: a grid framework of townships, sections, and acres superimposed on the land. These units are not part of the nature of the land. If science is a search for reality; if science is a search for knowledge at the leading edges of the humanly knowable, then there are 'sciences' other than the Western science of measurement (Little Bear, 2011).

In her text, *Decolonizing Education: Nourishing the Learning Spirit* (2013), Marie Battiste highlights the underlying discrimination created and legitimized by the cognitive frameworks of imperialism and colonialism, stating,

Despite the fact that all peoples have knowledge, the transformation of knowledge into a political power base has required the control of the meanings and diffusion of knowledge. Elite groups in society use knowledge and the control of knowledge to exercise power over certain economic and cultural interests, which are decided by politicians in collaboration with interest groups, the amalgamation of interests in political parties, and in power interests, such as lobbies, corporations and organizations (159)...Cognitive imperialism relies on colonial dominance as a foundation of thought...(161) (Battiste, 2013).

Essentially what these quotes highlight is that Miller's metaphors of knowledge are related to land or nature, as he suggests, and that the relationship to *nature* or *land* that each emphasize is rooted in perceptions, worldviews and enforced through political structures. Therefore, in talking about ways of knowing and worldviews, this comparison must also include conversations of settler colonialism and Indigenous worldviews, what Lowman & Baker refer to as a 'clash of sovereignties' (Lowman & Barker, 2015).

As highlighted in the text *Settler: Identity and Colonialism in the 21st Century* (2015), "Indigenous and Settler conflicts over land have been discussed in some senses as a clash of sovereignties" (Lowman & Barker, 55). Oxford Dictionary defines the term *sovereignty* as "supreme power or authority" (2019). In his essay, *Sovereignty: Do First Nations Need it?* (23 December 2014), Mohawk Lawyer and academic Stephen John Ford discusses the historical roots of the concept of sovereignty and elaborates on the meaning of the concept of sovereignty in a First Nations context. He focuses his discussion on sovereignty's synonyms, where "words such as jurisdiction, power, authority and control are found" (Ford, 2013: para. 4), and states, "It is beyond dispute

that at the time of contact Indigenous Nations were politically independent and governing themselves under their own laws” (Ford, 2013: para. 4). While people often think of sovereignty as exclusive to the colonial structure of nation-states, the concept itself has broader application with emphasis as above on jurisdiction, power, authority and control. This concept is also applicable in the context of visual sovereignty which will be discussed later.

Leanne Simpson (2011) elaborates on this in *Dancing on Our Turtles Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-creation, Resurgence and a New Emergence* citing the work of Nishnaabe scholar Gerald Vizenor. He states, “...[T]ransmotion, that sense of native motion and an active presence is *sui generis* sovereignty. Native transmotion is survivance, a reciprocal use of nature, not a monotheistic, territorial sovereignty. Native stories of survivance are the creases of transmotion and sovereignty” (Simpson, 88). She further elaborates on transmotion and sovereignty by telling of pre-colonial practices of the Nishnaabeg people, where movement, change and fluidity were a reality. Seasonal rounds – the movement through territory based on cyclical change – occurred, with gatherings at certain times of the year for governance, ceremonies and social activities. She states,

Centralized government and political structures are barriers to transmotion; this static state is never experienced in nature. Aligned with the natural world, Nishnaabeg people created political, intellectual, spiritual, and social lifeways that enabled them to align themselves individually and collectively with the lifeforces of their territories. While Nishnaabeg sovereignty was *sui generis*, it was also territorial...While the boundaries around that land were much more fluid than that of modern states, there was a territory that was defined by...language, philosophy, way of life, and political culture (Simpson, 2011:89).

While Simpson is directly referring to her, and the Nishnaabeg experience, this description of transmotion and sovereignty and the pre-colonial practice of seasonal mobility throughout the territory also apply to the Dane-zaa and Tsek’ehne peoples, as introduced in the discussion of historical context. Hugh Brody details the movement of peoples throughout the Peace Region in his influential book, *Maps and Dreams: Indians and the British Columbia Frontier* (1988). The title “Maps and Dreams” refers both to Brody’s work on a land use and occupancy study that consisted of mapping of traditional territory and land use in collaboration with Indigenous communities in the Peace Region, and the impacts of the dreams of white settlers in the development of the North (the

project was implemented in response to a proposed pipeline project). But it also refers to the cultural practice of dreaming and storytelling within the communities that Brody works with. Dreamers (*Naache*) drew maps of the land, of the trails within their dreams for others to follow, which in some cases were hunting trails, or in rare cases, the trail to heaven.

The Dreamers have been essential to Dane-zaa life since before white people came to their land. Dreamers are men, and sometimes women, who can follow a trail of song to a place beyond the sky where they come into contact with the spirits of the people who have gone before. Prior to contact, they were hunt chiefs who visualized the plans for communal hunts. Since the white people came, Dreamers have dreamed about the future and told their people how to cope with the pressures of living in a changing world (Ridington, 2013: 9).

The scholar carried out a land use and occupancy study. This book provides a series of interrelated maps that range from traditional hunting areas, to pre-contact and post-contact seasonal rounds, to increasing alienation from the landscape as traditional territory is impacted by the expansions of industrial activity in the form of oil and gas, mining, forestry and hydroelectric activity. Through these maps, Brody provides the reader with a comprehensive view of the theory of transmotion referenced above, but within the Peace Region's northern context. In regards to land use, he states,

The fur trade and its posts have been established in the region for over a century, and Indians repeatedly have insisted that the lands they used five years ago are the same as the lands they used thirty years ago. Their hunting system, which is based above all on the skillful tracking of animals that live all year round within a general area requires a comparatively large territory. Hunters may use parts of this territory infrequently; some locations may not have been seen for twenty years. But no part is therefore dispensable: dependence is upon the territory as a whole. Successful harvesting of its resources requires knowledge of animal movements over the whole area, including places that are rarely, if ever, visited...The land-use maps show a pattern of harvesting that is flexible in details but surprisingly constant and extensive. The Indians say, with their maps, that they continue to use or need all of their territories (1988:174).

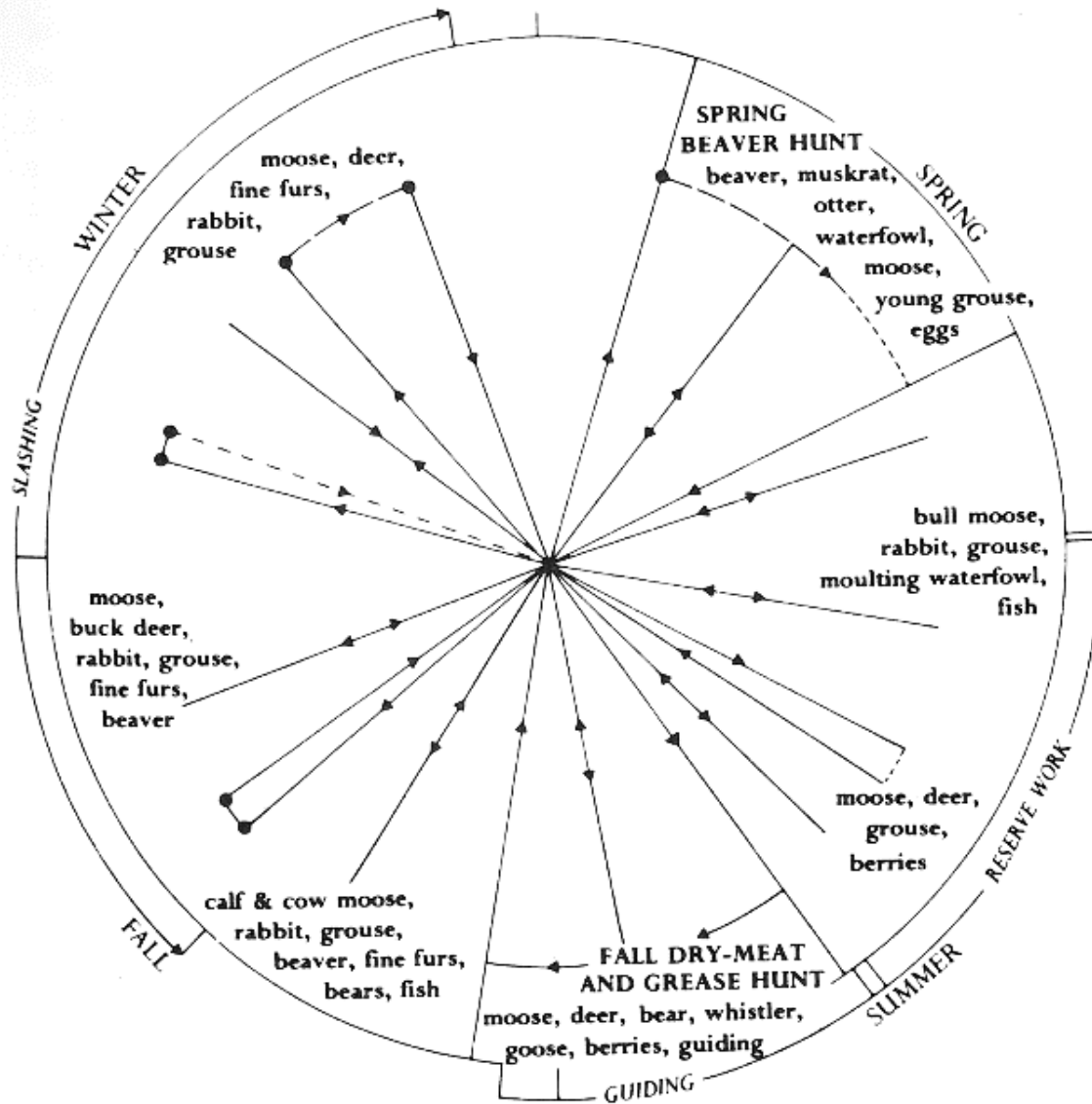


Figure 8. Seasonal Round of the Dane-zaa – Figure 3 from Hugh Brody’s Maps and Dreams (1988:199).

This concept of transmotion or sui generis sovereignty is further elaborated on by Robin Ridington in *The Place Where Happiness Dwells* (2013). Particularly in regard to seasonal gathering places. The book’s title refers to *Su Na chii k’chige*, “[...]the summer gathering place where people from different bands met to sing and dance and renew their relationships” (2013:1). The loss of *Su Na chii k’chige* is still felt by the Dane-zaa today, and is one of several court cases that relate to unjustifiable infringement of Treaty Rights within the region.

Simpson (2011) also emphasizes the acts of creation or making and how they relate to meaning. She states, “In terms of representation, modern society primarily *looks* for meaning (in books, computers, art), whereas Indigenous cultures engage in process or acts to create meaning. Indigenous cultures understand and generate meaning through engagement, presence and process – storytelling, ceremony, singing, dancing, doing...creation requires presence, innovation, and emergence....” (2011: 93). This is related to knowledge as narrative, as it shows “knowledge is inherent to objects and represents values that may be shared or individually led” (Miller, 2008).

In *Trail to Heaven: Knowledge and Narrative in a Northern Native Community* (1988), the process or acts to create meaning that Simpson references are illustrated. Ridington writes,

Here in the forest north of the Peace River, I found a country still occupied by people whose right to the land was demonstrated, at least in their own thinking, by their knowledge of it. They had not paid for the land or possessed it by changing it. Their right was the right of belonging. It was the right of knowing. Their relationship to the land was more complex, more deeply rooted, more spiritual than simple material possession...I felt in them a sense of place I had never before experienced. Every person I had met before could say what place his or her ancestors had come from. The Dunne-za did not seem to be *from* anywhere. Although they could recall a complex pattern of movements within the Peace River country, it made no sense for them to think of being from any other place (1988:19).

In contrast, as Lowman & Barker (2015) discuss in their text, *Settler: Identity and Colonialism in 21st Century Canada*, “Settler sovereignties are ‘carried with us’ until we decide to root them somewhere” [referring to the colonial project of legitimacy, see Benedict Anderson (1991)]. They suggest that Settler society relates to land indirectly, with the relationship being mediated through structures such as regimes of property, and that settler Canadian identities require the creation of social and cultural structures which need to be constantly rebuilt in a material sense as the land is adapted to the uses that are desired. They state, “[Settler identities require the creation of social and cultural structures in] a conceptual sense as Settler people generate histories and stories and political and legal systems that anchor them in place”. These are human-centric relationships to land and is at odds with the relationship between Indigenous peoples and their sacred places and home environments (2015:55-56).

Settler-colonial constructions of land and knowledge are often presented as *reality*, however, these narratives, while dominant, are deliberately exclusionary. As asked by Michael Rothberg (2009), “What happens when different histories confront each other in the public sphere? Does the remembrance of one history erase others from view?” (Rothberg, 2009:5). To understand how this perception of reality can be challenged, insights are provided through the work of Adele Perry (2005) and her discussion of reality effect, as well as the work of Robina Thomas, who writes about the power of storytelling.

The archive is one way that people relate to, interact with and remember the past. In *The Colonial Archive on Trial: Possession, Dispossession and History in Delgamuukw v. British Columbia* (2005), Adele Perry asks us to think about what archives are, what they contain, what is absent, and why those silences exist. This is also what will occur throughout this thesis in discussions of the films and what is made visible, who sees what, how seeing, knowing and power are interrelated. To do this within the article, Perry uses the 1991 ruling of *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia*. This ruling in 1997, became a landmark case in the quest for the recognition and assertion of aboriginal title in Canada and established the basis for oral testimony to be accepted and given weight as documentary evidence. This highlights how sometimes “...[T]he colonial archive can alternatively work to defend or challenge the states that create and sustain them” (Perry, 2005:327).

A key term in related to this thesis, as mentioned above is “reality effect”. Perry describes this as “[T]he complex process in which some history is produced as real and some is rendered invalid or simply invisible” (Perry, 2005:334). The significance of the archival record as a method or practice by which the past is remembered is indicated throughout the article. The Justice McEachern’s judgement is due to the aforementioned reality effect which suggests that only the official archive – here described as written, colonial and masculine – is to be trusted as the “arbitrator of history” (Perry, 2005:335), or considered as truth. This directly relates to concept of knowledge, time and power as previously discussed. As Perry describes, the archive is perceived of as *passive* and historians as passive custodians of the archival record (Perry, 2005:339).

Returning to Rothberg’s (2009) definition of memory as a form of *work, labour or action* with the ability to “...[B]uild new worlds out of the materials of old ones (Rothberg,

2009:5). Memory is active. The case study of Delgamuukw shows "...[T]hat both oral and written history are 'structured, interpretive, and combative" (Perry, 2005:335) and that by recognizing the archive as a space where imagination and interpretation of the past occurs people can challenge historical methodologies and our *assumptions about history*. This discussion of the archive as a place of active construction, open to imagination and interpretation is pertinent to this thesis as demonstrated by the use of archival materials integrated into the exhibition and films. Additionally, Perry's work highlights how some metaphors of knowledge have power, and how that power can be contested.

Another tool that is used to contest dominant narratives of land, time and *progress* is storytelling as it privileges experience and gives power to voice. In *Honouring the Oral Traditions of My Ancestors through Storytelling* (2005), Robina Thomas discusses the concept of storytelling as research methodology and the importance of stories. She states, "[T]hese stories leave us with a sense of purpose, pride, and give us guidance and direction – these are stories of survival and resistance" (Thomas, 2005:238).

She details the deep sense of responsibility that is associated with storytelling the role that stories play traditionally, as a teaching tool and cultural practice. Importantly, Thomas highlights the role of stories in resistance to colonialism. She states,

Storytelling also taught us about resistance to colonialism...All stories have something to teach us. What is important is learning to listen, not simply hear, the words storytellers have to share. Many stories from First Nations tell a counter story to that of the documented history of First Nations in Canada...[and] are very important because they give us teachings that allow us to continue to hear and document those counter stories – our truths (Thomas, 2005:241).

An example of this within Treaty 8 territory can be seen within the *Dane Wajich-Dane-zaa Stories & Songs: Dreamers and the Land* (Doig River First Nation, 2007). The digital archive arose out of a political context where the Doig River First Nation, like other First Nations in the Peace River region continue to be impacted by the dominant progress narrative, represented by W.A.C Bennett and the idolization of progress initiated in the 1950s, and also present in the continued industrialization of the territory through oil and gas exploration. The media utilized within the *Dane Wajich* convey the

continuity of knowledge and *naache* practices (Hennessy, 2012: 39) In this context it is possible to see the *Dane Wajich* as a form of social action providing both voice and agency through storytelling.

As the team traveled through traditional territory the impacts of oil & gas (and other industrial activities) that have manifested on the landscape did not adversely impact the stories as told. Some of the stories were contemporary and spoke to present concerns and the relationship to the land, others were expressions of older stories, previously told. For example: “Although Dane-zaa had no use for minerals in traditional times, their stories did refer to the deposits as ‘grease’ from the giant animals that (the Transformer) placed under the earth” (Ridington, 2013, 28). Each telling of a story in Dane-zaa tradition is a new experience. It is a re-creation not a re-citation, and the way that the storyteller iterates the story is heavily dependent on the context of the situation (Ridington & Ridington, 2013:22). The changes to the landscape, while having impacts on Aboriginal and Treaty rights do not negate or adversely impact the relevance and strength of the stories told, they do however, contribute to new stories to be shared. As highlighted previously, one of the locations travelled to within the territory was Madats’atl’qje (Snare Hill). Song keeper, Tommy Attachie, was recorded describing the impacts of forestry and oil and gas on the Dane-zaa landscape and culture. He highlights the continued importance of stories both old and new, for younger Dane-zaa generations and speaks to the importance of the digital archival project. He concludes his story by stating, “Before, uh. Us Native people are forgiving people. What people do to us, we, we don’t care. We pray for them, we just keep going. ‘Till now, they open our eyes. These younger people will, will live. It is for them I talk. I am only Grade Three, but I can talk” (Doig River First Nation, 2005).

All of these themes – memory, time, values, ways of knowing, sovereignty, land, truth, story – as stated at the beginning of this chapter, will specifically inform the discussion and analysis of the exhibition and films.

Institutions of Power

The following topics relate to and inform this thesis’ discussion of creative production and collaborative methodologies within the case study. Themes include the

museum as an institution of power (and how this can be related to the visitor center), visual sovereignty, styles of collaboration and research methodologies.

In his book *Imagined Communities* (1991), Benedict Anderson examines the creation and spread of the concept of nationalism. He defines the nation as an “...[!]imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign”. He argues that all communities are imagined but are distinguished by their style of imagining (Anderson, 1991:6). The nation is imagined as *sovereign* because the concept was born in the enlightenment, when the legitimacy of previous conceptions of states – like divine rule or hierarchical dynasties – were being questioned. Anderson argues that the legitimacy of the nation-state is linked to three institutions of power – the census, the map and the museum.

The census, the map and the museum were tools that shaped the way the colonial state imagined its dominion and presented its legitimacy. Anderson describes them as a web that aided in the imagination and creation of the nation-state. The census quantified the population, the map created arbitrary territories and presented ‘empty spaces’, and the museum allowed for the legitimization of the nation through the imagining of history [think back to Adele Perry and the *reality effect*]. He states,

Interlinked with one another, then, the census, the map, and the museum illuminate the late colonial states style of thinking about its domain. The ‘warp’ of this thinking was a totalizing classificatory grid, which could be applied with endless flexibility to anything under the state’s real or contemplated control: peoples, religions, languages, products and so forth. The effect of the grid was always to be able to say of anything that it was this, not that; it belonged here, not there; it was bounded, determinate, and therefore – in principle – countable (184).

Another example of these ideas can be found in Cole Harris’ (2002) *Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance and Reserves in British Columbia*. Similarly, to Anderson (1991), Harris presents the quantification of people, places and spaces and *imagining* of legitimacy but in a provincial vs. national/international context and specifically in relation to Indigenous communities, settler-colonialism and the state. Harris speaks to the dynamics between provincial and federal governments in Canada, as previously discussed in regard to the ‘defensive expansionism’ of W.A.C. Bennett that came at a later period. He writes,

[The reserve system]...was the product of the pervasive settler assumptions backed by the colonial state, that most of the land they encountered in British Columbia was waste, waiting to be put to productive use: or, where Native people obviously were using the land, that their uses were inefficient and therefore replaced. Such assumptions, coupled with self-interest and a huge imbalance of power, were sufficient to dispossess Native people of most of their land...[T]he reserve map of British Columbia reflected the agenda of the provincial government backed by the prevailing values of a settler society. This reserve geography functioned as intended. It opened up almost all provincial land to capital and settlers (insofar as access and topography allowed) and, for all practical purposes, extinguished the rights of usage, custom and Native law on which, not long previously, the human geography of the Northern Cordillera had depended. Another geography was quickly emerging, one dependent on the regime of property (Harris, 2002:266).

The references to *Imagined Communities* (1991), and *Making Native Space* (2002) are relevant to our discussion because of the role, as presented by Anderson and supported by Harris, of the map and the museum in sovereign claims to land and territory. Miller's presentation of metaphors of knowledge – knowledge and mechanistic and contingent – are both evident in this imagining.

The museum, as Anderson identifies as a site for the classification and ordering of knowledge, production of ideology and disciplining of the public is critical in addressing how the method of creation and changing representations of the W.A.C Bennet Dam narrative may shape perceptions and provide a space for dialogue around geographical land, nature and the complexities of history and memory.

Awareness of the role of the museum in the colonial project is important in understanding the underlying dynamics of power within the museum space. As Michelle Henning argues, "Museums and exhibitions through techniques of display and the organization of space and time, attempt to position or organize visitors, to choreograph them, or to direct and mound their attention" (Henning, 2006:2-3), and furthermore she, like Anderson, emphasizes how museums have presented, "...[C]ultural products of the world [as]...the material for narratives of progress, which make the present order of things seem both natural and inevitable" (Henning, 2006:2). The Visitor Centre and films within our case study do not emphasize artifacts or objects but do work to compose a narrative about the history of hydroelectricity within British Columbia, and craft memory of the structure.

As described, visual culture within the museum is a technology of power, and “This power can be used to further democratic possibilities or it can be used to uphold exclusionary values (Hooper-Greenhill, 2002:162). This case study speaks to this dynamic. As highlighted earlier, concepts of sovereignty are important when comparing and contrasting the dominant and alternative memory narratives surrounding the Bennett Dam as a site of memory. Having introduced the concept of sovereignty within an Indigenous and settler-colonial framework, it is helpful to address the notion of sovereignty in the context of the museum and visual culture.

Visual Sovereignty

In her article *Reading Nanook’s Smile: Visual Sovereignty, Indigenous Revisions of Ethnography and Atanarjuat (The Fast Runner)* (2007) Michelle Raheja elaborates on the concept of visual sovereignty:

The visual, particularly film, video, and new media is a germinal and exciting site for exploring how sovereignty is a creative act of self-representation that has the potential to both undermine stereotypes of Indigenous peoples and to strengthen what Robert Warrior has called the “intellectual health” of communities in the wake of genocide and colonialism (Raheja, 2007:1161).

She elaborates on visual sovereignty as a strategy that North American Indigenous filmmakers have engaged with since at least the 1960s in television, film and video projects. One such filmmaker is documentarian Alanis Obomsawin, who produced numerous works at the National Film Board of Canada. In the book *Alanis Obomsawin: The Vision of a Native Filmmaker* (2006) author Randolph Lewis outlines several attributes or lessons, as he calls them, of visual sovereignty as drawn from Obomsawin’s works. These ‘lessons’ are as follows:

1. Indigenous sovereign gaze. This he describes as, “...[A] practice of looking that comes out of Native experience and shapes the nature of the film itself...” (2006:182)
2. Authority: “Where cultural insiders are the controlling intelligence behind the filmmaking process, no matter how much non-Natives might help in various capacities” (Lewis, 2006:182), where “Native expertise is allowed to stand on its own...” (Lewis, 2006:185).

3. Autonomy: Where it "...must speak in the language of equals..." and "...[P]lace Native oral traditions on the same level as non-native forms of writing and remembering of the past" (2006:182).
4. Epistemological foundation: "...[A] profound respect for...ways of knowing and remembering..." (2006:184).
5. Accountability: "By focusing attention on what has been overlooked, concealed or distorted...[it] provides an ideological rebuke to dominant practices...[and] troubles the visual impulses of white settler cultures..." (2006:182).
6. Ethical relationship: "...[P]redicted on an enduring ethical relationship between media producer and subject..." (2006:191)
7. Art: Presenting an Indigenous perspective in a compelling way (2006:192).

The 'lessons' of visual sovereignty as outlined by Lewis can be applied to the film 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017), both in the act of creation and content, as well as to the re-structuring of the exhibitions at the visitor centre. In *Sovereign Screens: Aboriginal Media and the Canadian West Coast* (2013) Kirsten L. Dowell suggests that the act of creation or off-screen production process is vitally important to the concept of visual sovereignty. She states, "The social relationships and kinship ties produced through Aboriginal media are a significant aspect of my understanding ...I locate Aboriginal visual sovereignty in the *acts* [emphasis mine] of media production" (2013:107). As such, media production is a cultural practice that can act on, alter, and strengthen community relationships through the process of creative collaboration and creation. As Dowell asserts, "Aboriginal visual sovereignty is deeply rooted in these social relationships, kindships and family ties created through the production process" (2013:133) and can aid in subverting the impacts of colonial policies on impacted communities.

The role of the museum in the colonial project (Anderson, 1991: 184) is important to consider when reflecting on acts of visual sovereignty within the context of the Visitor Centre. As Karrmen Crey has stated, "Visual sovereignty...can be extended to the kind of irruptions that Indigenous filmmakers and producers create while working "within" state and dominant representational systems and institutions...[and] engage in complex and critical ways within the political, social and cultural areas and discourses through which they create their work" (Crey, 2016:24). In reflecting on the museum as a technology of power within the context of this case study, it is also important to reflect on the process of collaboration in the museum, film and exhibition design.

Collaboration and Design

Ruth B. Phillips writes extensively on collaboration in museum exhibition in her book *Museum Pieces: Toward the Indigenization of Canadian Museums*. She utilizes a variety of case studies to reveal what she determines as several key features of collaborative exhibitions (2011:188). While the visitor centre at the Bennett Dam is not directly comparable to the case studies cited by Phillips, it is possible to draw from some of the key features that she identifies. As she states, "...[T]he collaborative paradigm of exhibition production involves a new form of power-sharing in which museum and community partners co-manage a broad range of activities that lead to the final product" (188). These include but are not limited to identification of themes, writing of text panels, object selection and can include training and capacity building for community members. Additionally, "Community consultants and advisory committees have long been features of exhibition development...", and it can contribute to "...[W]hat Michael Ames calls "a realignment of power, achieved through a redistribution of authority" (188).

Phillips suggests, and exemplifies through her case study selection, that there is no one model of collaboration in exhibition development, but that she believes there are two distinct types: the community-based exhibition and the multivocal exhibition. I argue that the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery, film and incorporation of Indigenous voice throughout the visitor center are a result of the former type of collaboration, community-based a theme to be explored in later discussions.

Design is a key element in exhibition production, and through collaboration potential realignments of power, achieved through redistribution of authority can occur. In *Design Justice: towards an intersectional feminist framework for design theory and practice* (2018), Constanza-Chock discusses how designers can utilize a set of principles to ensure that design (whether it be in art, technology, or exhibition) is both equitable and participatory, and to avoid the reproduction of existing inequalities or misrepresentations (Constanza-Chock, 2018). In this article, Constanza-Chock reflects on nine principles of Design Justice. These principles, slightly condensed are: design to heal, sustain, and empower communities; center the voices of those directly impacted; prioritize designs and their impact on communities; focus on accountability, accessibility and collaboration; the role of designer as facilitator; have respect for lived experiences;

seek community-led and controlled outcomes; work towards non-exploitive solutions, and; honor and uplift traditional, Indigenous and local knowledge and practice (Constanza-Chock, 2018:2).

In discussing the creation of 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) and the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery, this thesis will reflect on the principles above in relation to the collaborative models identified by Phillips.

Summary

The theoretical foundations that guide this thesis highlight the importance of asking what is being represented, what is absent, and why those silences exist (Perry, 2005). As was stated, the case study of the W.A.C Bennett Dam acts as a site of memory. In our case study, visual representations of the structure using film - and to a lesser extent exhibition - is examined. Story, as told through film, is important as, "We normally view past events as episodes in a story...and it is basically such "stories" that make these events historically meaningful" (Zerubavel, 2003:13). As Rothberg (2009) has suggested, there can be multiple memories occurring in the same place and space, with no temporal limitation. These differences in *Time Maps* (perspectives of time) (Zerubavel, 2003) ways of knowing, and value systems influence our perspective of these "stories", as the term 'clash of sovereignties' (Lowman & Barker, 2015) used to describe settler colonialism and Indigenous worldviews suggests.

In examining the visual, and particularly in comparing visual representations of the parallel, yet conflicting memory narratives of the W.A.C Bennett Dam it is possible to gain a better understanding of how acts of creative production challenge or cement official notions of memory and history of place, and potentially shape perceptions of geographical land, nature and the complexities of history and memory.

These theoretical approaches formed the foundations for the design of the methodology for this study.

Chapter 4.

Methodology

The purpose of this section is to identify and address the methodological approaches adopted for this research.

In the Introduction I presented myself as a researcher, and the perspective I had in approaching this research, as, "...[A]ll research is informed by particular worldviews held by the researcher and...his or her discipline" (2010:57). This research is grounded in my own experiences of working in visitor communications and also in an analysis of historical documents, a study of the exhibitions organized by BC Hydro (2015, 2016), and an analysis of two films which tell the story through two different narratives of the construction of the dam, and subsequent flooding of the its associated reservoir (Williston Lake). In addition, I conducted interviews with individuals involved in the creation of the commemorative materials. The following will provide additional details of these approaches.

Archival and Documentary Research

Documentary and archival research was conducted regarding the history of the W.A.C Bennett Dam and hydroelectricity in British Columbia, the politics and ideology of the era of its construction (the Bennett era of the Social Credit Party from 1952-1972); First Nations of Northeastern British Columbia and history of the region. Additionally, archival and documentary research was conducted on previous iterations of the visitor center at the W.A.C Bennett Dam including information on information panels and the films that were used as supplementary material for engagement with the public, and archival materials and photographs used within the films themselves.

Outside of the aforementioned, documentary research was conducted on themes and topics that are applied in this thesis. This includes but is not limited to memory studies, oral and visual storytelling, ethical and decolonizing research methodologies, collaborative and participatory design, the archive and archival practice, the role of the museum (and visitor center), and concepts of visual sovereignty and self-representation.

Commemorative Displays & Site Visits

Material gathered here includes my own memories of the original exhibition at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam as it is no longer available. In this case, I draw on my memory during my time as a tour guide at the facility, and with a description of the Peace Canyon Dam Visitor Center/exhibition as an example (a smaller facility downstream) that contains similar original materials. I have visited the new exhibition at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, and base analysis of it on my experiences as a visitor. Brief descriptions of each iteration of the visitor center at the W.A.C Bennett Dam and t exhibits are presented in the next chapter.

Films

This thesis focuses on two conflicting memory narratives about the construction of the W.A.C Bennett Dam, which are exemplified in two films – ‘Canyon of Destiny’ (1967) and ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017).

‘Canyon of Destiny’ (1967) is a 28-minute industrial film funded by British Columbia Power and Hydro Authority and created by Lew Perry Film Productions; a Vancouver-based film company that operated from 1965-1981. The film, created between 1962 and 1967, illustrates the planning, construction and official opening of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam at Portage Mountain on the Peace River (BC Archives, 2018). It also includes a discussion of the geology of the region. A full transcript of the film can be found in the Appendix D.

A ten-minute condensed version of the film ‘Canyon of Destiny’ was used as the opening sequence of the W.A.C Bennett Dam tour when I worked at the facilities as a Tour Guide from 2006-2010. As such, I did have some familiarity with the content prior to the work on this project, and it was this familiarity that made me seek out the film to view for this project.

I struggled to gain access to the entire film for use. The film is not available commercially, and I found that the institutional copies seemed to be “reference”, meaning you must physically visit the institution to use them, as they are not available

for interlibrary loan. The closest facility with a digital copy was located at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) in Burnaby. I viewed it several times.

'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) is an 18:30 minute film funded by BC Hydro, and created in partnership by Kwadacha First Nation and Lantern Films, a Vancouver based film company. 'Kwadacha by the River' was created over a two-year time period (2015-2017), and captures, "...[T]he story of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam and its' impact on Kwadacha" (Lantern Films, 2018b). It incorporates elder interviews, archival images, new footage, and animation to tell the story.

I first viewed the film on site at the W.A.C Bennett Dam in its newly renovated Visitor Center. The film is featured in the *Our Story, Our Voices* gallery, which is a section of the Visitor Center dedicated to the stories and experiences of the First Nations communities impacted by the construction of the facility. A trailer for the film, approximately 2 minutes in length, is located on the Lantern Films website (<http://www.lanternfilms.ca/projects/>). When I conducted the research interviews, Jessica Hallenbeck (February 2018) provided me with a link to the film. It had been featured as part of the NSI Online Short Film Festival [National Screen Institute]. Since this time the film has been aired on the Knowledge Network (July 2018), and screened in a variety of cities across Canada.

Research Interviews

The *Our Story, Our Voices* exhibition gallery (and featured film 'Kwadacha by the River') is unique in the official commemorative displays in its recognition of the high price paid by Northeastern British Columbia's Indigenous people. I was very interested in learning from those who participated about their experiences working on the project and in creative collaboration with others. Interviews were semi-structured, since,

The semi-structured interview provides a repertoire of possibilities. It is sufficiently structured to address specific topics related to the phenomenon of study, while leaving space for participants to offer new meanings to the study focus... There is a great deal of versatility in the semi-structured interview, and the arrangement of questions may be structured to yield considerable and often multidimensional streams of data... A key benefit of the semi-structured interview is its attention to lived experience while also addressing theoretically driven variables of interest... it allows for considerable reciprocity between the participant and

the researcher. This reciprocity, or give and take, creates space for the researcher to probe a participant's responses for clarification, meaning making, and critical reflection (Galleta et al. 2013:24).

As is noted in the following descriptions, each of the individuals I interviewed had a different role, perspective and experience of the construction of the exhibition gallery and creation of 'Kwadacha by the River'. The format of the semi-structured interview allowed for the same questions to be asked of each individual while also allowing space for further discussion and elaboration of ideas. Each interview was approximately thirty minutes to one hour in length. Participants were recruited via snowball sampling. How this occurred is described below. To clarify, this method refers to the

...[R]ecruitment of participants to the research through our ability to access particular networks with whom we have a relationship. These relationships may be built on friendship (Browne, 2005), getting to know a group through a key informant (Smith, 2005), or the shared experiences of a phenomenon that allow for initial access (Edwards et al., 1999). However, the access starts, snowball sampling, otherwise referred to as chain sampling or network sampling, draws on this range of metaphors to describe a process of referral from one participant to the next in research. These metaphors point to slightly different features of the approach. Like a chain, there are clear and distinct links between the participants, as they are referred to researchers by previous participants. (Emmel, 2014: 131).

In the Spring of 2016 I was in the first year of my Masters program and chose to take a course IAT 811 – Computational Poetics, with Dr. Kate Hennessy at the School of Interactive Arts and Technology. I had been introduced to Dr. Hennessy's work when I was employed as an Archaeologist in Northeastern British Columbia. In particular, I had familiarity with *Dane Wajich: Dane-zaa Stories & Songs: Dreamers and the Land*, which is a collaborative virtual museum project conducted by Doig River First Nation in partnership with ethnographers, linguists and web-designers. It was also the focus of Dr. Hennessy's PhD dissertation.

While taking the course I spoke with Dr. Hennessy broadly about what I was interested in pursuing for a thesis topic, and coincidentally she was friends with Jessica Hallenbeck of Lantern Films. This was my first introduction. Dr. Hennessy introduced us digitally via email, and I spoke briefly with Jessica in March of that year, however, it wouldn't be until later that I interviewed her.

The Research Participants

My search for people to interview about their involvement in the creation of the exhibitions and the films was limited, as I did not speak to all parties involved. In some cases, this was due to stipulations made by BC Hydro. For example, contractors to BC Hydro were signatories to non-disclosure agreements (W3 Media and Lantern Films) and so my conversations with the filmmakers were about the collaboration involved in the making of the film and how it came to be through the larger process of collaborating on the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery. I did not speak with W3 Media. Information regarding the collaborative process was acquired through the Project Director, BC Hydro representative Lindsay Thompson. As such, the focus of this thesis is primarily on the construction of the last film (*Kwadacha by the River*) and views it as collaborative effort in conjunction with the exhibitions created.

Three individuals took part in this research project and also participated as interviewees and contacts about resources. The formal interviews are included in the appendix. I will begin with an overview of each research participant and how each was recruited for the study. I then introduce what the participants do and why their particular work was of interest to me as a researcher of this project. These introductions go in chronological order of who I spoke with. The interviewees are: Jessica Hallenbeck (Lantern Films), Mitchell McCook (Kwadacha First Nation) and Lindsay Thompson (BC Hydro).

Lantern Films – Creative Director, Co-Director, Editor : Jessica Hallenbeck

As previously stated, I was introduced to Jessica Hallenbeck digitally via email by Dr. Kate Hennessy in the spring of 2017. I contacted Hallenbeck in February of 2018, again via email, and arranged to conduct the research interview via telephone. I was in the Peace region visiting my parents at the time and sat at their wooden kitchen table.

Hallenbeck is a creative director, co-director and editor at Lantern Films, which is based out of Vancouver, B.C. The Lantern Films website describes her this way: “Jessica Hallenbeck is a professionally trained filmmaker and community planner with over 15 years of experience in documentary video production, participatory video

facilitation, and educational video creation. She has operated her own successful consulting practice for 6 years. Jessica holds a BA in film from Queen's University, an MA in Community Planning from the University of British Columbia (UBC) and is currently a PhD candidate in the Department of Geography at UBC. Jessica is the co-founder of Lantern Films" (Lantern Films, 2018).

Lantern Films' mandate was described as "...[D]riven by the people who have lived the story" (Lantern Films, 2018). The company "...[W]ork across a range of mediums including documentary, animation, and live action. Lantern uses a unique collaborative process, ensuring that our films meet the needs of our clients while being driven by the people who have lived the story. Our films shift how people understand the world" (Lantern, 2018).

In speaking with Hallenbeck, I learned how Lantern Films first became involved in the W.A.C Bennett Dam Visitor Center exhibition renovations, the unique collaborative process that took place during the creation of 'Kwadacha by the River', and how her previous experiences in filmmaking and academia influence her approach to the work. The conversation would also touch on the idea of how "films shift how people understand the world" (Lantern,2018) and what impact the distribution of 'Kwadacha by the River' can have.

Kwadacha First Nation & Lantern Films – Filmmaker & Co-Director, Content Advisor: Mitchell McCook

Mitchell McCook (2018) introduced himself by stating, "My name is Mitchell McCook. I grew up in Fort Ware for a couple of years and then after that we moved to and grew up in Sunny Creek after that. After high school I went to university here [at the University of Northern British Columbia] in Prince George. After I graduated, I started working for Kwadacha. I am half Carrier and half Tsek'ehne." I became aware of McCook through my contact with Jessica Hallenbeck, as Mitchell is also a part of the Lantern Films team.

From my research interview with Hallenbeck I learned about the role that McCook played within the community and in collaboration with Lantern Films during the creation of 'Kwadacha by the River'. This was further elaborated on when I met with Mitchell in Prince George, B.C., and within our subsequent telephone interview (March

2018). As discussed in the research interviews and summarized on the Lantern Films website, “He [Mitchell] works with Lantern Films as a co-director, facilitator, and content advisor” (Lantern Films, 2018).

Prior to his work with Lantern Films, McCook had been working with Kwadacha doing filming with them, and elder interviews. As he stated in the research interview, “First it was pictures. We have grants that we apply for yearly, and the original idea was for pictures. Then, I took it a step further and said we should try film. And not only film our - I remember the first few culture camps that I went to I did interviews, and I started filming everything -whatever they did...you know a race...I just started filming everything and yeah it just snowballed from there” (McCook, 2018). The filming that was conducted would be compiled and shared in a common venue, so those in the community that may have been unable to participate in person would still be able to see what events had been occurring.

In my interview with him, McCook spoke of the community’s use of film prior to the making of ‘Kwadacha by the River’ and his role and passion for these projects (McCook, 2018). I asked him specifically about the use and role of filmmaking within the community, specifics about the project ‘Kwadacha by the River’, and future goals regarding the completed project, and media use within the community.

BC Hydro – Director of Indigenous Relations: Lindsay Thompson

I was introduced to Lindsay Thompson through Jessica Hallenbeck. She suggested three individuals to speak to when conducting this research, one of which was Lindsay.

In my research interview with Lindsay Thompson (2018) she introduced herself, explained her role at BC Hydro and provided me with some context about herself and how the Visitor Center exhibition renovations, and film ‘Kwadacha by the River’ came to be. She stated, “I have been at BC Hydro for 10 years. My background before that was as a Museum Designer. I did my MA and Undergrad degrees at UBC [University of British Columbia] in Anthropology and my Masters was in First Nations of BC and Museum Design - working in and with the MOA [Museum of Anthropology] for my Masters degree” (L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018).

Her first project at BC Hydro was the renovation of the Revelstoke Video Center, which incorporated a large First Nations exhibit (which does not have a featured video like 'Kwadacha by the River') that was collaboratively designed with the Shushwap, Ktunaxa, and Okanagan First Nation. "That was kind of my first Visitor Center at Hydro and the first kind of First Nation's exhibit that I think Hydro had done before. I then went into project delivery, managing capital projects for 8 years. One of the projects that we got was upgrading the GMS building that the [W.A.C Bennett Dam] Visitors' Center was in. The idea was to refresh the exhibits and align – the hydro story - you know, how do you make electricity, what is the story of the dam, you know that kind of corporate story. I felt really strongly that we needed to do something with the First Nations like we had done at Revelstoke, so I basically just wrote a proposal for that and got permission"(L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018).

Her work as a project manager for BC Hydro, previous experiences in Museum Design and desire to and experiences implementing collaborative exhibition design projects within BC Hydro helped provide clarity on the role of BC Hydro, and goals of the project from her perspective and that of the corporation. In my research interview with Lindsay, we explored these themes.

Both Jessica Hallenbeck and Mitchell McCook suggested I speak with Susan McCook, Elder Coordinator at Kwadacha First Nation. The role that Susan McCook played was heavily emphasized in my research interview with Jessica Hallenbeck,

Kwadacha put in a serious amount of resources as well. And I think that is really really important. Chief and council were supportive of the project and let it be steered by Elders and Susan McCook who is the Elders coordinator. [She] did not get money from Hydro. She is hired by Kwadacha but she was really essential to setting up meetings and coordinating everything. She would go up [to Fort Ware] with us and hold Elders' meetings (J. Hallenbeck, personal communication, 2018).

At this time, I have not been able to speak with Susan McCook. I have contacted her via email (as provided by Jessica Hallenbeck) but did not receive a response. This is an unfortunate lacuna in my research because Susan McCook was the Kwadacha First Nation elder coordinator.

Analysis Framework

As mentioned in the introduction this thesis stems from a desire to learn about collaborative and ethical research methodology and practice, including what creative collaboration looks like in this context. A limitation of this thesis is both the number of participants that I was able to speak with, and the fact that I was not an active participant or observer in the creation and collaboration process. In order to identify broader themes from which to frame the following discussion of collaboration, challenges to dominant, hegemonic narratives of industrialization, and creative production I have been influenced by Jennifer Wemigwans (2018) text *A Digital Bundle: Protecting and Promoting Indigenous Knowledge Online*. In her text, Wemigwans draws on the work of Leanne Simpson (2011), Taiaiake Alfred (2009) and Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) to provide a framework for her study rooted in Indigenous principles and methodologies.

In exploring collaboration in the context of the W.A.C Bennett Dam, I rely on my conversations with Lindsay Thompson, Mitchell McCook and Jessica Hallenbeck to provide insights into the process and acts of creation. Taking from the influence of Wemigwans, I have looked for themes within these conversations from Linda Tuhiwai Smith's twenty-five projects, found in *Decolonizing Methodologies*. As cited by Wemigwans (2018) the "...[T]wenty-five projects are not a definitive list of activities but an attempt to bolster Indigenous communities, researchers and activist with the information that there are processes and methodologies that can work for them (1999, 161)...[and] represent methodologies concerned with the broader politics and strategic goals of Indigenous research (1999, 143).

These twenty-five projects provide a starting point for analysis of collaborative and ethical research methodologies and practices put into place during the act of creation of both the film and exhibitions as discussed with the research participants. Although Tuhiwai-Smith is referring to the creative process these categories can also be applied in the analysis of testimonies from creators about their processes. Not all the twenty-five projects are applicable in the analysis of interviews with creators but five have been used later in this thesis. The complete 25 projects are listed for reference below. They are as follows:

1.Claiming	6. Indigenizing	11. Writing	16. Restoring	21. Protecting
2. Testimonies	7. Intervening	12. Representing	17. Returning	22. Creating
3. Storytelling	8. Revitalizing	13. Gendering	18. Democratizing	23. Negotiating
4.Celebrating Survival	9. Connecting	14. Envisioning	19. Networking	24. Discovering
5. Remembering	10. Reading	15. Reframing	20. Naming	25. Sharing

These twenty-five projects are used to identify methodological themes articulated by the research participants.

As discussed in the Introduction, this thesis addresses how competing value systems or ways of knowing can come together and contribute to broader discussions of geographical land, nature and the complexities of history and memory in a localized context. To do this, this thesis has been divided into several parts. After an overview of the commemorative exhibitions there will be an examination of the films. This functions as a comparative analysis of the films to emphasize the background complexities of history and memory within the northeast and how these forms of artistic or creative production challenge (or cement) official notions of memory and history of places. Next I discuss the notion of collaboration focusing on testimony about the filmmakers' experiences of the process as a space to explore the act of creation, and the method of creation. This discussion also considers how changing representations of the W.A.C Bennett Dam narrative may shape perceptions and provide a space for dialogue around geographical land, nature and the complexities of history and memory.

Chapter 5.

Commemorative Centres

My fieldwork included visits to commemorative centres where exhibitions present stories of the history of the Bennett Dam and are intended to shape memory narratives for visitors. This section also is informed by my previous experiences working in each facility.

The W.A.C Bennett Dam Visitor Center



Figure 9. The W.A.C Bennett Dam Visitor Centre. Image from M.Poirier

The W.A.C Bennett Dam Visitor Center, prior to its renovation (2015), had an open floor plan. As you walked in the front door, the front desk was on your left. If you walked straight you would find the door to a small theatre where the tour guides would play a condensed version of the film 'Canyon of Destiny' (1968), to start the first 10

minutes of the 45 minutes to one-hour tour. Directly across from the front desk was a large-scale model of one of the generating units (showing the turbine, rotor and stator). Other installations included a small replica of the Dam, discussing the different sizes of fill materials used to create a strong embankment or earth-filled structure. A bicycle attached to a lightbulb allowed visitors to test how much energy they would have to exert to keep the bulb lit. The remaining exhibits were linked to BC Hydro's Power Smart initiative and sought to teach children about the risks of electricity and power of conduction. Panels at the front of the Visitor Center (which overlooked the W.A.C Bennett Dam, Williston Lake Reservoir and intake gates) told the history of the region in regard to geology, the fur-trade and power pioneers. In one such panel, I believe the Tsek'ehne and Dane-zaa were briefly mentioned.

The W.A.C Bennett Dam Visitor Center was demolished and replaced with a new building in 2015. As highlighted on the BC Hydro website, "If you haven't been here for a few years, you'll notice a big change. We've created a new visitor centre that offers a wider range of exhibits around dam construction, wildlife in the area, how we turn water into electricity, and a First Nations Gallery" (BC Hydro, 2018). W3 Design, a contractor on the project described the new visitor center on their website,

At BC Hydro's W.A.C. Bennett Dam Visitor Centre, visitors can walk through a section of a penstock, hear the sounds of local wildlife, generate electric energy at a scale model of a turbine—and even be jolted out of their seats by a (staged) power outage during the screening of a feature film! Along with the outdoor Peace Canyon Viewing Area, the Visitor Centre offers numerous activities which engage visitors on the idea of how flowing water can power an entire province. Designed for all ages, the Visitor Centre brings together exciting interactive exhibits, audio-visual presentations, artefact displays, and compelling graphics to tell the story of hydroelectricity in British Columbia (W3 Design, 2018).

The First Nations' Gallery, titled *Our Story, Our Voices*, opened on June 9th of the following year. This also included work by W3 Design, and the design of the gallery was a collaborative effort. As described on their website,

In the *Our Story, Our Voice* Gallery, visitors learn that 'progress'—dam building—came at a high price for Aboriginal groups in the area. W3 was honoured to sit at the table with representatives from 7 local communities [Peace Aboriginal Advisory Council] who gathered to tell their own story of the building of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, despite the impact that dam-building had on their communities. During this process, W3 was there to listen to the stories and then reflect them back in physical form. The end

result was an authentic representation of the past and ongoing effects, co-created by the members of the Committee and the project team (W3 Design, 2018b).



Figure 10. Screening of ‘Kwadacha by the River’ at the Our Story, Our Voice gallery. Image by W3 Design.

‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) is featured in the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery, and runs on a timed rotation. The decision to create the film derived from the collaborative work, referenced previously.

The changing representations of the structure before and after 2015 in relation to the larger goals of this thesis will be discussed following the presentation of exhibition materials of the era as found at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam’s sister structure, Peace Canyon.

Exhibition Materials of the Era: The Peace Canyon Dam

The previous exhibition materials at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam are not included at the new Visitor Centre, and so the content of the Peace Canyon Dam Visitor Center- which still houses its original displays and was generated at a similar time period - will be used as an example of older approaches to commemoration.

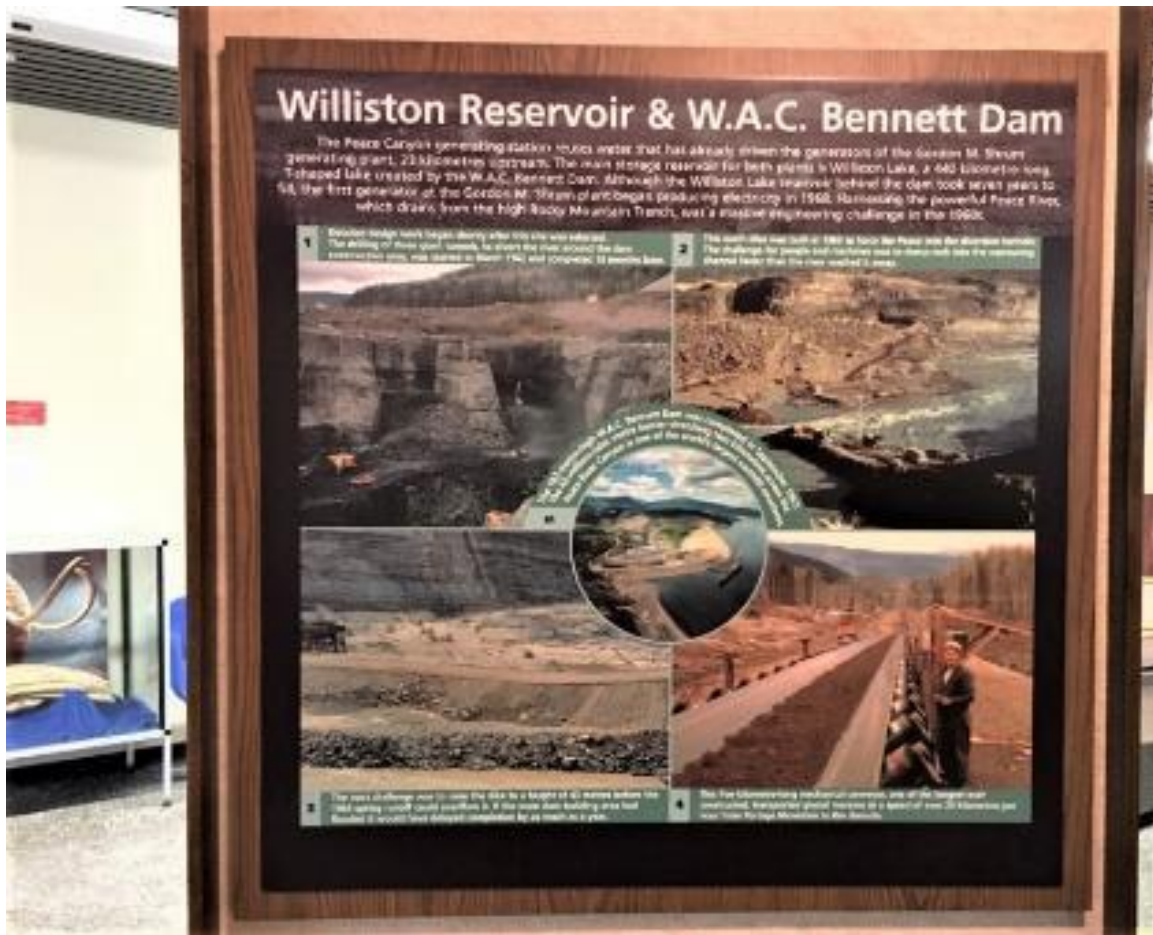


Figure 11. Information Panel about the W.A.C. Bennett Dam at Peace Canyon Dam. Image by M. Poirier

Peace Canyon Dam is the second hydroelectric structure on the Peace River system. Unlike its larger sister structure, Peace Canyon is a concrete gravity dam and its production capacity is smaller, at 700 MW. The Peace Canyon Dam Visitor Centre is no longer open to the public nor promoted via BC Hydro's websites. In a 2013 News Release, the center was described as,

The Peace Canyon Visitor Centre offers a wide range of exhibits about the history of the dam and the community of Hudson's Hope. The displays showcase the achievements of explorers, pioneers and First Nations, and the construction of the Peace Canyon dam. The largest exhibits are about Hadrosaurs, duck-billed dinosaurs that left their tracks along the Peace River (BC Hydro, 2013).

As described above, when visitors enter the Peace Canyon Visitor Centre, they are greeted to the facility by a large replica statue of a mother Hadrosaur and her young. Northeastern British Columbia is known for its rich paleontological history and is the location of British Columbia's first fossilized Hadrosaur bone bed (McCrea, 2017:9), and is also known for large fossilized trackways. The feature of the Hadrosaur at the Peace Canyon Visitor Centre is linked to the large footprint site (now flooded under Peace Canyon's associated reservoir – Dinosaur Lake), which was first reported in the 1920s by geologist F.H. McLearn, and recorded and researched prior to the back filling of the Peace Canyon Reservoir in 1979. Images, and text describing the research conducted line the walls of the Visitor Centre, as well as two large castings of the footprints from within the Peace Canyon. Like the film 'Canyon of Destiny' (1968) the exhibition at the Peace Canyon Dam attempts to follow a linear structure, "Our story begins in the Canyon of the Peace, eroded deep into the shale and sandstone of prehistoric time" ('Canyon of Destiny', 1968).



Figure 12. Exhibit on the Peace River Canyon prior to hydroelectric development. Image of Exhibit by M. Poirier

From a discussion of the geological history of the canyon, the exhibitions move to a display of the Fur Trade era. A large diorama featuring Alexander Mackenzie follows. The diorama features the narrow Peace River canyon in the background with Alexander Mackenzie and his dog standing on a rock outcropping, overlooking the canyon and a First Nations man standing behind them. A small informative panel is mounted at the base of the diorama, titled “Alexander Mackenzie – The first white man to view the powerful canyon of the Peace”. It features a quote from Mackenzie’s journals describing the waters as illustrated. It states,

...The river above us, as far as we could see, was one white sheet of foaming water and it was really awful to behold with what infinite force the water drives against the rocks on one side, and with what impetuous strength is repelled to the other...Such was the state of the river that no alternative was left us but the passage of the mountain, over which we were to carry the canoe as well as the baggage... (Alexander Mackenzie, here at Peace Canyon, May 22nd, 1793).

To the right of the diorama is an illustration of Alexander Mackenzie and his crew, with a small descriptive panel describing the date they would reach the Pacific coast. There is no mention of the guide that stands behind Mackenzie in the diorama.

From here is a section of historical photographs illustrating the people and history of the Peace River region. A large panel of photographs titled “The Lonely Frontier: 1850-1905” features black and white images of the Peace river, and life in the region. Three photographs feature the Dane-zaa people. These are the only reference to the First Nations peoples within the Visitor Centre. The first image is titled “Indian Winter Camp – 1910” and shows a single home in a snow covered landscape; the second image is titled, “Indian Summer Camp – 1910” and shows a series of structures on flat, grassy terrain with 6 men in the foreground, two lounging on the ground in the mid-ground, and a child walking in the background. The third and final image is titled, “Six Mile Mary – 1913” and is an image of an older First Nation’s woman standing with a cane, smoking a pipe, with cloth hanging in the background.



Figure 13. “The Lonely Frontier 1850-1905” at Peace Canyon Dam. Image of Panel by M. Poirier

The rest of the exhibition is a series of displays featuring historical photographs (in colour) from the construction of the Peace Canyon Dam with descriptive text. A single panel represents “Williston Reservoir and the W.A.C. Bennett Dam”.

The Peace Canyon generating station reuses water that has already driven the generators of the Gordon M. Shrum generating plant, 23 kilometers upstream. The main storage reservoir for both plants is Williston Lake, a 440 kilometer long T-shaped lake created by the W.A.C. Bennett Dam. Although Williston Lake reservoir behind the dam took seven years to fill, the first generator at the Gordon M. Shrum plant began producing electricity in 1968. Harnessing the powerful Peace River which drains from the Rocky Mountain Trench, was a massive engineering challenge in the 1960s (BC Hydro).

The panel consists of four colour photographs from the construction of the facility, in various stages (diversion tunnels, earth dikes (2), and conveyor belt) with the completed structure in a circular photograph at the intersection of the four photographs.

Summary

Peace Canyon Dam exhibits act as an archive of the era of construction for the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, highlighting the narrative of ‘progress’. In its form it has similarities to the film ‘Canyon of Destiny’ (1968) which will be discussed in Chapter 6 (as both are representative of the same era). From my experiences as a tour guide, I can say that the structure of the Peace Canyon Dam tour, when given, followed a linear timeline, beginning with geological and fossil exhibits, through to the Fur Trade, and then to the construction of the facility and production of electricity.

The Peace Canyon Dam Visitor Centre as described is important to consider in this analysis as, as suggested by Robin & Jillian Ridington in *When You Sing It Now, Just Like New: First Nations Poetics, Voices and Representation* (2006),

Every normal human being experiences the world through the categories of his or her culture. Much of what we see and hear seems so ordinary and natural that we do not recognize these sights and sounds as highly cultural information...Sights and sounds recorded in a culture at one time may also seem strange in the context of a later time. Audio recordings and photographs provide documentary evidence of the cultural context of a particular time and place. Examining them may reveal the degree and direction of a culture’s change (Ridington & Ridington, 2006: 18).

Ridington & Ridington (2006) refer to this documentary evidence as the 'actualities' of a time and place, and that they form primary documents of that culture's everyday experience (2006:18-19).

In suggesting the Peace Canyon exhibit act as exhibit and an archive of the era or representative of the 'actualities' (Ridington & Ridington, 2006) of the particular time and place one can reflect on the significance of the archival record as a method or practice by which the past is remembered (Perry, 2005). As suggested by Adele Perry these archival spaces can produce a "reality effect" (Perry, 2005, 334) which she describes as, "[T]he complex process in which some history is produced as real and some is rendered invalid or simply invisible" (Perry, 2005:334). The Peace Canyon Dam exhibits present a specific "reality" of hydroelectric production in the 1960s.

As described above, the panel of photographs titled, "The Lonely Frontier: 1850-1905" are the only reference to the First Nations peoples within the Visitor Centre. The title on the panel itself suggests temporal limitation for the people and practices within the images and provides no context or comment on the continuity of practice or information about the communities within the Peace. As Perry suggests, often archival spaces are perceived of as *passive* and historians as passive custodians of the archival record (Perry, 2005:339).

The following section will focus on the renovation of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam Visitor Centre and describe the exhibitions. Reflecting on the presentation of the era of construction as presented at the Peace Canyon Dam, in comparison to the following, one can recognize the archive as a place of active construction, open to imagination and interpretation as the renovations present a different story of hydroelectricity and Indigenous communities in Northeastern British Columbia. It also allows us to reflect how "...Examining them may reveal the degree and direction of a culture's change" (Ridington & Ridington, 2006, 18).

Renovation at the W.A.C Bennett Dam

What collaborative exhibitions seek, in contrast to those they replace, are more accurate translations (Phillips, 2011:201).

The new iteration of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam Visitor Centre consists of two sets of exhibits, those that are featured outside of the Visitor Centre building and those within it. These will be described independently beginning with the exterior exhibitions, moving to the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery, and interior displays.



Figure 14. Entrance to Visitor Centre. Image by M.Poirier

Prior to entering the Visitor Centre, you walk over a large circular map or compass on the ground featuring all of the cardinal directions. It has the town of Hudson’s Hope, BC at its center with silver lines branching out in all directions indicating the position of towns of the Peace region (Tumbler Ridge, Fort St. John, Chetwynd, Pouce Coupe, etc.) and First Nations communities. To the left is a larger “eagle’s eye view” map of the province of British Columbia indicating the same, stretching as far north as Fort Nelson, and Fort Nelson First Nation, as far east as Taylor and Pouce Coupe, B.C. and the community of Kelly Lake Metis Settlement, as far west as the coast line, but indicating Takla Lake First Nation, and as far south as Mackenzie, B.C. and the McLeod Lake Indian Band. The words of Geraldine Gauthier of the Saulneau First Nation are quoted on the map stating,

Our Treaty is sacred to us. As long as the sun shines, the grass is green and the rivers flow, our Treaty will stand forever. This is how our ancestors, grandmothers and grandfathers, have put it so we can benefit from it.

Just below the map is an informative panel “Welcome” which introduces visitors to the center and the territory, including, “...The Peace River region includes the traditional lands and travel routes of the Treaty 8 First nations, non-treaty First Nations and Metis” and ties the “bird’s eye view” map with the directional map below the feet of the visitor. It further introduces the reader by highlighting those who are signatories to Treaty 8, non-treaty and Metis incorporating further direct quotes from community members and historical photographs and a map of Treaty 8 territory.

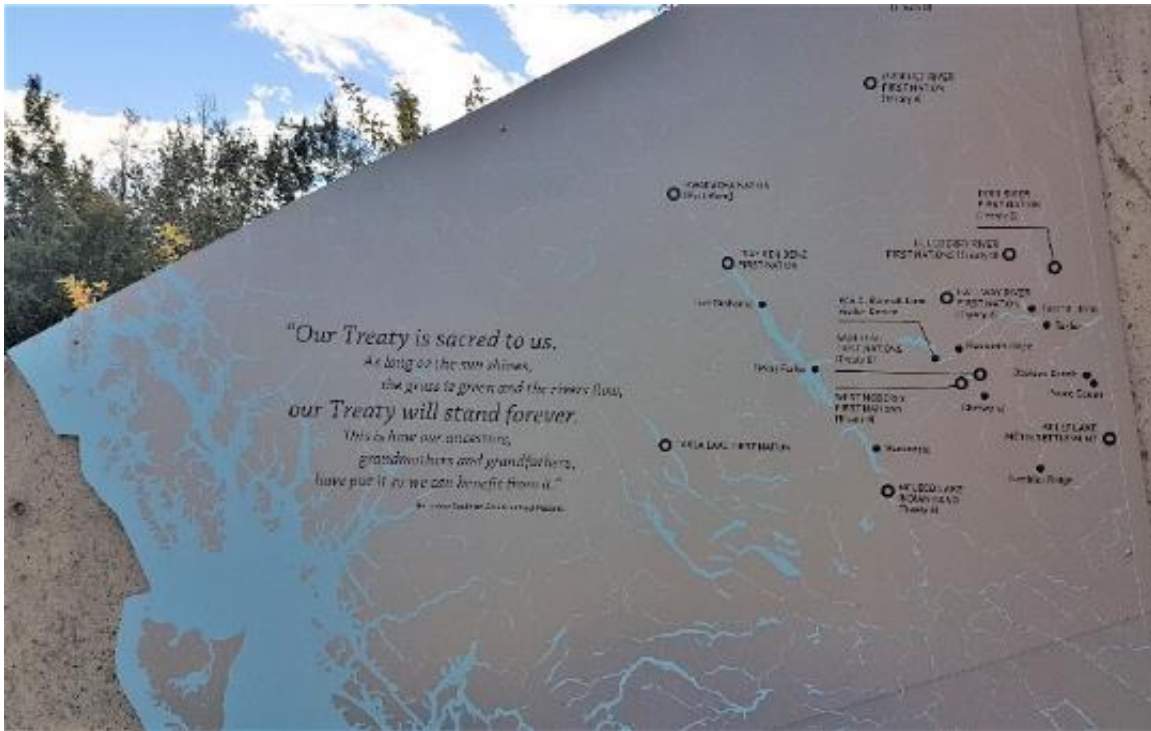


Figure 15. Image of Exhibit Panel by M. Poirier

To the right of the front door, and down slope towards the reservoir there is a large archway “W.A.C. Bennett Dam: Hudson’s Hope, B.C., Canada” constructed of “generator bearing coolers that were used until 2014”. Walking through the archway towards the reservoir and turning right there is a series of outer displays. A gravel path leads visitors to old wicket gates (that control the flow of water into the generating units). As you walk along you encounter a series of imagery of species including the caribou, moose, beaver and elk each with a quote from First Nations community members in

number of displays about “Life on the Land: Aboriginal peoples in the Peace Region are connected to the landscape”. Adjacent and to the left is a metallic stretched moose hide describing the process of stretching and drying, and further along another drying rack illustrating preserving and drying of smaller game. Continuing along the path is a metallic tipi with each its poles inscribed with a word describing its significance and meaning. An example from the associated panel, “The tie binding the first three poles to be put up represents strength. The base of the tipi represents the foundation of values...” (BC Hydro, Visitor Centre). Additionally, a second information panel, “A Home in the Valley” which describes the tipis, lean-tos and log huts that were used as temporary shelters as people moved across the landscape. Information is also provided about the medicinal and food plants within the region.



Figure 16. River Boat Replica. Image by M.Poirier

The last three displays at the end of the path are about movement on the water. They include a metallic Metis Canoe representing the transportation method of the Metis of the Peace region; a metallic flat-bottomed river boat and containers that were often used to haul freight; and a wooden river boat replica constructed by Emil McCook of

Kwadacha First Nation. As the panel states, “Before Europeans arrived in the Peace region, Tsek’ehne people were self-sustaining through hunting and trading with other First Nations. After European contact, these resources diminished and river boats became a lifeline for Tsek’ehne people, providing a livelihood freighting on the rivers and bring supplies to the communities...Kwadacha Tsek’ehne people were closely involved in river freighting”.



Figure 17. Interior of the Visitor Centre. Image by W3 Design.

When you enter the Visitor Centre the front desk is to your left, as well as the attached café and small gift shop area. Exhibits in the facility include the Our Story, Our Voice gallery (which will be discussed shortly), a section on wildlife of the Peace, information about the construction of the facility, including photographs of before, during and after construction which would be similar to those discussed above with the Peace Canyon facility, and displays with a focus on BC Hydro’s PowerSmart initiative which is centered on energy conservation.



Figure 18. Our Story, Our Voice Gallery. Image by M.Poirier.

As above, the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery focuses on the impacts to First Nations communities due to the construction of the dam. It includes historical archival images, maps that indicate the flow of the river as contrasted with the contemporary shoreline of Williston Lake, numerous direct quotes from First Nations community members, and a panel which speaks specifically to the community of Tsay Keh Dene First Nation who declined to participate. At the center of the gallery is a bench, wide enough for three people, where visitors can sit and facing toward the back wall view the film 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017), which plays on loop.

Summary

Michael Rothberg (2009) reminds us that “Memory is not strictly separable from history, but captures simultaneously the individual, embodied and lived side and the collective, social and constructed sides of our relations to the past” (Rothberg, 2009:4). He suggests that memory is multidirectional, meaning it is “...[M]eant to draw attention to the dynamic transfers that take place between diverse places and times during the act of remembrance” (Rothberg, 2009:11) and therefore is subject “to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing and borrowing;[it is] productive [active]...” (Rothberg, 2009:3).

This chapter on Commemorative Centres describes transitions and changing representations of the W.A.C Bennet Dam narrative within Visitor Centre exhibitions. Each utilizes film, contemporary/archival imagery and presents stories of the history of the Bennett Dam. Benedict Anderson suggests that all communities are imagined but are distinguished by their style of imagining (Anderson, 1991:6). These imaginings or presentations of story, memory and history within the exhibitions therefore have the power to shape or craft memory narratives for visitors. As Michelle Henning argues, “Museums and exhibitions through techniques of display and the organization of space and time, attempt to position or organize visitors, to choreograph them, or to direct and mound their attention” (Henning, 2006:2-3).

Awareness of the role of the museum in the colonial project is important in understanding the underlying dynamics of power within the museum space. Museums have presented, “...[C]ultural products of the world [as]...the material for narratives of progress, which make the present order of things seem both natural and inevitable” (Henning, 2006:2). In describing the changes that have occurred over time at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam Visitor Centre, and through utilizing the Peace Canyon Dam exhibits as documentary evidence of the ‘actualities’ of the time and place (Ridington & Ridington, 2006:18) shows past (and changing) dynamics within the museum space and illustrate changing narratives of history and memory, as presented to the public.

Memory is productive and has ability to build new worlds out of the materials of older ones (Rothberg, 2009). This is exemplified in the transitions of the exhibitions and style of imagining, as described, over time This is important as:

...[P]ursuing memory’s multidirectionality encourages us to think of the public sphere as a malleable discursive space in which groups do not

simply articulate established positions but actually come into being through their interaction with others; both the subject and the spaces of the public are open to continual reconstruction (Rothberg, 2009:5).

Visual culture within the museum is a technology of power, and “This power can be used to further democratic possibilities or it can be used to uphold exclusionary values (Hooper-Greenhill, 2002:162). The commemorative centres featured illustrate this power dynamic, and how the renovation of the Visitor Centre seeks to further democratic possibilities in comparison to the exclusionary values in previous iterations. This will be addressed further in the following chapter on films.

Chapter 6.

Films

The following compares and contrasts the content of the two commemorative films featured at the W.A.C Bennett Dam – ‘Canyon of Destiny’ (1968), and ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) - utilizing the theoretical foundations introduced previously. Through this comparison, I hope to illustrate how social memory can challenge official memory, and how “Memory is not strictly separable from history, but captures simultaneously the individual, embodied and lived side and the collective, social and constructed sides of our relations to the past” (Rothberg, 2009:4).

‘Canyon of Destiny’ (1968)

‘Canyon of Destiny’ (1967) is a 28-minute industrial film funded by British Columbia Power and Hydro Authority and created by Lew Perry Film Productions; a Vancouver based film company that operated from 1965-1981. The film, created between 1962 and 1967, illustrates the planning, construction and official opening of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam at Portage Mountain on the Peace River (BC Archives, 2018). It also includes a discussion of the geology of the region. A full transcript of the film that I prepared by listening to the dialogues can be found in Appendix D.

The film ‘Canyon of Destiny’ follows a linear framework as proposed in Eviatar Zerubavel’s concept of linear time or ‘progress’ narratives, which “...[A]lmost invariably play up the theme of development...” (2003:14). As previously stated, within this theme of progressive improvement and emphasis on development would often include the movement towards a “...[D]egree of technological control over our environment” (2003:15), which you will see throughout the film.

‘Canyon of Destiny’ begins with an overview of the opening ceremonies at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam. It pans over a crowd, composed of individuals and workers there to celebrate what has often been called an engineering marvel (‘Canyon of Destiny’, 1968). Described by in the text *Voices from Two Rivers: Harnessing the Power of the Peace and the Columbia*, the opening ceremony was in the fall of 1968 with a crowd of

more than three thousand people. “The event was very much a public celebration” (Stanley, 2010: 71).



Figure 19. Bennett Dam Opening Ceremony. Archival Image 1990.002003 from Hudson's Hope Museum and Archives

As presented earlier, the W.A.C. Bennett Dam is a large earth-filled structure, or embankment dam, consisting of a big pile of soil and rocky heavy and massive enough to resist the hydro-static pressure from its associated reservoir. The Bennett Dam reservoir is Williston Lake, the largest lake in British Columbia, both man-made and natural. It extends approximately 250 km in length, and approximately 150 km wide, with depths up to 500 ft (BC Hydro:2015). Along with a section of the Peace River, the backfilling of the reservoir flooded portions of the Finlay and Parsnip rivers. As such, Williston Lake is now referred to as having three *reaches*, the Peace which extends to the hydroelectric facility in question, the Finlay which stretches north to Fort Ware and the Parsnip, reaching south to the town of Mackenzie. The film, however, does not focus on the reservoir but on the power of the river before it was dammed. The narrator states,

Here was a project wherein man had joined forces with nature to stop an ancient river, to store its mighty waters and harness their wasting power...But what was the background story, how had they achieved this triumph, and what part had nature played in its fulfillment? (BC Hydro, 1968).

In Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1991) he discusses the map as a spatial technology of power and tool of colonization. The map (along with the museum and census) were institutions of power that profoundly shaped the way the colonial state imagined its dominion and presented its legitimacy. The map specifically, helped in creating arbitrary territories and presenting the idea of 'empty spaces'. In a presentation at Arizona State University, Leroy Little Bear (2011) discusses western worldviews desires for quantification and containment of nature. He states,

Western paradigmatic views of science are largely about measurement using Western mathematics. But nature is not mathematical. Mathematics is superimposed on nature like a grid, then examined from that framework. It is like the land survey system: a grid framework of townships, sections, and acres superimposed on the land. These units are not part of the nature of the land (Little Bear, 2011).

The language and imagery in 'Canyon of Destiny' draw on this idea, suggested by Little Bear (2011) that Western paradigmatic views of science are largely about measurement...superimposed on nature like a grid, then examined from that framework. This relates directly the concept of metaphors of knowledge presented earlier, where knowledge is used interchangeably with nature. Dominant within western worldviews are 'knowledge as mechanistic' and 'knowledge as contingent', which link to the scientific method and a man vs. nature perspective.



Figure 20. Surveying the Canyon. Archival Image 1982.PEA.053. Hudson's Hope

'Canyon of Destiny' is comprised of imagery of surveyors and engineers being transported up the Peace Reach in river boats, illustrated within this text through archival imagery from the era. The narration of the film continues with this idea of quantification and "[D]egree of technological control over the environment" (2003:16) suggested by Zerubavel as a primary component of the progress plotline. As Zerubavel suggests, past events are often viewed as an episode, or chapter of a story which make the event historically meaningful (2003:13). Further, by approaching memory from a narratological perspective it is possible to examine the structure of collective narration of the past, just as any fictional story. Examples of episodes are found in the quantification statements within the film.

At the beginning the starting point for the official history of the dam project is established to begin a foundational story.

Our story begins in the Canyon of the Peace, eroded deep into the shale and sandstone of prehistoric time. It was here that engineers started their

first studies of the watershed in 1956. Their objective, to *measure the power of the river* [emphasis mine] and to find a way of harnessing it (BC Hydro, 1968).



Figure 21. Location of Bennett Dam prior to construction. Archival Image 1992.PEA.004 Hudson's Hope Museum and Archives.

The story of the development of the dam project continues with an account of the work of surveying and geological investigations to establish a relationship between the construction concepts and the history of the secrets of the sandstone bluffs. In this way the construction project is linked to a deep geological history of the place.

Four major sites were examined and surveyed within the canyon itself. And the flags of the surveyor became a familiar site up and down 200 miles of the river. Sandstone bluffs *gave up their secrets* [emphasis mine] to the experienced eyes of the geologist (BC Hydro, 1968).

The dam project then becomes a tale of humans joining forces with nature, in a way that exalts human interventions and enhances the value of the landscape.

Here was a project wherein man had joined forces with nature to stop an ancient river, to store its mighty waters, and *harness their wasting power* [emphasis mine] (BC Hydro, 1968).



**Figure 22. Bennett Dam during construction. Archival Image 1981.BEN.015
Hudson's Hope Museum and Archives**

Lastly, it continues to emphasize the human-centric relationship to nature advocated in the ideology of high modernity and settler colonial structures characterized by a belief in science and technology and their ability to benefit society through the domination of nature (Loo, 165).

Nature had provided [emphasis mine] a dam site on a firm foundation and here less than 4 miles away was the moraine of glacial materials cleared of overburden and ready for the job ahead (1968)

These narrative statements, taken from different sections of the film reinforce concepts indicated by Zerubavel (2003) as components of the progress plotline, and also reinforce and illustrate western concepts of land as human-centric.



Figure 23. W.A.C. Bennett Dam During Construction. Archival Image 1981.BEN.004. Hudson's Hope Museum and Archives

The latter half of the film is focused on the construction of the facility and back flooding of the reservoir. Images are of blasting, heavy machinery moving soil and the slow destruction of Portage Mountain to provide material fill for the dam itself. It places emphasis on man's 'triumph over nature', and the ideology of post-World War II modernity and W.A.C Bennett's Social Credit Party. Rosemary Neering summarizes this ideology well as,

When Bennett looked at the province, he saw not the problems of the outback, but the possibilities. In his vision, the silent interior forests were noisy with loggers and sawmills and pulp mills. The tumultuous rivers were tamed, their driving force harnessed through claims to send hydro-electric power to the rest of the province. The blank wilderness [emphasis mine] was scored with blacktop highways and steel rails. Investment, development, industry, communication: these were key to Bennett's vision of B.C. (1981:37).

The blank wilderness that Neering references corresponds with representations of the Rocky Mountain Trench throughout the film, in which there is no mention of the First Nations people of the northeast nor other residents. As in Chapter 3, both in Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* as well as our discussion of settler-colonialism, the narrative and practice of erasure is used as a way of rooting and justifying settler colonial societies on the land (Lowman & Barker, 2015:60, Anderson 1992). This blank wilderness that Neering refers to is *terra nullius* – that the land was empty at the time of occupation. An example of this is the narrative statement and imagery regarding Finlay Forks. Here the narrator states, "*The trading post of Finlay Forks, the one-time trading center of this wilderness is long deserted and ready for the days when the waters will rise and make it only a memory*" (1968). As will be discussed, 'Kwadacha by the River' presents Finlay Forks in an entirely different light, and highlights the *reality effect* that Perry (2005) describes as, "[T]he complex process whereby some history is produced as real and some is rendered invalid or simply invisible" (334).

The above reality is challenged in the 2010 publication *Voices from Two Rivers: Harnessing the Power of the Peace and the Columbia* - a commemorative coffee table book to celebrate the 50th anniversary of BC Hydro, comprised of archival, documentary research and interviews – in which Meg Stanley for the BC Hydro Power Pioneers writes,

Eyewitness accounts from Finlay Forks stress that sawmill operators, loggers and Tsek'ehne in the Finlay Fort area were all caught by surprise by the rising water. Cattermole Timber abandoned its mill, loggers woke up to find their tents floating, and Tsek'ehne families retreated repeatedly as the water advanced" (2010:110-111).

'Canyon of Destiny' (1968) favors western paradigms of knowledge, and is an example of the metaphor of knowledge, in viewing knowledge as mechanistic. This is exemplified throughout the film's narration with an emphasis on discovery and quantification, presentation of time as linear (both in style and narrative) with a future orientation. The film highlights a relationship to land that is economically driven and human centric. Large-scale, state-directed environmental exploitation drove the rise of British Columbia. Tina Loo (2004) states,

For Bennett and his Social Credit party, making British Columbia modern depended on conquering the province's geography and realizing the

economic potential of its forests, fisheries, rivers and minerals through massively capitalized resource development (2004:162)

The film also participates in Indigenous erasure from the landscape as exemplified through its presentation and representation of Finlay Forks. In *Grounded Normativity/Place Based Solidarity* (2016), Coulthard and Simpson write,

As a settler-colonial power, Canada has structured its relationship to Indigenous peoples primarily through the dispossession of Indigenous bodies from Indigenous lands and by impeding and systematically regulating the generative relationships and practices that create and maintain Indigenous nationhood's, political practices, sovereignties and solidarities (254).

'Canyon of Destiny' reflects the presentation of the dominant history and memory of the construction of the W.A.C Bennett Dam as a sign of 'progress' linked with modernity and the *Rise of British Columbia* (1983), which is ultimately an exclusionary and unidirectional narrative.

'Kwadacha by the River' (2017)

'Kwadacha by the River' is a short film (18:30 minutes) created in partnership by Lantern Films and Kwadacha First Nation. In the synopsis of the film submitted for the NSI Online Short Film Festival [National Screen Institute] states, "Decades after being flooded out of their territory by a hydroelectric dam, the Indigenous northern BC community of Kwadacha grapples with the cultural and social impact that the loss of their land has on their heritage" (National Film Institute, 6 February 2018).

The film is broken roughly into three parts: Part one emphasizes the landscape and movement of people: Part two emphasizes the flooding and changes to the landscape: and, Part 3 is comprised of an animation that tells the story of Finlay Forks.

Visual sovereignty, as introduced in the theoretical foundations chapter of this thesis, is comprised of several attributes or lessons, as Randolph Lewis (2006) outlines in his analysis of the work of documentary filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin. These seven attributes are described as: 1) sovereign gaze; 2) authority; 3) autonomy; 4) epistemological foundation; 5) accountability' 6) ethical relationship and 7) art (2006:182-192). These attributes are evident throughout the film, and as will be discussed in the

following Chapter, were expressed in the method of creation when collaboration on the film was occurring. Exploration of the seven attributes are found in analysis of the films.

The narration of the film features the recorded voices of 12 elders in Kwadacha. As Robina Thomas highlights in *Honouring the Oral Traditions of My Ancestors through Storytelling* (2005), stories act as resistance to colonialism, and “Many stories from First Nations tell a counter story to that of the documented history of First Nations in Canada...[and] are very important because they give us teachings that allow us to continue to hear and document those counter stories – our truths” (Thomas, 2005:241). The voice and experience of Kwadacha elders highlights the epistemological foundations of the film, which are rooted in respect for ways of knowing and remembering that come from lived experience.

‘Kwadacha by the River’ follows a *cyclical* or *rhyming* framework as outlined by Zerubavel, in which occurrences are seen to be somewhat *cyclical*, much like while years progress (*linear*), the changing of the seasons remain the same (Zerubavel, 2003:23-25). This pattern is found in both the structure of the film and the narrative. The decline plotline, with an emphasis on *deterioration* (2003:16) and nostalgia with a focus on the past, is also relevant. As Zerubavel highlights, “... [M]any decline narratives are in fact a reaction to the overly optimistic belief in progress...” (2003:18), as suggested by the synopsis referenced above. The film moves back and forth in time, as the elders share their memories and stories, “The story and the storyteller...connect the past with the future, one generation with the other, the land with the people and the people with the story” (Tuhiwai-Smith, 1999:146).



Figure 24. Still image of Fort Ware from 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:00:38)

The introduction to the film begins with the following statements, narrated over an image of the community. The narrator (an Elder of Kwadacha) shares, “In 1961 BC Hydro began to build the Bennett Dam. One of the largest dams in the world. This is the story of what happened to us”, [followed by] “Kwadacha” means ‘by the river’ you know. We come from Kwadacha. That is what it means”, [and concluding with] “We live in northern British Columbia. Our territory stretches from Summit Lake far into the Rocky Mountains” (Kwadacha First Nation & Lantern Films, 2017: 0:00:38).

Here the concept of sovereignty (and is related to visual sovereignty) and its synonyms of jurisdiction, power, authority and control emerge. The introduction to the film asserts authority and control in the statement “This is the story of what happened to us”, as well as jurisdiction in the statements, “We come from Kwadacha...Our territory stretches from Summit Lake far into the Rocky Mountains”.

These statements are both strong and powerful. Aural and visual mnemonic triggers illustrate relationships to the land throughout the film. “I can close my eyes even yet and picture the way it was. The cut banks, this little flat over here and we could see the geese taking off in the summer and I, I can still picture that in my mind” (Elsie Arthurs, Kwadacha by the River, 2017) all of which are rooted to landscape and the changes to the surrounding environment. As stated in the introduction, *Kwadacha*

means 'by the river', and many statements are made about the river, the sights, the smells, and movement of people across the landscape. In *Disturbing the Peace: Environmental Change and the Scales of Justice on a Northern River* (2007) Tina Loo writes of W.A.C. Bennett Dam and the changes that occurred within the Rocky Mountain Trench. The recorded changes are vast and include increased wind, colder temperatures, and humidity, not to mention the impact of flooding on fish and wildlife populations. She writes of the environmental effects that occurred, but also,

It was the meaning of change and the human scale at which it was experienced that was fundamental to understanding the possibilities and challenges of doing environmental justice...For a minority of people, many of whom were Aboriginal, environmental change meant dependence, isolation, alienation, and illness. When the peoples of the Peace lost their farms and trap lines, they lost more than the land that fed them; they lost their autonomy (Loo, 2007:905).

Leanne Simpson (2011) writes of the Nishnaabeg experience of landscape destruction due to forestry activities, which relates to the loss of autonomy that Loo references above. She states,

[W]hen a trapline is clear-cut a trapper loses much more than his or her livelihood. The community loses food, medicines, and places to hunt, fish and gather. Families lose opportunities to travel on the land and be together. Animals, the clans that inform traditional governance and provide personal direction, lose places to live and food to eat. Spiritual places are destroyed and with them opportunities to maintain alliances with the essential forces of nature, the very alliances that are responsible for the transmission of Indigenous knowledge (2004:379).

This deterioration of the landscape as a result of industrial impacts emphasized both in the film and in Simpson's statement above refers to the destruction of traditional lifeways of the Tsek'ehne peoples.

The final component of the film is a story and animation that highlight the dangers of the newly flooded reservoir and *destruction of traditional lifeways* mentioned above. It takes place at Finlay Forks. Finlay Forks is a common thread in both films. It was where the Parsnip and Finlay rivers joined to form the Peace River before the area was flooded to create the reservoir for the Bennett Dam.



Figure 25. Still image of Finlay Forks before the reservoir from 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:06:38)

In direct contrast to the story of Finlay Forks within 'Canyon of Destiny' (1968) where the narrator describes the trading post of Finlay Forks, the one-time trading center of this wilderness is long deserted and ready for the days when the waters will rise and make it only a memory (1968) the elders speak of the use of Finlay Forks during the flooding of the reservoir with memories such as, "I got to Finlay Forks there in July. That thing was coming up like 4 feet a day", and "At Finlay Forks they just had to keep moving up higher and higher until they were just about right up against the mountain" (Kwadacha First Nation & Lantern Films, 2017). Its continued use after the flooding of the reservoir when mobility had been limited.



Figure 26. Still image of location of Finlay Forks after reservoir from 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:06: 45)

The animation tells the story of an incident that occurred on the lake after the flooding. In an introduction to the story, a speaker states, “My Uncle Art, the lake swamped his boat...” (Kwadacha First Nation & Lantern Films, 2017). Those who were on the boats had gone out to get supplies for the community including tanks of fuel that were being carried within flat-bed river boats (the primary mode of transportation on the river until the flooding of the reservoir). The increase in wind through the Rocky Mountain Trench after the flooding of the reservoir – “The Peace River wind they call it. When it blows, it’s just too much for that lake, eh?” – caused large swells on the lake, which would end up overtaking one of the river boats causing it to be submerged. A rescue was undertaken by a second boat, discarding fuel and other supplies to ensure the boat remained above water while those who had been thrown into the waters of Williston Lake were rescued from possible drowning. As told at the conclusion of the animation, “So that was a big scare of our life for all of us...” and text would re-iterate the narrative of *deterioration* with the statement, “The flooding made river travel impossible, destroying the way of life of the Tsek’ehne peoples”. The animation was described in conversations with the filmmakers as a vital component of the film and will be further discussed in following chapters.



Figure 27. Still image of animation of capsized river boat from 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:08:27)

The representation of Finlay Forks within 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) is in direct conflict with the dominant narrative as presented in 'Canyon of Destiny' (1968). Adele Perry (2005) had highlighted how, "... The colonial archive can alternatively work to defend or challenge the states that sustain them" (327). Throughout the film archival images are incorporated. These images, when compared with those from 'Canyon of Destiny' (1968), are similar in what is represented (the boats used to survey the Rocky Mountain Trench, images of the river prior to backfilling of the reservoir) but are associated with different language, and memories. These images illustrate the power of memory as a form of *work, labour or action* with the ability to "...[B]uild new worlds out of the materials of old ones (Rothberg, 2009:5), and shows how archival materials and story illustrate "...[T]hat both oral and written history are 'structured, interpretive, and combative" (Perry, 2005:335) and through memory, story, and archival materials challenges are raised about assumptions about history.



Figure 28. Still image of river boat on Williston Lake from 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:09:22)

Robina Thomas tells us that, “Storytelling also taught us about resistance to colonialism.... All stories have something to teach us. What is important is learning to listen, not simply hear, the words storytellers have to share” (2005:241). ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) follows the pattern of decline as described by Zerubavel in *Time Maps*, but while describing the devastation, also highlights the strength of the Tsek’ehne people and through its narrative style also highlights a cyclical or rhyming pattern. The film acts as an example of visual sovereignty as the filmmakers and producers present a counter-narrative to the dominant progress narrative within the northeast.

Summary

The two films, ‘Canyon of Destiny’ and ‘Kwadacha by the River’, while both featured at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam Visitor Centre, have never been presented together. After the renovation of the Visitor Centre in 2015, the condensed 10-minute version of the film ‘Canyon of Destiny’ was removed from the tour offered to the public. ‘Kwadacha by the River’ is currently featured in the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery, on loop.

The film ‘Canyon of Destiny’ much like the iteration of the Visitor Centre where it was featured, presented a linear, ‘progress’ narrative, that was complicit in the erasure

of Indigenous bodies from the landscape. 'Kwadacha by the River' is a powerful contrast to this erasure because it inserts Indigenous presence and stories on-screen in the Visitor Centre. As Michelle Henning argues, "Museums and exhibitions through techniques of display and the organization of space and time, attempt to position or organize visitors, to choreograph them, or to direct and mound their attention" (Henning, 2006:2-3), and furthermore she, like Anderson (1991), emphasizes how museums have presented, "...[C]ultural products of the world [as]...the material for narratives of progress, which make the present order of things seem both natural and inevitable" (Henning, 2006:2). The Visitor Centre and films within our case study do not emphasize artifacts or objects but do work to compose a narrative about the history of hydroelectricity within British Columbia, and craft memory of the structure.

As described, visual culture within the museum is a technology of power, and "This power can be used to further democratic possibilities or it can be used to uphold exclusionary values (Hooper-Greenhill, 2002:162). This case study speaks to this dynamic. Concepts of sovereignty are important when comparing and contrasting the dominant and alternative memory narratives surrounding the Bennett Dam as a site of memory.

As Karmen Crey has stated, "Visual sovereignty...can be extended to the kind of irruptions that Indigenous filmmakers and producers create while working "within" state and dominant representational systems and institutions...[and] engage in complex and critical ways within the political, social and cultural areas and discourses through which they create their work" (Crey, 2016:24). The use of technologies and the act of 'making and doing', or 'presencing' (Simpson, 2011: 92-93),"...emphasizes the necessity of creative material practices, measures and tactics that regenerate connections to bodies, land, territories and community" (Vellino, 2018:131).

The impacts of industrial development on the landscape, whether in the form of hydroelectric development, oil & gas, mining, forestry or the fur trade have had implications on the traditional lifeways of the Indigenous communities of the Peace River region. Testimony from individuals involved in the creation of 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) provides additional insights into the attitudes and motivations of creators involved in the film production.

Chapter 7.

Creative Collaborations

In exploring creative collaboration in the context of the W.A.C Bennett Dam, I rely on my conversations with participants in the film-making project, Lindsay Thompson, Mitchell McCook and Jessica Hallenbeck to provide insights into the process and acts of creation, as well as on testimonies presented in the film and documentary research (including statements on the film website). This off-screen production process, and the choices and collaboration involved are, as highlighted by Kirstin L. Dowell in *Sovereign Screens*, crucial in understanding media production as an act of sovereignty. She states, “ Filmmaking is an inherently social process that often requires the labour of numerous individuals in order to complete a project...The production process creates more than merely a set of film or video footage; it is a process through which Aboriginal social relationships can be created, negotiated and nurtured. Translating an Indigenous story to screen is an *active process*...” (2013:2-3). To understand the *active process* of off-screen production and what this suggests in relation to the larger guiding questions of this thesis, I needed a framework through which to approach my conversations with Thompson, McCook, and Hallenbeck, and the stories of their experiences

Taking from the influence of Wemigwans, I have looked for themes within these conversations from Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s 25 projects, found in *Decolonizing Methodologies*. As cited by Wemigwans (2018) the “...[T]wenty-five projects are not a definitive list of activities but an attempt to bolster Indigenous communities, researchers and activists with the information that there are processes and methodologies that can work for them (1999, 161)...[and] represent methodologies concerned with the broader politics and strategic goals of Indigenous research (1999, 143). My conversations with Thompson, McCook and Hallenbeck, suggest that the act of making and the choices made during film and exhibition production were a result of an underlying ethics or belief in methodologies that supported the goals of the Indigenous communities involved. Elements of this practice are found in the projects highlighted by Tuhiwai-Smith in *Decolonizing Methodologies*. In particular, this thesis will focus on the following five themes - storytelling, survivance, reading, representing and creating. Using Tuhiwai-

Smiths detailed definitions of the concepts, I analysed the interviews and determined which were featured in depiction of their creation process.

Themes

Tuhiwai Smith's twenty-five projects provide a starting point for analysis of collaborative and ethical research methodologies and practices put into place during the act of creation of both the film and exhibitions (but with emphasis on the film, 'Kwadacha by the River') as discussed with the research participants. Not all of the twenty-five projects are applicable. Themes that came up in our conversations and are evident in creative collaborative efforts of this case study are storytelling, celebrating survival (survivance in Tuhiwai Smith's terminology), reading, representing and creating.

Storytelling

Storytelling as described by Tuhiwai Smith (1999) elaborates on the integral role that story, oral history, and the role of Elders and women play in research practices. Reflecting of the films, this is illustrated through the voices of the twelve elders who spoke in 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017).

Kwadacha Elders who shared their stories are: Mike Abou, Elsie Arthurs, Craig McCook, Emil McCook, Leena McCook, Johnny Poole, Mary Jean Poole, Willie Poole, Laura Seymour, Bill Van Somer, Shirley Van Somer, and Annie Timmins. The following are images of the Elders featured in the film, and a few small moments from the stories they share.



Figure 29. Still Image of Mary Jean and Willie Poole, Kwadacha Elders from 0:01:03 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017).

While sitting together, Mary Jean reflects on the past use of the landscape. She shares, "They know everything off the land, they use everything off the land. For everything you do. They make their own moccasins, all their clothing. I wish it would be like that again. I just wish" ('Kwadacha by the River, 2017: 0:01:03-0:01:06).



Figure 30. Still image of Emil McCook from the film 'Kwadacha by the River' (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:01:24).

Kwadacha Elder and former Chief, Emil McCook, mentions the practice of trapping within the community. He shares, “ We were all trappers then, eh? And we were able to use the Finlay River for transporting our goods and for travelling” (Kwadacha First Nation,2017:.0:01:24-0:01:40)



Figure 31. Archival footage of flat bottomed river boat from the film ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:01:40).



Figure 32. Still image of Kwadacha Elder Bill Van Somer from film ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017:0:01:43).

Bill Van Somer reflects on the presence of trappers on the landscape He shares, “There was trappers every ten probably fifteen miles. Right from Summit Lake right to Fort Ware” (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:01:38-0:01:46)



Figure 33. Still image of Kwadacha Elder, Johnny Poole from film ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:02:00).

Johnny Poole reflects on the time to travel from Fort Ware to McLeod Lake and the practices that took place during that travel time. He states, “When they take their time it takes about two weeks a little longer to take a trip from here to McLeod Lake. And sometimes they would smoke or make dried meat along the river” (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017:0:02:00-0:02:04).

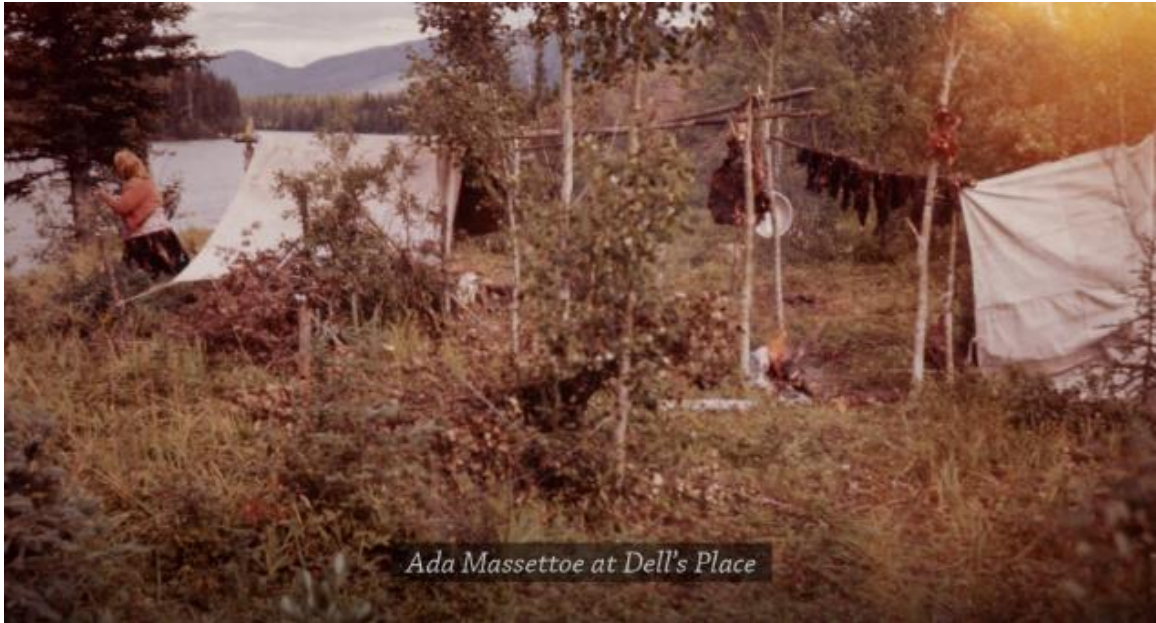


Figure 34. Still image from 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) of community photos of dried meat as described by Johnny Poole (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017:0:01:59).



Figure 35. Still image of Kwadacha Elder Laura Seymour from 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017:0:02:11).

Laura Seymour reflects on practice of people living along the riverways. She shares, "People living along the river always. You could land and visit them. Sometimes them do their camping. You just land by them and spend the night. Pitch your tent and

spend the night. Visit with them and keep going. I traveled lots when I was young. I wish those were the days again” (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:02:11-0:02:40).



Figure 36. Still image of Craig and Leena McCook from ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017:0:02:50).

Leena McCook, sitting with Craig, reflects on her experiences camping along the river. She shares, “I remember camping around there beside the river and it was just like everything just looked so clean, the water looked sparkly, and people were just enjoying themselves camping and I do remember a lot of great memories” (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:02:50-0:03:06).

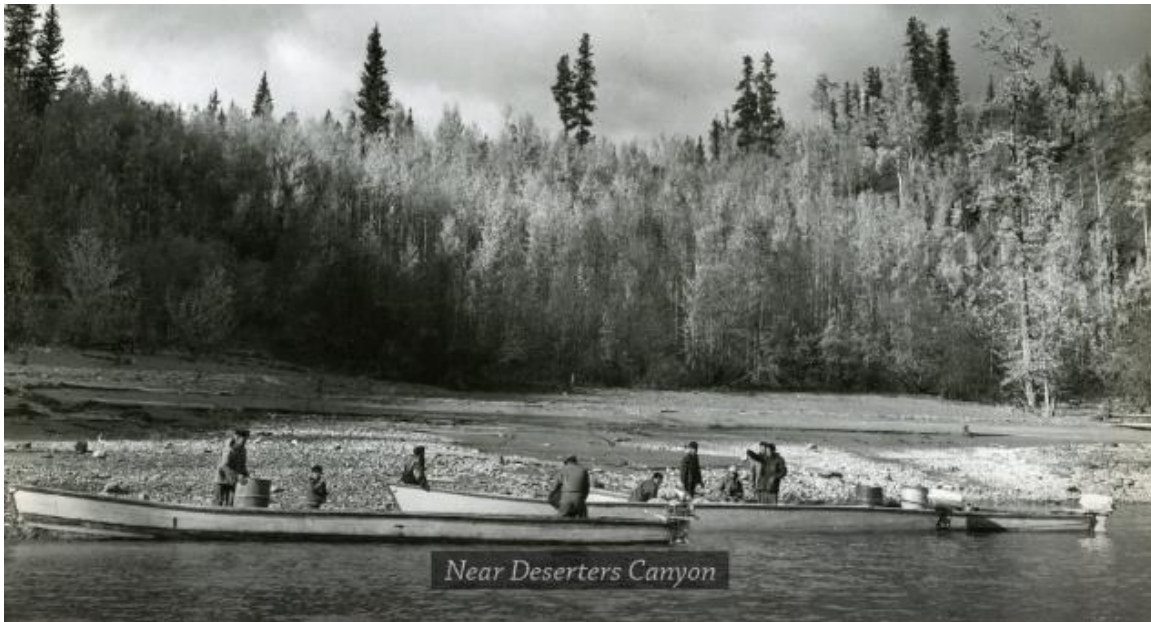


Figure 37. Still image of archival image ‘Near Deserters Canyon’ from ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017:0:03:07).



Figure 38. Still image of Kwadacha Elders Shirly Van Somer, Elsie Arthurs, and Anne Timmins from ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017:0:03:17).

Elsie Arthurs shares her memories of the river before the construction of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam. She shares, “ I can close my eyes even yet and picture the way it was. The cut banks, and this little flat over here. And we would see geese taking off in

front of us in the summer time. I can still picture that in my mind” (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:03:06-0:03:21). She further shares, “ Oh my god, and Ingenika was so beautiful, the river water there was just absolutely turquoise. I wouldn’t be able to tell you now, after the waters came, where any of that is. I don’t have a clue. At all.” (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:03:23-0:03:40).



Figure 39. Still image of photograph of Rocky Mountain Trench from ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017:0:03:28).



Figure 40. Still image of Kwadacha Elder Mike Abou from 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017:0:04:48)

Mike Abou's reflections are about the impacts of the construction of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam on the community. He shares, "Everybody was pretty mad about that. Everybody say go find that guy, Bennett guy, bend him over that Dam. Make him swallow his Dam, they said" (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017 0:04:48 – 0:05:06).



Figure 41. Still image of archival photograph ‘W.A.C. Bennett at the Bennett Dam’ from ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) (Kwadacha First Nations, 2017: 0:04:58).



Figure 42. Still image of Chief Danny Van Somer from ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017:0:05:10).

Chief Danny Van Somer reflects on the backfilling of the reservoir and the rapidly rising waters of Williston Lake. He shares, “ The Government and BC Hydro they had no idea what they were doing. The water was coming up like amazingly fast. I watched it

come up over like a little hill, or a roadway or a little trail” (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:05:10-0:05:21).

Storytelling as described by Tuhiwai Smith (1999) elaborates on the integral role that story, oral history, and the role of Elders and women play in research practices. The film, ‘Kwadacha by the River’ uses the land, memories and stories of Elders of Kwadacha to document personal knowledge of the impacts of the construction of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam. As Dowell (2013) suggests, “Many elders embrace the technology of video production for its powerful potential to carry on their knowledge and stories, creating a lasting legacy for future generations” and furthermore that “...[M]edia technology becomes a crucial link between the generations, helping to forge kinship relationships and intergenerational ties” (Dowell,2013:127). This is apparent throughout the production process. The power of storytelling, and the voices of elders as expressed within the film ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) and as seen in the exhibitions (although not highlighted here) is also found in the second theme, reading.

Reading

Reading refers to “...deconstructed accounts of the West, its history through the eyes of Indigenous and colonized people” (1999:15). A critical reading of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam’s history and the restructuring of the exhibits and creation of film speaks to this theme as, as suggested by Julie Cruikshank (1998:104) stories and images are part of “...the cultural equipment used to think about and engage in reproducing or transforming complex human relationships” (Cruikshank, 1998:104).

Voices from the Kwadacha Elders emphasize this idea through the practice of storytelling. The narrative of ‘progress’ in the Peace region and surrounding the construction of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam as an ‘industrial marvel’ is countered by the lived experience of Kwadacha First Nations, and the other Indigenous communities in the Peace. Within the film, ‘Kwadacha by the River’ elders reflect on the impacts of the flooding of the reservoir, Williston Lake. Elder Bill Van Somer remembers:

“I got there to Finlay Forks there in June. That thing was coming up about 3 feet a day” (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:05:23-0:05:28).



Figure 43. Still image of Williston Lake Reservoir and the debris therein from ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:06:17).

This is followed by the voice of Chief Danny Von Somer, who speaks to memories of the destruction caused by the backfilling of the reservoir and the lack of logging. He shares, “There was an amazing amount of timber that was left. There was miles and miles of islands of debris floating and blocking all the waterways. I didn’t know what it meant but I did see a lot of devastation” (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017, 0:06:21 - 0:06:36)

In speaking with Lindsay Thompson of BC Hydro she shared that the goal from BC Hydro’s perspective of the project -both the film and the creation of the gallery *Our Story, Our Voice* – was,

[T]he basic principles were that Hydro didn’t want to tell the First Nations story. We didn’t want to script it, or write the story. That is why the gallery [Our Story, Our Voice] is all in quotations from people, from the Nations, so we weren’t editing it, weren’t scripting it, censoring it. You know what I mean? We wanted it to be their voice not ours. Because it’s not our story to tell (L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018).



Figure 44. Image of quote wall in Our Story, Our Voice gallery. Image from W3 Media.

BC Hydro’s perspective on the project also speaks to the theme of Reading as “...deconstructed accounts of the West, its history through the eyes of Indigenous and colonized people” (1999:15), as Lindsay Thompson expresses:

We wanted it to be their story from their perspective and really it was the first time I think that Hydro has ever had the Nations tell their perspectives and their story about building a facility...It [Visitor Centre exhibitions] kind of tells the cultural use of the land and it is a really different way, I think, than other cultures, especially Western culture, engages with and thinks of the land (L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018).

This leads us into the third theme, the theme of celebrating survival-survance (Tuhiwai-Smith, 1999:136).

Celebrating survival – survance

As discussed by Simpson (2011:88), Tuhiwai Smith also references the work of Gerald Vizenor with the term *survance*, which instead of focusing effort on research that centers or documents demise, “...accentuates the degree to which Indigenous

peoples and communities have retained cultural and spiritual values and authenticity in resisting colonialism” (1999:136).

Julie Cruikshank highlights themes that emerged in her work in the Yukon with subarctic Indigenous communities that are relevant here in this concept of *survivance*. She states,

[E]lders spoke about the continuing importance of *words*, insisting that people still make use of long-standing narrative traditions to think about life. Oral tradition does not simply tell us about the past, they stated emphatically; it continues to provide guidelines for the present and to lay a foundation for thinking about the future (Cruikshank, 1998:103).

An example of *survivance* and how power of stories to *provide a foundation for thinking about the future* highlighted above was clear in interviews with Jessica Hallenbeck and Mitchell McCook. McCook emphasized that while the film highlights the story of Kwadacha, that there are many First Nations that share a similar story. He shares,

People need to know the story and I am glad that we have this documentary to show for people to understand it. There is a lot of healing in this process. You can almost see; you can feel it (M. McCook, personal communication, 2018).

As Mitchell McCook shared, Jessica Hallenbeck also highlights the strength of the community of Kwadacha. She shares:

Kwadacha put in a ton of time and resources as well and because it was something that they really wanted to have done [the film]. I think that is really important [to highlight]. They also had healing sessions along the way because this was a story that people hadn't necessarily talked to each other about in that way for a long time (J. Hallenbeck, personal communication, 2018).

Mitchell McCook (personal communication, 2018) provides a specific example of the strength of community and positive power of creating 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017). He shares:

One of the things was doing research for the project. Interviewing all the elders. It brought us together as a group. I really enjoyed that part. Going to certain locations. The Elders would point out what they would do. Showing stuff on a map. They would be telling us stories that they wouldn't otherwise tell us and it really...they were very willing to share...[T]hese are the stories that people lived through...Some of the

Elders opened up in a totally different way and they didn't share it as much earlier as they do now (M. McCook, personal communication, 2018).

This leads into the next theme, representing.

Representing

Representation refers both to a political project as well to creative self-representation as discussed with the concept of visual sovereignty. The emphasis on the voice of communities and control of content in the process of filmmaking and exhibition design is found within this theme. Examples of this can be found in interviews with Jessica Hallenbeck (2018), Lindsay Thompson (2018), and Mitchell McCook (2018).

Jessica Hallenbeck (personal communication,2018) highlighted that process that was put in place to ensure that the community of Kwadacha retained control of the filmmaking process and content of 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017). She shares:

[W]e negotiated a Protocol Agreement that was between Hydro and Kwadacha and that kind of set the terms...That set the terms for copyright, who owns the material, how that material could be used. So, basically the consent process from the community superseded any timelines although it was informally agreed upon that we would try to, that all interested parties would try to have the film ready to be shown when the Visitor Centre was first opened (J. Hallenbeck, personal communication, 2018).

This emphasis on control and consent was also found in interview with Lindsay Thompson (personal communication,2018) in regard to the construction of the exhibitions at the Visitor Centre. She begins by explaining how the Peace Aboriginal Advisory Council (that consulted and controlled the direction of the exhibition) was formed:

[W]e invited 13 First Nations and Metis to join and send cultural representatives from their communities. So, it was through the committee that we walked through their ideas for content and the committee basically designed the exhibit and the content (L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018).

Further to this, Thompson elaborated on the process of how community representatives were chosen, and the how this relates to the direct quotations that are featured in the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery. In regard to cultural representatives from each community she shares:

[W]e went to each of the communities and they got to nominate who they wanted. We asked for consistency, just because it is very difficult to move a project forward if we aren't getting the same people but we had two representatives from their community that seemed to be quite consistent over the 18 to 24 months (L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018).

The quotes featured in the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery were taken from those cultural representatives nominated by the communities that made up the Peace Aboriginal Advisory Council as well as taken from Site C Joint Review Panel reports. The idea behind this is shared as being:

[W]e did go through and mine those reports for some quotes from certain people and then the community members went back to the people who had the direct quote so it was more inclusive (L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018).

Keeping the larger community's membership involved was also detailed as important and described as:

[R]epresentatives from each community led presentations to their Chief and Council to make sure that the community was engaged and aware of what was going on and approved of the direction and content (L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018).

Lastly, Thompson emphasized really engaging the communities, letting the communities drive the content and ensuring that communities had decision making authority on signing off of exhibits (personal communication, 2018). This leads into the fifth and final theme, creating (Tuhivai Smith, 1999:159).

Creating

In creating, Tuhivai Smith (1999) describes, "The project of creating is about transcending the basic survival mode through using a resource or capability that every Indigenous community has retained throughout colonization – the ability to create and be creative....Creating is not the exclusive domain of the rich, nor of the technologically superior, but of the imaginative...[It is] about channeling collective creativity..." (159). This is apparent in conversations about community work prior to and evident during the film and exhibition.

Prior to the collaboration that resulted in the exhibition and film at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, Kwadacha First Nation was utilizing creative practice and media tools

within the community. In conversation with Mitchell McCook, he shared a few examples of this:

First it was pictures. We have grants that we apply for yearly, and the original idea was for pictures. So I took it a step further and we should try film. And not only film our – I remember the first few culture camps that I went to I did interviews and I started filming everything. Whatever they did. You know, a race. I just started filming everything and it just snowballed from there (M. McCook, personal communication, 2018).

Mitchell McCook emphasized the importance of creative and media practice when reflecting on favorite moments from the experience of working on the project and filming within the community. He stated,

The favorite – there are a couple. One was when we had to film one of the Elders who has passed away now. It is so valuable to have that interview that we have with him. A few of them now. And you can't put a price on it. They will be there and have them on film and I am so glad that we had the opportunity to get them to do the interview (M. McCook, personal communication, 2018).

Theses thematic areas provide insights into ways participants conceive of their work as activities that engage with the projects as collaboration, involving both creative workers and communities who share their experiences.

Collaboration

...[W]hile a collaborative project takes longer to develop than a conventional exhibition, the added investment of time allows the project to become a much more effective site for research, education and innovation (Phillips, 2011:191).

Phillips (2011) distinguishes between two forms of collaborative exhibits: the community-based exhibition and the multivocal. In this case, the community-based exhibition is pertinent but not directly applicable. As Phillips also suggests, no collaborative exhibition is the same in the method employed and collaboration should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Key elements of the collaborative exhibition include but are not limited to identification of themes, writing of text panels, object selection and can include training and capacity building for community members. In this case, collaboration also includes the community as final arbiter of content, and the extension of space and incorporation

of new meanings to objects that visitors would have seen previously exclusively from one perspective (Leers & Brown, 2003: 168). Lastly, “Community consultants and advisory committees have long been features of exhibition development...” (Phillips, 2011:88). As part of the design process for the renovation of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam Visitor Centre, a Peace Aboriginal Advisory Council was established. This aspect of exhibition development can contribute to shifts in power relations (Ames in Phillips, 2011:188).

Emphasized in all interviews, but with particular focus by Lindsay Thompson and Jessica Hallenbeck (and as expressed in the five themes discussed above) was the desire by all parties for the voice of the Indigenous communities of the Peace region and their experience of the construction of the facility to be expressed without interference. Jessica Hallenbeck (personal communication, 2018) expressed her surprise at the process of collaboration with BC Hydro. The following asserts aspects of a “re-alignment of power, achieved through a redistribution of authority” (Phillips,2011:188) within the production off-screen and background production processes of the exhibitions and film. Hallenbeck shares:

I think I was maybe a bit cynical about BC Hydro potentially controlling the process and they were actually very supportive. Lindsay was especially very supportive of the film being made and they put a lot of resources into it. They bought equipment for the community and we would have a lot of feasts and for me that was pretty – quite – surprising (J. Hallenbeck, personal communication, 2018).

In reflecting on the two-year development process of ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017), -which is outside of the Peace Region Advisory Committee but still within the larger project of the development of the Visitor Centre- she states,

I definitely think that Kwadacha had control over the content. And that they had control over the process and what that looks like and took that in specific directions (J. Hallenbeck, personal communication, 2018).

Lindsay Thompson recognized and speaks to the concern (as Hallenbeck expressed) about BC Hydro retaining control, authority or manipulating the story as desired by the Peace Aboriginal Advisory Committee. She states:

I think there is a lot of valid fear. You know you are redoing the Visitor Centre and your story is always about you know these engineering marvels and how great these dams are and how great electricity and

Powersmart [BC Hydro initiative] is, etc. But that is where I think there is a fear about how we are going to manipulate their story to fit in and I think that they really didn't believe that we would tell their story the way they wanted it told. Uncensored, raw, true and true to them. (L.Thompson, personal communication, 2018)

As highlighted previously, under the theme 'reading' (see pg. 88-89), the goal of the restructuring and redevelopment of the Visitor Centre exhibits was to:

[F]acilitate and help bring the committee's vision to life... We wanted it to be their story from their perspective and really it was the first time I think that Hydro has ever had the Nations tell their perspectives and their story about building a facility...It [the Visitor Centre exhibitions] kind of tells the cultural use of the land and it is a really different way, I think, than other cultures, especially Western culture, engages with and thinks of the land (L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018).

A re-alignment of power, as suggested by Michael Ames (Phillips, 2011:188) is linked to the concept of visual sovereignty. Visual Sovereignty refers to "a creative act of self-representation that has the potential to both undermine stereotypes of Indigenous peoples and to strengthen what Robert Warrior has called the "intellectual health" of communities in the wake of genocide and colonialism (Raheja, 2007:1161).

A realignment of power as seen through a creative act of self-representation is illustrated in the changes in exhibition over time at the commemorative centres, and is located within collaborative act of making that went into the exhibition and film. Indigenous bodies are presented on the landscape within the digital storytelling practice of filming 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017), and in the production of collaborative exhibits at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam. This will be discussed in the following section.

Visual Sovereignty

Creative collaborative efforts at the W.A.C Bennett Dam resulted in creative acts of self-representation, and a realignment of power, achieved through a redistribution of authority. This production process, and the choices and collaboration involved are, as highlighted by Kirstin L. Dowell in the text *Sovereign Screens*, crucial in understanding media production as an act of sovereignty. Dowell roots visual sovereignty in the "acts of media production [emphasis mine]" (Dowell, 2013: 107). While she speaks to the filmmaking, this can be applied to all aspects of creation within the case study. Dowell highlights the "...tremendous off screen impact that Aboriginal media can have within

Aboriginal families and communities...[as]...an activity around which Aboriginal kinship and social relationships are nurtured and maintained...[and]...helps bridge the ruptures that colonial policies have wrought on Aboriginal family and community structures” (2013: 107). She further states, “ Filmmaking is an inherently social process that often requires the labour of numerous individuals in order to complete a project...The production process creates more than merely a set of film or video footage; it is a process through which Aboriginal social relationships can be created, negotiated and nurtured. Translating an Indigenous story to screen is an *active* process...” (2013:2-3). In discussing visual sovereignty, Randolph Lewis presents seven attributes derived from the work of Indigenous documentary filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin. These are Indigenous sovereign gaze, authority, ethical relationship, autonomy, epistemological foundation, art and accountability. Utilizing the theory as presented by these two authors, it is possible to reflect on the two guiding questions of this thesis as well as how, collaborative projects can contribute to a realignment of power. As a reminder, those guiding questions are:

- What forms of artistic or creative production are used to challenge (or cement) official notions of memory and history of place?
- How can creative efforts shape perceptions and provide a space for dialogue around geographical land, nature and the complexities of history and memory?

The first lesson, as identified by Lewis, is Indigenous Sovereign Gaze, which refers to “...[A] practice of looking that comes out of Native experience and shapes the nature of the film itself...” (2006:182)

Sovereign Gaze

The film ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017), featured in the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery, was a process of collaboration that took place over a two-year period and was a partnership between BC Hydro, Lantern Films, and Kwadacha First Nation.

As highlighted under the theme of ‘creating’ - prior to this partnership film was being utilized heavily within the community of Kwadacha - first with photographs, then filming of elder interviews, and documenting other community events, like culture camps. These were then shared with the larger community (personal communication, McCook,

2018). This is highlighted on the Kwadacha website, in describing the Historical Legacy Database Project, of which McCook is the coordinator:

Kwadacha Nation is using modern technology to capture ancient knowledge. Information on land use, Elder stories, cultural celebrations and community achievements are being recorded and stored for future generations. This is an historic opportunity for our people to take ownership of the Kwadacha story (Kwadacha Nation, 2018)

Interest in film as a component of the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery came from both BC Hydro and Kwadacha Nation. Film, from the perspective of Thompson,

...[I]s a very powerful medium that brings the Visitor Centre alive in a different dimension and depth (L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018).

McCook placed more emphasis on the on the process of filmmaking. He spoke of the opportunities to connect with Elders (one of which, has passed), the experiences of learning through story while out on the land (and the hilarity that ensues from adventures berry picking - stuck vans, and trucks, and mud), and how the act of making the film,

It brought us closer together as a group. I really enjoyed that part (M. McCook, personal communication, 2018).

Storytelling is central to the Dane-zaa and Tsek'ehne people.. The authors of *Repatriating Indigenous Technology in an Urban Indian Community*, (Bang et al., 2013) suggest that “The increasing utilization of technologies for meaningful community driven goals reflects an important shift from the use of technologies singularly for representation and communication toward new innovations of technologies as authoring tools” (708). It is this reminder that technologies are tools and that First Nations communities have been developing and utilizing technologies from time immemorial - “Like other hunters in the north, the Beaver and the Sekani [Dane-zaa and Tsek'ehne] had learned to live in harmony with, rather than opposition to their environment” (Burley et al., 1996:14) which required an intimate knowledge of the geography and resources of the boreal forest environment, or as an “efficient technology” (Burley et al. 1996:17) – storytelling. The use of technologies and the act of ‘making and doing’, or ‘presencing’ (Simpson, 2011: 92-93),”...emphasizes the necessity of creative material practices, measures and tactics that regenerate connections to bodies, land, territories and community” (Vellino, 2018:131).

Robin & Jillian Ridington's *Trail to Heaven: Knowledge and Narrative in a Northern Native Community* (1988) emphasizes this practice. Within the text they share many personal narratives and traditional stories of the Dane-zaa communities, including time spent with Doig Elder Charlie Yahey. Ridington & Ridington (2006) state,

The Dreamer, Charlie Yahey, knew that Robin's recordings would carry his words and songs not only to other contemporary communities but also to communities that would come after his time (Ridington & Ridington, 2006:19).

They highlight the use of electronic media by the Dane-zaa in cultural projects to tell important stories and "...restore a balance between Dane-zaa tradition and the rapid changes now overtaking them. They are learning to follow the trails of new technology, rather than being pursued by it" (2006:20).

The creation of the film 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) and the use of tools already employed within the community to take ownership of the Kwadacha story (Kwadacha Nation, 2018) suggests a practice of looking that comes out of Native experience and shapes the nature of the film itself (Lewis,2006: 182).

In addition to 'Sovereign Gaze', Lewis identifies authority, and ethical relationship as key attributes of visual sovereignty. *Authority* refers to, "Where cultural insiders are the controlling intelligence behind the filmmaking process, no matter how much non-Natives might help in various capacities" (Lewis, 2006:182), where "Native expertise is allowed to stand on its own..." (Lewis, 2006:185). *Ethical relationship*, as described by Randolph, is "...[P]redicated on an enduring ethical relationship between media producer and subject..." (2006:191)

Authority and Ethical Relationships

In regard to 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017), all interviews with participants illustrated the intention to engage in *ethical relationships* between parties, exemplified through the continued relationship and partnership between Kwadacha Nation and Lantern Films. Outside of the film 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017), Lantern Films and Kwadacha Nation have worked together on a series of other projects one of which is *Aatsie Davie, Kwadacha* which is "A day in the life of Kyla and Tierra, a teacher and student at the Aatse Davie school in Kwadacha, British Columbia" (Lantern Films, 2018c).

As described in the theme ‘representing’, early on in the creative process a Protocol Agreement was reached between BC Hydro and Kwadacha Nation, where ownership of the film and decision-making approval for the content was retained by the community (L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018; J. Hallenbeck, personal communication, 2018). Additionally, the timeline of the film project was not dictated by the corporation, placing priority on the decision-making, consent process as Kwadacha Nation retained the controlling intelligence behind the film (J. Hallenbeck, personal communication, 2018).

This idea of control within the production process, that it is an, “[A]ctive process full of choices made at every stage of preproduction, production, and postproduction that involves negotiating the interface of digital technology, filmic conventions, indigenous knowledge, and cultural poetics of storytelling” (Dowell, 2013:167) is also found within the fourth attribute, *autonomy*. The attribute of *autonomy* describes where it “...must speak in the language of equals...” and “[P]lace Native oral traditions on the same level as non-native forms of writing and remembering of the past” (2006:182);

Autonomy

In the design and construction of the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery, and exterior displays BC Hydro hired an outside facilitator, Dan George of 4 Directions to facilitate the work of the exhibit committee, which included the Peace Aboriginal Advisory Committee, BC Hydro, and W3 Media Design. As above under the theme ‘representing’ Lindsay Thompson (personal communication, 2018) shared that BC Hydro recognized that there would be and was fear that BC Hydro would manipulate the stories of the communities to fit it into the BC Hydro corporate narrative, and so sought to work in a collaborative method, where

...[C]ommunities drive the content. We made sure the communities had decision making authority on signing off on the exhibits (L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018).

Representatives from each community led presentations to their Chief and Council to keep the other community members engaged and aware of the process, as well as approved of the direction and content. The quote wall featured in the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery contains voices from the Advisory Committee, as well as other members of the communities. Some of the quotes were pulled from the Joint Review

Panel for the current hydroelectric development, Site C, with permissions sought from the individuals being quoted to be more inclusive of additional community members.

In regard to 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) and Lantern Films, Jessica Hallenbeck (personal communication, 2018) shared,

I guess we probably spent a year interviewing and filming and in that time we did screenings with Elders and I mean they were just amazing throughout the whole project. Coming out to meetings and screenings and dinners. So we would get feedback from them in terms of if we needed to fill in...

Further to this, and using the 'boat story' animation as an example,

[W]e talked to many elders about that story, the elders that were there that day and then animated, then edited that story. We went back to them and got feedback, edited again, got feedback, and then animated it, and changed some elements in the animation based on those elements we got right or wrong...And the rest of the film, again, was kind of an iterative process...We would go up and have meetings and elders would come out and provide feedback...(J. Hallenbeck, personal communication, 2018).

It was shared that, "...[B]efore the flooding was really important, really important for people to share what life was like before..." (J. Hallenbeck, personal communication, 2018). This ties into the next attribute as identified by Lewis of epistemological foundation, which refers to "...[A] profound respect for...ways of knowing and remembering..." (2006:184), which is tied to the idea of competing value systems.

Epistemological Foundation

In conversation with Lindsay Thompson of BC Hydro, the initial decision to overhaul the Visitor Centre exhibition came from the need to upgrade the GMS building where the visitor centre is housed. When asked to re-fresh the exhibits and align the corporate BC Hydro story Thompson (whose background is in museum design) felt strongly that the new exhibition should include First Nations voices (L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018).

As above, and discussed under the theme 'Representing', "Community consultants and advisory committees have long been features of exhibition development...", and it can contribute to a realignment of power. A Peace Aboriginal Advisory Committee was created and invitations to thirteen First Nations and Metis

communities were extended. Two representatives were sent from communities to participate, and through the committee the exhibition was born. Designers from W3 Media Design were contracted to help facilitate the vision of the committee.

The basic principles were that Hydro didn't want to tell the First Nations story. We didn't want to script it or write the story...(L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018).

Therefore, much of the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery consists of direct quotes from individuals in the communities.

As above, the Advisory Committee retained control of content, which includes *Our Story, Our Voice* as well as other exhibits. The exterior of the building has

...[O]utdoor exhibits [which] tell how the nations used the land, how the land was their lifeline, how the water was like the blood in our veins. The story and how they used their hunting, their fishing, how they processed hides. Drying racks for meat. Transportation along the river. It kind of tells the cultural use of the land, and it's a really different way than other cultures, especially Western culture, engage with and think of the land (L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018).

The exterior displays highlight ways of knowing and remembering and reflect the place-based practices and knowledges of the First Nations peoples of the Peace, a kind of active presence[ing] as described by Simpson through the work of Gerald Vizenor. The displays illustrate prior and continued movement and relationship with the landscape, which she describes as "...[T]ransmotion, that sense of native motion and an active presence... Native transmotion is survivance, a reciprocal use of nature, not a monotheistic, territorial sovereignty" (2011:88). She further states, "Native stories of survivance are the creases of transmotion and sovereignty" (2011: 88).

The communicative capacity of display and film also incorporate *art*, which Randolph describes as, "Presenting an Indigenous perspective in a compelling way" (2006:192). In addition, as suggested by Dowell (2013), "Through the collaborative nature of the filmmaking process...and the creation of stories about relatives and ancestors, Aboriginal media practices have become a vital way to recuperate Aboriginal kinship ties" (2013:115). This includes intergenerational ties. The following presents a discussion of a vital component of the film 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) – referred to in interview as the 'boat story'.

Art

As described in the discussion of films, part three of 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) is comprised of an animated story, narrated by Kwadacha elders, of an incident that occurred at Finlay Forks. The "boat story" was identified by the Elders as being vital to the film, and involved a very iterative, collaborative process in the creation of the animation that would bring together youth and elders within the community and have positive long term effects within the community itself (personal communication, Hallenbeck: 2018; personal communication, McCook, 2018).



Figure 45. Still image from 'boat story' animation in 'Kwadacha by the River' (2017) (Kwadacha First Nation, 2017: 0:08:56)

Elders directed the process of the animation providing detailed feedback in each iteration of the animation until it became the product that it is today (as with other aspects of the film – feedback and response was very important). Mitchell McCook (2018) spoke of the role of youth in the creation:

Well the animation part – remember when you were in Grade 3 or 4 and you participate in...where they have people come in and you are given one instrument, stuff you can find in the classroom and you shake it and it makes a noise and everyone does it and it just gets SO LOUD! Well, that is what we did. And we did it in the classroom and it was loud and perfect. The kids participated in that, and they helped by drawing. Some of their drawings are in the animation. Some are included, but one of the best ones is the wind, and if you look at the animation on there, the wind, that

is one of the students that did that. That is Darian, I think his name is, and Chantelle – they made the best wind. The story was by Emil McCook, and Dan [Lantern Films] put animation to it (M. McCook, personal communication, 2018).

Finlay Forks, as featured in the film 'Canyon of Destiny' (1968) is an exclusionary narrative, that suggests that the area had been long abandoned prior to the backfilling of the reservoir. The animation component of the newer film presents the lived, embodied, and previously excluded lived experience, of the construction of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam and impacts of the backfilling of the reservoir by highlighting the *Indigenous perspective in a compelling way* (Lewis, 2006:192). Further, the off-screen production process shows the power of media to reconnect through story, document cultural and personal knowledge, honor the voices of elders and encourage the intergenerational transfer of knowledge and strengthening of those relationships (Dowell, 2013: 126-128).

The last attribute that Lewis identifies is *accountability*, meaning “By focusing attention on what has been overlooked, concealed or distorted...[it] provides an ideological rebuke to dominant practices...[and] troubles the visual impulses of white settler cultures...” (Lewis, 2006:182).

Accountability

A small panel on the right-hand side of the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery features a statement from Chief Dennis Izony of Tsay Keh Dene First Nation, titled *Words from Tsay Keh Dene*. Izony's statement reads,

The people of Tsay Keh Dene have decided not to participate or contribute to this impacts gallery at this time due to the ongoing trauma and the lasting effects of the creation of the reservoir on our nation and its people that has yet to be resolved.



Figure 46. “Words from Tsay Keh Dene”. Image by M. Poirier

The statement is visually accompanied by a map of Williston Lake, and the Legend of the map highlights Tsay Keh Dene territory, locations of current TKD Communities and Settlements, Relocation sites, TKD Flooded Settlements, and BC Communities. It also indicates the total flooded area as 1721 km (BC Hydro, 2016).

Judith Herman describes psychological trauma as an “affliction of the powerless,” and drawing from the *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry* as a “[F]eeling of intense fear, helplessness, loss of control, and threat of annihilation” (Herman, 1992:33). She further states,

Traumatic events call into question basic human relationships...[they] have primary effects not only on the psychological structures of the self but also on the systems of attachment and meaning that link individual and community. Mardi Horowitz defined traumatic life events as those that cannot be assimilated with the victims "inner schemata" of self in relation to the world. *Traumatic events destroy the victim's fundamental assumptions about the safety of the world, the positive value of self, and the meaningful order of creation [emphasis mine]*" (Herman, 1992:51).

In an article written by Johnny Wakefield in the Dawson Creek Mirror, he describes the isolating effect of the Willison Lake Reservoir (as was articulated by Elders in 'Kwadacha by the River'). When backfilling of the reservoir was completed, the traditional lifeways of the First Nations people who resided there (Tsay Keh Dene and Kwadacha) were irrevocably altered. Riverboats - as featured in the animation of the film and highlighted above with the replica constructed by Emil McCook – which had previously been a primary source of transportation, were rendered obsolete by the creation of the lake, isolating the communities on the far side of the reservoir.

Destruction of traditional lifeways correlates with Herman's definition of trauma as an *affliction of the powerless*, as self-sufficiency and mobility are eradicated. As Wakefield states in his article,

According to an elder of the Kwadacha Nation, a total of nine people drowned shortly after the dam was completed in 1968 – forced to navigate the Williston Reservoir on flat bottomed boats designed for river travel. The dam inundates more than 1,700 square kilometers of forest and created an unstable aquatic environment where fish are laden with mercury (Wakefield, 2016).

In addition to the statement by Tsay Keh Dene, key components of the film 'Kwadacha by the River', illustrate the impacts of the flooding of the reservoir on the mobility of the community, and the dangers the new waterway possessed. The quote wall also featured in the gallery speak to the loss and lasting ramifications of the dam. Wakefield (2016), specifically highlights the comments made by Chief Roland Wilson of West Moberly First Nation, a leader and strong opponent to the current hydroelectric facility under construction in the region, the Site C Clean Energy Project. He writes,

Lining the walls are quotes from local First Nations leaders, including from West Moberly First Nation Chief Roland Wilson...Wilson said he remembered learning how to prepare a fish with wild onions and pea vine from his mother, who learned the technique from his grandmother. "That was transferred, traditional knowledge from my grandmother to my

mother. Nowadays what I get to do is to teach my son how to throw contaminated fish back into the river (Wakefield, 2016).

The development of hydroelectric dams has adverse effects on the ecology, economics and the social fabrics of the regions in which they are constructed. As such, the power of the 'progress' narrative regarding the W.A.C. Bennett Dam has been challenged over time, and during its initial construction, however, the strength of that challenge has previously been limited due to an asymmetrical power relationship – meaning that while the voices and memories of impacted residents and Indigenous community members were present they lacked strength and representation in comparison to the provincial government which pushed for a policy of 'defensive expansionism' and 'progress' under the government of premier W.A.C. Bennett.

Accountability, as above, refers to “...focusing attention on what has been overlooked, concealed or distorted...[it] provides an ideological rebuke to dominant practices...[and] troubles the visual impulses of white settler cultures...” (Lewis, 2006:182). The *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery, *'Kwadacha by the River'*, and Izony's statement on the position of Tsay Keh Dene at this time focus attention on what has been overlooked, concealed or distorted and provides an ideological rebuke to dominant practices. As stated within the work of Robina Thomas (2005),

All stories have something to teach us. What is important is learning to listen, not simply hear, the words storytellers have to share. Many stories from First Nations tell a counter story to that of the documented history of First Nations in Canada...[and] are very important because they give us teachings that allow us to continue to hear and document those counter stories – our truths (241).

Settler-colonial constructions of land and knowledge are often presented as *reality*, however, these narratives, while dominant, are deliberately exclusionary. As asked by Michael Rothberg (2009), “What happens when different histories confront each other in the public sphere? Does the remembrance of one history erase others from view?” (Rothberg, 2009:5).

What has been overlooked, concealed or distorted and provides an ideological rebuke to dominant practice, troubling the impulses of white-settler cultures is the presence of indigenous bodies on the landscape, and the counter-stories of those communities to the dominant narratives of 'progress' and settler-colonialism. The

contrasting relationship to *nature* or *land* that each emphasize is rooted in perceptions, worldviews and enforced through political structures, what Lowman & Baker refer to as a 'clash of sovereignties' (Lowman & Barker, 2015).

As Lowman & Barker (2015) discuss in their text, *Settler: Identity and Colonialism in 21st Century Canada*, "Settler sovereignties are 'carried with us' until we decide to root them somewhere" [referring to the colonial project of legitimacy, see Benedict Anderson (1991)]. They suggest that Settler society relates to land indirectly, with the relationship being mediated through structures such as regimes of property, and that settler Canadian identities require the creation of social and cultural structures which need to be constantly rebuilt in a material sense as the land is adapted to the uses that are desired. They state, "[Settler identities require the creation of social and cultural structures in] a conceptual sense as Settler people generate histories and stories and political and legal systems that anchor them in place". These are human-centric relationships to land and is at odds with the relationship between Indigenous peoples and their sacred places and home environments (2015:55-56).

This is highlighted by Lindsay Thompson (personal communication, 2018) in her interview. She shares,

MP: Have you had any visitor feedback on the new center?

LT: Yeah there has been quite a bit of feedback I think lots of people have really enjoyed the exhibit but it is a bit harsh and jarring and a lot of feedback is that it is completely unexpected from Hydro. And I think that that is amazing. I think that shows where the company is and where its headed and where we want to further our relationships with nations and understanding the impacts that we have had and what our history is a huge part. How can you move forward if you don't know where you come from?

MP: Exactly. So a lack of fear in presenting the past to the people who are going to learn about the facility is huge.

LT: Yeah, I mean Chris talked about....you see this the view from the visitor center is a gorgeous view but say you took a picture of that. Of this huge engineering structure. I mean the dam is so significant, it's quite...the first time I went to GMS I was in awe. Like wow. This is mammoth. This is huge. And then you go to the Visitor's Center and there is this gorgeous view and that is where you see this is an engineering marvel, this is process. And what he talked about was everything you don't see. What you don't see in that project, what's under it. I mean we flooded it. What was

there, what was lost, what is the impact of the erosion and the debris and the death and the devastation and the cutting people off and the isolation. You don't see what's behind that and that is what the exhibit tries to show.

Overview

The five themes - storytelling, survivance, reading, representing and creating - drawn from the work of Tuhiwai Smith, as well as the lessons or attributes of visual sovereignty drawn from Randolph Lewis' analysis of the work of Alanis Obomsawin, and Kirsten L. Dowell's reflections on British Columbia's West Coast provide a framework to discuss the act of creative collaboration at the W.A.C Bennett Dam in both exhibition and film as conveyed by Jessica Hallenbeck, Mitchell McCook and Lindsay Thompson as well as how competing value systems or ways of knowing can come together to present a more complex, nuanced story of place.

Chapter 8.

Conclusion

This thesis stems from a desire to learn about collaborative and ethical memory practice. Utilizing the case study of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, its Visitor Centre, and visualizations of the structure exemplified in exhibition and films it hopes to address how competing value systems or ways of knowing can come together and contribute to a broader discussion of geographical land, nature and the complexities of history and memory that inhabit environments.

One of the research questions that I address in this thesis is: What does creative collaboration look like in this context, in situations involving participants with different motives?

Within collaborative exhibits, people with different perspectives should be able to define and gain benefits they deem appropriate (Hooper-Greenhill, 1992:190), however, as expressed by Deborah Doxtator, “There is always this assumption that we all share the same end product; I think we share parallel goals, but not exactly the same end goal ...the goals of European [Canadian, settler] society for intellectual stimulation and cultural growth have been met to a far greater degree than the needs of aboriginal communities, whose needs are a sense of self knowing, self-worth, and self-determination” (65). In the case of collaboration at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, the partnerships that were undertaken did, as expressed above, consist of parallel goals with partners seeking to define and gain benefits that they deem appropriate.

Hooper-Greenhill (2000) states that, “Collections are brought together and used to make visual statements by purposeful individuals, acting on the basis of sets of ideas, attitudes and beliefs” (9). The drive from BC Hydro to work with First Nations communities came from the project manager, Lindsay Thompson, who had a background in museum design, and practice. This purposeful individual “... wrote a proposal for that and got permission to do it” (personal communication, Thompson), suggesting that this exhibition may not have occurred with a different project manager with differing “...ideas, attitudes or beliefs” (2000:9).

The Aboriginal Advisory Committee worked with BC Hydro and contractors to design the exhibitions and incorporate a film both of which centered the voice of those directly impacted, while also incorporating “the hydro story - you know, how do you make electricity, what is the story of the dam, you know that kind of corporate story” (L. Thompson, personal communication, 2018). In reflecting on her collaborative work with Yukon elders, Julie Cruikshank is noted as having said, “ Ongoing discussions about how these words [stories] should be recorded, transcribed and circulated were central to the procedures that we followed in trying to develop shared ethnographic authority” (1998:x). While Cruikshank is reflecting on her own experience working collaboratively with elders, however, this practice of shared authority, can extend to other collaborative practices and procedures. In the W.A.C Bennett Dam case study, it was through the method of collaboration, seeking to create and sustain an equal power relationship through redistribution of authority that the *parallel goals of participants with different motives* could be achieved.

The second research question that this thesis explores is: What is the potential for the current exhibit and the film made about the impacts of the facility to influence the meta-narrative associated with the W.A.C. Bennett Dam and broadly with development of industrial projects and notions of ‘progress’ in the northeast?

In this thesis it was my own fieldwork that provided some basis for interpretation of the messages sent to visitors. There was no information available on visitor studies and the research for this thesis did not include a visitor study, and therefore it cannot reflect or present information on the visitor experience in encountering and interacting with the stories presented and re-presented in the exhibitions and film. However, it has been suggested that the primary commodity offered by museum spaces (and therefore, I suggest Visitor Centres) is knowledge, and linked to education. Visitors have, “...[T]he opportunity to change one’s perception or knowledge of the world through a visit...” (Hooper-Greenhill, 1992:2) and “...the way in which knowing is enabled, constructed and consumed...” (Hooper-Greenhill,1992:3).

As Zerubavel has stated, “Although historical changes usually occur over a period of time and as a result of process rather than a single event, collective memory tends to select particular events as symbolic markers of change” (1992:7).In this thesis I proposed that the W.A.C. Bennett Dam acts as a symbolic marker of change or *site of*

memory for two parallel or conflicting memory narratives. Throughout this thesis I have sought to provide a comparison of the dominant and the excluded, and also illustrate how the current exhibition, and 'Kwadacha by the River' film (2017) challenge existing dominant social configurations of power and understandings of 'progress'. By introducing a more complete, multidirectional perspective of the construction of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, it is possible to better understand how, "...Memory's anachronistic quality, its bringing together of the now and then, here and there – is actually a source of its powerful creativity, its ability to build new worlds out of the materials of older ones" (Rothberg, 2009:5).

While no measurements have been made of visitor's perceptions or the influence of the exhibition and film through their testimonies, it is possible to understand that, "Exhibitions can open up ideas that have long been suppressed, and can make the formerly invisible histories visible" (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000:19). As Robert Houle, a Salteaux artist has said, "There is a phrase sometimes used from the good old days when we used manual typewriters instead of word processors. Remember how we daubed away trying to cover up our mistakes with Liquid Paper? Well, there is a tendency to "white out" parts of history, and the most important parts of history are often what is not said. What is happening now is the "writing in" of what was "whited out" and that is a very important process" (78).

The third question this thesis sought to reflect on concerns about ways communication practices intervene in shaping history and memory. It is: What forms of artistic or creative production are used to challenge (or cement) official notions of memory and history of place?

The forms, in our case study, are primarily the films and exhibitions, which are inherently visual. As stated by Hooper-Greenhill (2000),

Visual culture as a field of study raises theoretical questions about the social practices of looking and seeing, which are related to processes of learning and knowing...Visual culture works towards a social theory of visibility, focusing on questions of what is made visible, who sees what, how seeing, knowing and power are interrelated (14).

In contrasting the previous iterations of the exhibition at the Visitor Centre with its current form, and the film 'Canyon of Destiny' (1968) with 'Kwadacha by the River'

(2017) examples of how these visual foundations of communication can act to cement official notions of memory and history of place are apparent. –‘Canyon of Destiny’ (1968), and the older exhibit illustrates this. In contrast, ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) and the collaborative exhibits (*Our Story, Our Voice* and others) demonstrate how tools, such as story and voice can challenge those official narratives, indicating a deeper, multidirectional memory (Rothberg, 2009) and history of place.

Lastly, the final question this thesis sought to reflect on concerns communication practices again, asking: How can creative efforts shape perceptions and provide a space for dialogue around geographical land, nature and the complexities of history and memory that inhabit environments?

As described, visual culture within the museum is a technology of power, and “This power can be used to further democratic possibilities or it can be used to uphold exclusionary values” (Hooper-Greenhill, 2002:162), therefore, creative efforts can shape perceptions and provide a space for dialogue around geographical land, nature and the complexity of history and memory that inhabit environments.

The dominant narrative promoted by BC Hydro in Northeastern British Columbia is that of a linear ‘progress’ narrative, of which the W.A.C. Bennett Dam acts a site of memory, representative of the era of its construction and the ideology of high modernity. The act of ‘making and doing’ or ‘storied presence-ing’ within the film and exhibitions illustrates a radically different theoretical, political, and lived experience of the construction of the facility and the meaning of ‘progress’.

The museum (or Visitor Centre), has a role in the colonial project and *imagining* of the states dominion and presentation of legitimacy (Anderson, 1991), which contributes to a *reality effect*, wherein “... some history is produced as real and some is rendered invalid or simply invisible” (Perry, 2005:334). In the comparison of ‘Canyon of Destiny’ (1968) and ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017), and changes in exhibition through collaborative practice illustrate how *realignments of power through redistribution of authority* (Phillips, 2011:188) can *avoid the reproduction of existing inequalities or misrepresentations* (Constanza-Chock, 2018:2) providing a space for dialogue to occur.

Additionally, in presenting alternative worldviews in regard to land (again, alternative’ that is to the dominant notions previously portrayed at the W.A.C Bennett

Dam), further complexity is presented. However, one area that needs further research is a study of the attitudes of First Nations communities, especially those directly affected by the dam, including former residents of the area to gain a deeper understanding of the diverse alternative interpretations within the communities. The map as a spatial technology of power, and its representation of arbitrary territories and 'empty spaces' is contested, as "To most Indigenous people, culture is a map and it is written in the land. It is a common worldview of Indigenous peoples that they "belong to the land" as distinct from the general notion that "land belongs to the people" (Galla, 1996:86).

Chapter 9.

Site C: Evocations of the Past in Planned Future Transformations



Figure 47. Site C dam site Fort St John 2017 (Woodhead, 2017)

The answers to how and why our knowledge has become threatened lie embedded in the crux of the colonial infrastructure and unless properly dismantled and accounted for, this infrastructure will only continue to undermine efforts to strengthen Indigenous Knowledge systems and harm the agenda of de-colonization and self-determination (Simpson, 2004:334).

Like the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, Site C is an earth filled structure that will block the flow of the Peace River and generate approximately 900 MW of power. Aware of the positive historical presentation of the previous structures on the Peace River the announcement of the project is framed in relation to the official narrative of progress.

The CBC reported on the construction of the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery, and quoted West Moberly First Nations Chief Roland Wilson. He is cited as having said, "...while BC Hydro may be apologizing for how First Nations were impacted during the W.A.C Bennett project, 'they are building Site C and doing it again'" (Fisher, CBC, 2016) BC Hydro's deputy CEO Chris O'Reilly recognized that this feeling of re-creation of the events of the past have been mentioned but also highlights that Site C is different than the Bennett Dam as " Site C has gone through a three year independent joint-review panel...second the legal framework around how we engage with First Nations is completely different. For Site C we have been consulting with First Nations for eight or nine years" (Fisher, 2016).

The Site C announcement was made in April 2010. Several photographs were taken to commemorate the announcement. The most striking featured Premier Gordon Campbell, BC Hydro executives and workers in the foreground, and that historic site of progress – the W.A.C Bennett Dam – acting as a backdrop. Both the press release for the announcement of Site C and the later Joint Review Panel would make references to the Bennett era. The 2010 press release quotes then Premier Gordon Campbell,

"Hydroelectric power helped develop our province and Site C will build on B.C.'s heritage of clean, renewable and affordable, power," said Premier Gordon Campbell. "Site C will be a publicly owned heritage asset and will ensure that British Columbia has reliable sources of clean electricity, while contributing to our goal of electricity self-sufficiency" (2010).

The Joint Review Panel also mentions the high modernist era of the W.A.C Bennett Dam construction with this statement – "A few decades hence, when inflation has worked its eroding way on cost, Site C could appear as wonderful gift from the ancestors of that future society, just as BC consumers today thank the dam builders of the 1960s" (BC Hydro, 2014).

As illustrated throughout this thesis in the case study of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, the alternative narrative ('alternative' that is to the dominant notions of memory and remembrance) is rooted in the land. It is inherently localized. During the era of the Bennett Dam construction the narrative of 'progress' rooted in the ideology of high modernity had achieved dominance, and "...[W]here ideologies do achieve dominance within a specific culture, they often fail be recognized as such and pass as 'common sense' or as 'self-evident truths'" (Borchers, 2011:27-28). A perception of the domination

of nature was shared across society during this period. Industrial projects were controversial, however, "...there was [little to] no public opposition to building big dams or the idea that growth was a social good that could be delivered through state-sponsored mega projects. The consensus stretched across the political and social spectrum, from the Social Credit on the right to the New Democratic and Communist Parties on the left, and from business to labour..." (Loo, 184).

In the context of the Site C controversy, the alternative narrative (again, ('alternative' that is to the previously dominant notions) has gained power. As public discourse has shifted from the 'technological sublime' to an increased concern for environment, the decline narrative and implied trajectory for environmental degradation have allowed for increased strength of the alternative voices. "Memory is operating in a new 'ecology' of media connectivity, networks and flows" (Garde-Hansen, 2011:32). As such, the use of the media has allowed for the alternative narrative to grow in strength and reach through dissemination of information. Citizen protest has manifested primarily through artistic means and through aural and visual mnemonic triggers. An online project, titled *My Peace River*, is a tool to share and create collective memory of the river valley via photographs. Local artists Miss Quincy and Twin Peaks released a song, accessible via mypeaceriver.ca. Lyrics include, "I was standing by the river feeling lucky because I know where I stand. I've been here before a thousand times or more...Oh I wonder if we know the cost, the value of a history if it all gets lost...And I'll stand by this river, come hell or high water..." (Peck, et al., 2015).

Another example of this, albeit speaking to the larger impacts of the cumulative effects of resource development to the lands and communities within the Peace region over time, is the 2017 group exhibition in Vancouver, B.C. titled *Maps and Dreams* at Audain Gallery (1 June - 29 July 2017), and associated publication *\$5 Dollar Handshake: Art on Treaty 8 Territory* (2018). As described on the SFU Audain Gallery website (2017),

The works connect the personal to the regional context through photographs, paintings, installation and conceptual documents that take up land-based kinship, the labor of land development, surface rights, and ethereal spaces of beauty and reciprocity. The artists present Indigenous and settler perspectives take up forms of literal and figurative mapping, and through diverse strategies and speculative inquiries, engage with a

complex entanglement between multi-faceted dreams and the land (SFU, 2017).

One of the curators of the group exhibition, Brian Jungen, spoke with the Dawson Creek Mirror (2018) of the "...little cultural exchange between the Peace country and Vancouver so it felt like it was needed" (Cozicar, 2018). The exhibition deliberately included the voices of both First Nations and settler artists (Cozicar, 2018). Artists featured in the exhibition were Jack Askoty, Brittney Bear Hat, Richelle Bear Hat, Jennifer Bowes, Brenda Draney, Emilie Mattson, Karl Mattson, Garry Oker, and Peter von Tiesenhausen. The associated publication *\$5 Handshake*, "...addresses the tensions in our contemporary landscape by pushing us to favor the multivalent over the authoritative. The book is a gesture towards Indigenous sovereignty, by allowing those voices from within to speak and write about it personally" (Matthews, 2018).

The phrase "favour the multivalent over the authoritative" (Matthews, 2018) should be considered in the context of Site C, narratives of 'progress' and resource development in Northeastern British Columbia. In the foreword to *Breaching the Peace: The Site C Dam and a Valley's Stand against Big Hydro* (2018) Alex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International writes,

So many people and communities from so many different backgrounds and points of view – living in the valley, nearby, elsewhere in British Columbia, and around the world – have come together and devoted their effort, time, resources, heart, and soul to this enormously consequential struggle. Why? Because what is at stake has been a critical test of the willingness and preparedness of federal and provincial governments to act with honor and uphold human rights, reconcile with Indigenous peoples, commit to core principles of justice for farmers and land owners and protect the environment (Cox, 2018:x),

Sarah Cox further writes of time she spent in the community of Hudson's Hope with Roland Wilson, Chief of West Moberly First Nations. She states,

...Wilson said, there were few places remaining anywhere in Treaty 8's homeland where members could have "quiet, peaceful enjoyment of our treaty rights." Everywhere First Nations members looked, the landscape had been carved up by oil and gas development, mining, logging, agriculture, private land holdings, and the reservoirs from the previous two dams on the Peace River. Site C would flood the "last refuge" of river valleys. Even though much has changed in just one century, the Dunne-Za [Dane-zaa] are still part and parcel of the land. Losing the valley to Site C would be like losing an organ from your body, explained Chief

Wilson. “It’s like cutting out a kidney. Our connection to the land is spiritual. We’re people of the land. You take us off the land, and you destroy a piece of who we are” (2018:93-93).

Julie Cruikshank argues that “...narratives are used to *establish* such connections – between past and future, between people and place, among people whose opinions diverge” (Cruikshank, 1998:2). As described in this thesis, the W.A.C Bennett Dam, acts as a site of memory for parallel or conflicting memory narratives – the high modernist ‘progress’ narrative of the era of construction and the alternative narrative, intimately tied to the land and story. The strength of these narratives has changed and shifted over time, but both remain present on the landscape and within the interactions between industry, government, residents and First Nations communities within the Peace region. Social memory can challenge official memory with variable strength. This is found in the collaborative exhibits and film ‘Kwadacha by the River’ (2017) now featured at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, and continue to see this today in the discourse regarding the Site C Clean Energy Project.

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Appendix A.

Interviews

Lindsay Thompson (March 2018)

BC Hydro – Director of Indigenous Relations

LT: Lindsay Thompson

MP: Maggie Poirier

LT: Good morning, Lindsay speaking.

MP: Good morning, Lindsay. This is Maggie Poirier calling.

LT: And how are you?

MP: Thank you so much for taking time out of your schedule to speak with me about my project. I really appreciate it.

LT: Oh, no problem.

MP: I didn't want to take up too much of your time, but before we begin did you have any questions about the project or the consent form?

LT: Yeah. I guess if you could just run me through what your project is, what you are doing, what kind of intel you would like from me, that would be awesome.

MP: Yeah, absolutely I can do that. So, just to tell you a little bit about me as well....My name is Maggie. I'm a student researcher at the School of Communication. So my interest in the project. I'm interested in stories and in particular stories that have shaped the Peace River region. Just to tell you, I grew up there and I lived and worked in that part of BC as an Archaeologist doing consulting, like Cultural Resource Management. I also worked as a young person, during my undergrad at the Bennett Dam at the Visitor's Centre there.

LT: Oh! Cool

MP: Yeah, so my interest in the facility I guess in general comes from that. And because the Bennett Dam is the first hydroelectric structure on the Peace River it is tied to the story of progress in the northeast. So I am interested in the

alternative viewpoints that have often been overlooked both in relation to the structure as well as that idea of progress in the northeast. Um..and I think that the *Our Story, Our Voice* gallery that is now featured at the Visitor Centre and 'Kwadacha by the River' are both two things in the way that they were created and in the story that they are telling that I am really interested in learning more about. And specifically more about the process that went into the creation of those things. So, what I would be looking to speak with you about is just a little bit of background on yourself, what you know about the northeast and the Bennett prior to working with these exhibits and how they came to be, I understand that there was collaboration between contractors, BC Hydro and First Nations and in their construction talking a little about that. Kind of the same direction in 'Kwadacha by the River' and the film how that came to be and then impressions of the final exhibits.

LT: Sure. Ok so stop me any time, ask me any questions. SO my background before I came to BCH so I have been at BCH for 10 years. My background before that was as a museum designer, I did my MA and undergrad at UBC in Anthropology and my Masters was in First Nations of BC and Museum design. So working in with the MOA etc. for my master's degree. So when I came to hydro my first project was the Revelstoke Visitor Center which is, doesn't have a feature video like 'Kwadacha by the River' but I did re-do the Visitor Center and a large First Nations exhibit between the Shuswap the Ktunaxa and the Okanagan First Nation. SO, that was kind of my first visitor center at Hydro and the first kind of First Nation's exhibit that I think Hydro had done before. I then went into project delivery, managing capital projects for 8 years one of the projects that we got was upgrading the GMS building that the Visitors Center was in, so the idea was to refresh the exhibits and align - the hydro story - you know, how do you make electricity, what is the story of the dam, you know that kind of corporate story. And so I felt really strongly that we needed to do something with the First Nations like we had done at Revelstoke, so I basically just wrote like a proposal for that and got permission to it. So what we did was create the Peace Aboriginal Advisory Committee. Where we invited 13 First Nations and Metis to join and send cultural representatives from their communities. So, it was through the committee that we walked through their ideas for content, a and the committee basically designed the exhibit and the content. So there are multiple components to that. There is obviously funding for the committee and capacity funding for the participation from the nation. We brought in...obviously it was a collaboration internally between project delivery and corporate communications. We brought our designer in as well and had them attend the committee....

MP: Is that W3 Media Design?

LT: Yeah, so we brought them in and they participated in the committee and basically the whole idea was to facilitate and help bring the committee's vision to life. So the basic principles were that Hydro didn't want to tell the First Nation's story, we didn't want to script it or write the story and that's why the gallery is all in quotes from people. From the nation so that we weren't editing it, weren't scripting it, censoring it. You know what I mean? We wanted it to be as their voice not ours. Because it is not our story to tell and we wanted it to be their story, from their perspective and really it was the first time I think that Hydro has ever had the nations tell their perspectives and their story about the impacts of building a facility. So, the visitors center kind of expanded a little bit just from that one gallery that is in the inside to exterior exhibits as well. So there are outdoor exhibits that tell how the nations used the land, how the land was their lifeline, how the water was like the blood in our veins. The story and how they used their hunting, their fishing, how they processed hides, drying racks for meat. Transportation along the river. It kind of tells like the cultural the use of the land and it is a really different way I think that other cultures, especially Western culture, engages and thinks of the land for sure. Then we worked specifically with Kwadacha. So I brought on Lantern Films to work with us on the feature film that we did with Kwadacha. So that was an intensive project that ran almost two years. We set up a protocol with Kwadacha so they are the owners of the video, of the content, if we want to use it we need to get permission. There is an elders statement at the beginning. We gave them total approval and sign off whether they liked it or not. So it was a really good way to build a strong relationship in a way where they had ownership and decision-making authority over the way the story was told. Because I think there is a lot of un---- its completely understandable given the history hydro has had and the way that we have engaged with nations in the past. When we build the Williston Dam, the world was very different. There weren't the same environmental conditions, regulatory conditions, consultation wasn't where it is today. So that was a very harsh, very devastating experience for the nations. It ripped their lives apart. So obviously there is a lot of mistrust in the relationship with hydro and so putting in the protocol and the agreement gave them the comfort to know this was their story and it wasn't going to be hydro manipulated. Because I think there is a lot of valid fear....You know you are redoing the visitors center and your story is always about you know these engineering marvels, and how great these dams are and how great electricity and power smart is etc. But that is I think there is a fear about how we are going to manipulate their story to fit in and I think that they really didn't believe that we would tell their story the way they wanted it told. Uncensored, raw, true and true to them. Like it is their truth, right? And so that is kind of the process that we went through. There was lots of consultation with the community on the video - like every edit and screening getting their input for every quote that is on the

visitors center we got them to sign off on that like if they didn't want their quote up there or name up there it wasn't. So we were very careful and diligent to make sure it was approved by the person speaking, and everybody in that video signed off on their piece of it and even now for the screening of it we get their permission and approval for how it is used. So, I don't know if that answers some of your questions....

MP: That answers quite a few of the ones that I had prepared so that is perfect. So you had, let's see...so you had mentioned...we...lets focus on the film for a minute. So how was the decision made to create a film with Kwadacha and in that specific partnership?

LT: Well, I really...I wanted to create a video. I just think it is a very powerful medium that brings the visitor center alive in a different dimension and depth. And seeing something in words and quotes on a wall is one thing but to have an experiential , you know to experience itin video form is really powerful. So I got the relationship lead internally for Kwadacha to start working with them and asking them if that was something that they would be interested in and working with them about what that might look like. You know we left it up to the community as far as what they wanted to do. So it was a joint partnership and we did bring Lantern on and had Lantern go up there multiple times to see and build relationships see if the community was comfortable with them and it all kind of worked out. The community liked them and liked the idea they liked that we were willing to put in writing in an agreement upfront where the decision-making power lied. They liked the people that we had working with Lantern. Lantern hired a couple of First Nations community members to work on their crew and we set them up with their own equipment and lantern trained them and now they still have projects that they work on Lantern with. Through Kwadacha we did a workshop in the schools, you know the middle of the video the animation – so we did a workshop in the community. So it really we had even the people from Lantern they got invited and went on the Elders trip, the annual trip, you know going through all the different communities and down to the lower mainland, they went berry picking with them, you know what I mean it really became I think it was really beneficial to both the community and the project.

MP: So just to clarify then BCH role was really setting the First Nations up with Lantern but from there Lantern and Kwadacha worked predominately together to create the film as a contractor from that point

LT: I think there were touch points. I mean our relationship lead kept in touch and went up there a few times with Lantern, our relationship lead has a really good relationship with Kwadacha as well but I think part of the trust and part of the communities

ability to let go was that Hydro wasn't micro managing it. It wasn't – in order to set it up to succeed and in order for there to be comfort was setting up and making sure it was the right fit, the agreement and the community felt comfortable with it and I think it made it a bit easier having a third party working with them so the community felt ownership of the film. Like, it is their film!

MP: Absolutely. And then just to flip back to the Peace Aboriginal Council and quote wall for a minute. So, with that the representatives from the communities that made up this council, those representatives were chosen from within their own communities?

LT: So basically we went to each of the communities, and they got to nominate who they wanted. We asked for consistency, just because it is very difficult to move a project forward if we aren't getting the same people but we basically had two representatives from their community and that seemed to be quite consistent over the 18 to 24 months and then when the visitor center opened we had an opening just for the nations and we had over 110 members from the communities come to the opening which was amazing.

MP: And then for the quote wall, those quotes were taken from the people who were nominated to participate

LT: Well, it is a mix. So some were nominated and some are other community members. So when Site C had the joint review panel and there were those big reports, we did go through and mine those report for some quotes from certain people and then the community members went back to the people who had the direct quote so it was more inclusive. And, Hydro participated and attended all those meetings but we did have a third-party facilitator as well and we did have representatives from each community lead presentations to their chief and council to make sure that the community was engaged and aware of what was going on and approved of the direction and the content..

MP: That you were taking..

LT: Yeah...

MP: Ok, so I guess the history you had mentioned the history and legacy of the structure for the communities. How did that affect your facilitation method? Did W3 primarily do the facilitation of your sessions or was that something that came from Hydro?

LT: Neither. So I hired Dan George from 4 Directions. He is First Nations and a facilitator, though he facilitated the committee, Hydro and W3 participated in all of the committee meetings.

MP: So you said that your first renovation was at Revelstoke. Did you feel that these two experiences had some parallels? Or, what did you learn from your first experience that you were able to apply at the Bennett Dam?

LT: I think that some of the key things that are similar is that we really engaged the communities, we let the communities drive the content we made sure the communities had decision making authority on signing off on the exhibits. We didn't have the same sort of advisory committee that we did at GMS, we didn't have that at Revelstoke but we did work with all the communities. And I think some of the key things that made it successful were really engaging elders and cultural representatives from the communities instead of making it political. In the case of Revelstoke we focused on the Columbia river and what that meant and how it was used by all of the First Nations. So I think finding shared experiences between nations where it doesn't become political and it doesn't all need to be separated. Where you are collaborating and your theme or your topic is something that everybody relates to. And it thinks there is shared experience. Shared experience with the use of the Columbia river, and obviously shared experience with the impact of building GMS, and building the reservoir Williston and flooding out the Peace River, so really that is something that everybody can contribute their experience around.

MP: And then just to clarify a few things – so the decision to incorporate stories from First Nations community members that was a driver from you as a PM?

LT: Yes.

MP: From you and your experiences in museums and your background...

LT: yeah.

MP: Ok. And so, the initial, the decision to renovate the Visitor Center was that tied to the 50-year anniversary of the structure or just that the building was aging and needed to be refurbished?

LT: It was the state of the building. The building was end of life. It needed new water supply, H Vac etc. And the Visitor Center was basically was built when the dam was built years ago but the driver of it, the capital project was actually, the title of it was the GMS Axillary Building Upgrade. I just turned it into more of a And it was like we should refresh the exhibit...and I was like – because it's my passion and I feel strongly about it – so then I again kind of wrote a proposal and I have been very lucky that hydro agreed with the concept and the funding and let me just run with it.

MP: Well, it looks great! I was in the facility before it was renovated and then after and it is amazing to see the change that has gone on. Had you been in the old facility and the old visitor center before it was taken down? Did you get to look through?

LT: Yeah, because I was in project delivery for 8 years. The first three I was in the Columbia, so heavily in the Revelstoke and Mica so I was really familiar with the Revelstoke facility and the last 5 years I was managing the capital project for GMS and Peace Canyon so I was up there probably 4 times a month.

MP: Oh wow. So quite frequently. And then you visited the Visitor Center since it has opened. What are your impressions of the final exhibits? Are you happy with it?

LT: Yeah. I am happy. I mean I am really proud of the exhibit and video I feel like it was something kind of new and something more innovative and creative for the company and I definitely feel like we succeeded in letting the voices of the nations be represented and heard in a way that they approve of and they are proud of. Like, it was amazing to have 110 community members come to the opening and now its somewhere that they don't necessarily....they hear so many stories about the impacts but the younger generations don't know what we went through and don't understand and they don't have any idea. So lots of people brought their kids and grandkids and they want to bring school classes, classes of school kids to come there, to be able to tell that story. And that is huge for me. And I think it is also its helped shift the company as well. We had Chris O'Reilly...he is now the president of the company but was the senior vice president at the time and he came up and spoke at the opening and apologized for the impacts of building that dam and I think that is really powerful I think it has been a powerful tool internally to create more understanding of the history and impacts that hydro has had on the nations is significant.

MP: Have you had any visitor feedback on the new center?

LT: Yeah there has been quite a bit of feedback I think lots of people have really enjoyed the exhibit but it is a bit harsh and jarring and I think a lot of the feedback is that it is completely unexpected from Hydro. And I think that that is amazing. I think that shows where the company is and where its headed and where we want to further our relationships with nations and understanding the impacts that we have had and what our history is a huge part. How can you move forward if you don't know where you come from?

MP: Exactly. So, a lack of fear in presenting the past to the people who are going to learn about the facility is huge.

LT: Yeah, I mean Chris talked about....you see this the view from the visitor center is a gorgeous view but say you took a picture

of that of this huge engineering structure. I mean the dam is so significant, it's quite...the first time I went to GMS I was in awe. Like wow. This is mammoth. This is huge. And then you go to the Visitor's Center and there is this gorgeous view right and so that is where you see this is an engineering marvel, this is process. And what he talked about was everything you don't see what you don't see in that project, what's under it. I mean we flooded it. What was there, what was lost, what is the impact of the erosion and the debris and the death and the devastation and the cutting people off and the isolation. You don't see what's behind that right and that is what the exhibit tries to show.

MP: And you have the one panel that represents Tsay Keh Dene who declined to participate.

LT: I mean I obviously I wished that they had participated but the fact that they wanted to put a statement in there and it's a placeholder for the future shows that we continue to work on it right"?

MP: So, just a few more questions and then...what have we not spoken about or that I have not asked you about do you feel would be beneficial to know about the facility?

LT: Nothing that I can think of off the top of my head.

MP: What do you feel that ...

LT: I think that one of the biggest things is just how much a positive impact just exploring and understanding and speaking the truth about the past can have. It is just very difficult, it's a difficult thing to ask the nations to do and part of the Kwadacha film project too we funded regular healing sessions for the community. Because you can't just go in and unearth all of this trauma and negative devastating past and not understand the ramifications and impact that has on people. So I was really mindful about how can we make this a healing journey because it is really difficult to go through. It was a really emotional experience. We even had healers, private rooms on the premises for the opening. Because there are so many community members who hadn't really seen it or didn't know about it etc. You know before they came and I think that is really important to build in health and wellness and how do you make this a healing experience instead of just going in and kind of taking what you want. Do you know what I mean? Just because you want to....that's another thing...just because you want to tell the story doesn't mean that is where they are. And I think you really need to meet people where they are at. Like Tsay Keh....we respect that they are not in a place where they want to start that process, or be involved in that process when it happened for that specific project. And I also think that it has been a fundamentally powerful tool to be able to show that

video internally as cultural awareness and being able to crack people's minds open internally and understand the history and not just in Indigenous relations but across the whole company. There is huge value and I do think there is really big value as well in how that builds positive relationships with the communities. If that is something that they want to participate in that they feel supported in that they feel can overall be a positive experience. I think that really helps move the dial in how do we go from here. I think in the past hydro has been transactional and I think a lot of people in the company have not understood, or taken the time to understand, or had a clue about the history in the past and I think this gives them a totally new awareness and way to approach things.

MP: Yeah, and just one more question. With the second film....the one you show before visitors go on the tour itself...how was that one created?

LT: Which one was that?

MP: It focuses on the facility, it is not 'Kwadacha by the River'....they go to a lower gallery and watch the film before going on tour. I'm not sure what the title of the film would be .

LT: Yeah mi not sure. I think that might be corporate. I wasn't involved in developing that one.

MP: Ok. Well, thank you so much for your time Lindsay. I really appreciate the opportunity to speak with you about this.

LT: Oh you are welcome. I am happy to help anytime so if you have any other questions, and if you have any actual work product that comes of it I would love it if you would circle back and send it to me. I would be super interested. This is definitely an area of passion for me so yeah...happy to help any time, reach out if you have any questions, and yeah I would love to see what you do with it.

MP: I would love to give you a copy and probably speak with you again at some point.

So that would be great.

LT: Awesome. Have a good day

MP: You too
END (30:53).

Mitchell McCook (March 2018)

Kwadacha First Nation & Lantern Films – Filmmaker & co-director, content advisor

Mitchell McCook: MM

Maggie Poirier: MP

MP: I'm at the university right now, in Vancouver, and you can feel the stress of some of the people walking around...its....

MM: Yeah, the struggle is real.

MP: Yeah the struggle is real for sure.

MP: Ok so, I'll just here...So the last time that we met, and thanks so much for doing that again, when I was in Prince George...

MM: Well thanks for stopping by.

MP: Yeah, it was awesome. I'm hoping to come again to Prince George in April sometime, so maybe I will see if I can pop in then and say hello as well.

MM: Sure

MP: So what my research is about and what we talked about last time was that I am really interested in stories, and stories in particular that are a part of the Peace River region in BC. Especially because that is where I grew up and so that is a personal interest I guess for me and now I am trying to make it a part of my school. So, I was really interested in the Bennett Dam and the visitors Centre and how that's kind of changed in the last couple of years and then obviously with the creation as well of your film 'Kwadacha by the River' which is awesome.

MM: Thanks. Are we doing the interview now, or?

MP: Well, this is just kind of going over the goals and then I will get into the consent form right now if that works for you.

MM: Ok. That's perfect.

MP: Ok so, basically the purpose of the interview is to ask you about your experiences working on the project, on the film, as well as if you participated in the 'Our Story, Our Voice' Gallery that is at the Visitor Centre.

MM: Oh yeah, OK.

MP: The time commitment for the interview is probably somewhere around a half an hour.

MM: Ok. That's fine

MP: And, then just again, if you are comfortable, then I will record the interview.

MM: Yeah, of course.

MP: Ok, then I will just turn that on (2:29 official) then.

MP: So once the data that is collected. The interviews will be kept for 5 years after the research is done. It is up to you if you would like a copy of the recorded interview or a transcript of it. As well, I can give you a copy of my thesis when it is finished if you would like that as well.

MM: Sure, that would be nice.

MP: Ok, I can definitely do that then. And so the rest of the consent form, it just goes over the questions that I will be asking you a little bit about northeast BC about the dam and the film. It says that the location of the interviews will be variable so basically over the phone or in person. The copy I sent you over email outlines if you have any concerns about what we talked about or if you are worried about me as a person there is contact information for my supervisor and for the research ethics office.

MM: Ok

MP: And it just says that the information will be used in a research project.

MM: Ok. Nice. Sure.

MP: As you can tell I don't have a lot of experience with interviews so I'll just ask you to bear with me. Some of the questions will be repetitive just because of our chat before. But, could you please state your name and tell me a little bit about yourself?

MM: My name is Mitchell McCook I grew up in Fort Ware for a couple of years and then after that we moved to...we grew up in Sunny Creek after that, and after high school I did university here in Prince George. After I graduated there I started working for Kwadacha. I am half Carrier and half Tsek'ehne. I have been working with Kwadacha and doing some filming with them. Doing Elder interviews and then we came across a contract for to complete to start 'Kwadacha by the River' documentary.

MP: So how did that project kind of begin? How did you get involved in 'Kwadacha by the River'?

MM: Well I was involved with our band doing filming and it came to us after we had all these interviews that it seemed nice to create something for the community and we had all these

information and stories compiled so we made one [a film] and then sent it out and some people saw it and the majority of the people saw it in the community and have really enjoyed it since and so that's what kept me going. Hydro came along and we started getting our relationships. Our relationship with Hydro and they somebody suggested in Hydro that there should be a movie in the Bennett Dam and they wanted to put it at the Visitor Centre...and I forget her name...but she knew one of the filmmakers and she asked them and they jumped on board and they said they would only do it if there was somebody in Kwadacha who would do filming and so they came up and I met with them and yeah it just. That's how it pretty much started,

MP: That's so neat! So, filming had been a big part of what you were doing in the community before 'Kwadacha by the River' even started?

MM: Yeah, but not with that type of equipment.

MP: And you had mentioned to me before... So, was using film in the community, was that an initiative that you took working for Kwadacha or was that something that had been in the community for a long time before you started?

MM: No, nope. It is something that we started. First it was pictures. We have grants that we apply for yearly, and the original idea was for pictures. So the camera that I was given at the time ...So I took it a step further and said we should try film. And, not only film our...I remember the first few culture camps that I went to I did interviews, and I started filming everything... whatever they did...you know a race...I just started filming everything and yeah it just snowballed from there.

MP: Oh, that's really cool.

MM: Yeah.

MP: So the things you would film, you would then edit and show to the community?

MM: Yeah, yeah. Every once in a while. Now it seems...we weren't aware about lagging and audio at the time so it was just really raw, unedited.

MP: So, it must be...is that one of your big takeaways then from the experience of working on 'Kwadacha by the River'. Learning/developing your skillset as a filmmaker?

MM: Oh yeah, definitely. It helped me look at things in a different way. A different perspective on filming. And then at the time when they came on we...things progressed ...getting to get a little more equipment, you know, year by year, and new software, new equipment, and it really helped out. I really

enjoyed my time filming it, quite a bit. Learned how important audio is.

MP: I was thinking about what you mentioned to me when I was in Prince George, because next week I am going to be filming for the first time, so I was thinking about some of those tips and tricks you were talking about!

MM: Oh yeah.

MP: I'm hoping it goes well.

MM: Its easy, its lots of fun. There is like 3 things, and that's about it.

MP: What did you know about the Bennett Dam before you started working on the project?

MM: Nothing. I assumed I flew over it a few times when I was a teenager [Williston Lake] and I assumed it was all natural. I had no idea it was manmade and the impacts that it had.

MP: So you had never visited the dam before?

MM: No.

MP: Have you been to the structure since the exhibit [Our Story, Our Voice] has opened?

MM: Yeah. We went, I went. My Uncle lives in Fort St. John so I went there a couple times and just popped in to take a look. So I've been there twice.

MP: Do you have a favorite moment from your experience working on the project or filming in general?

MM: Yeah, well the favorite, there is a couple. One was when we had to film....one of the Elders who has passed away now. It is so valuable that interview that we have with him. A few of them now. And you can't put a price on it. They will be there and have them on film and I'm so glad that we had that opportunity to get them to do the interview and a couple of times during the filming there were some funny points. You know, during....we got to film some of the location and we had to drive in the forest and we would drive in the bush and the roads were awful and there was this one part where we were getting a berry picking scene and we got one van stuck and we used the other to try and get the other one unstuck and ended up getting THAT stuck. And we had a truck behind us, one of the community members had a stuck and then they came to help get us unstuck and we ended up getting one of the vans unstuck and then THAT truck got stuck and then we had to have another vehicle come and get that truck unstuck and then....

- MP: Oh my god [laughs]. It does sound like a country song!
- MM: [laughs] yeah. It was pretty funny. It was a long day getting the vehicle unstuck. Packing rocks and sticks. It was just mud, right.
- MP: Oh yeah, soft ground is difficult to do.
- MM: So that was pretty funny. It took all day, and we needed that vehicle and...it was a lot of fun!
- MP: Those are good adventures and good stories hey? When we have to work together
- MM: One of the other things was doing research for the project. Interviewing all the Elders. It brought us closer together as a group. I really enjoyed that part. Going to certain location. The Elders would point out what they would do. Showing stuff on a map. They would be telling us stories that they wouldn't otherwise tell us and it really....they were very willing to share. It was interesting. I really enjoyed the experience.
- MP: So, these stories that are spoken about in 'Kwadacha by the River' hadn't really been spoken about before?
- MM: No. Because our interview was about land use planning and stuff and its really limited. But these are stories that people lived through. They didn't feel...They wouldn't talk too much about it or would just lightly touch on it but wouldn't go and tell us their whole experience. So, some of the Elders they opened up in a totally different way and they didn't share it as much earlier as they do now.
- MP: How did the direction of the film....how was that decided? Was that something the community chose? What was BC Hydro's role in that?
- MM: Well, we had to transcribe all of our interviews and we transcribed it, typed it out, well transcribed and then we looked at it that way and then we started taking stuff out for the storyline. And there were a couple of directions we could have went. And, but generally there was a general area or storyline that we chose to go with. The three of us participated in that and then after that I believe, but you would have to confirm with Jessica, the finer points of the story were looked at by one of her friends in Vancouver...I forget the name.
- MP: What surprised you about the process of making the film? Did anything surprise you while doing it?
- MM: How fast...well they use Adobe software. We were using Final Cut Pro for our videos. And, the difference in video editing between Adobe and Final cut pro and the camera and the angles

and. A lot of it you can find You Tube courses on how to. There are tons of help online. So, I would say the software and some of the camera and how big of a difference that makes in the audio – the external audio- we were only using the audio from the camera. We did have external audio but it wasn't as good as the one we have now.

MP: Because you had so many interviews and recordings that you had conducted, did you use any of your previous recordings that you had made with the community for Culture Camps and stuff like that or was it all done specifically for 'Kwadacha by the River'?

MM: Yes, there was some. But...oh can you hold on! Just one second.

MP: Yes, you bet

MM: Just one second.

pause for phone call

MM: Hello?

MP: Hi

MM: Sorry about that.

MP: No! No problem.

MM: Okay, what was the question again?

MP: I was asking, was there anything that you would have liked to include in the final version of the film that was excluded?

MM: Oh, there is more. There is, you know, since then a lot of the other elders came up and told us. There are some other stories, those are only the ones we focused on. There are other stories from other families too.

MP: Oh, Ok

MM: Some of that should be included. There are many directions that the documentary could include if we say had an hour-long feature, or an hour and a half long. One of the things that keeps popping up are residential schools. It is something that needs to be addressed and something that has to be included. Lately, something that keeps being mentioned in our interviews and I think it has something...it should be included. Like some of them would hear the plane, it would come and take them away and some of them would take the river back up to come home.

MP: That would have been hugely impacted by...

- MM: Yeah. Or, even something like the war. When the elders mention that they used the river to come out to try and sign up for the war but they were too young so they were refused. That's what one of them said. They enjoyed their trip out but they decided to help be a freight person, I guess. Not sure what title they used...river man or freighter...yeah. So I would say the residential schools, the war. There were a few people who mentioned that...stuff like language. But that is something that could be included in there. A few other elder stories.
- MP: How were the speakers chosen in the final version of the film? You had mentioned the storyline that was chosen for the 20 minutes that it ended up being or?
- MM: Well, we had a general outline of how we would like it. That was the part that I participated in. The stories that it came down to, we decided...that was a team decision. And, it kind of narrowed itself down and the majority of the storyline was with Jess. And I am pretty sure she had some consultant look at it. She has contacts and the budget to do it.
- MP: What are your goals for the film now that it is out there? Do you have any? Or for how it is used?
- MM: Well, it is Kwadacha's story, but there are many First Nations that have the same story. We are just luck that ours is out there in this 18-minute documentary. Oh! To get back to the other question too. Another thing is I guess you have to compare ourselves with the other bands that were impacted too to get a complete picture, to see what it has done, how the dam affected them. That would be something too, to figure a complete picture. We were trying to include the other band, Tsay Keh, but they refused us point blank.
- MP: Ok.
- MM: And they didn't want to participate any further. So, we were...yeah, so we respected their decision and went on without their voice.
- MP: Did Kwadacha participate in the rest of the 'Our Story, Our Voice' gallery and the way it was created?
- MM: Yeah, we were with...Kwadacha is very progressive. We, we really liked their attitude. They were involved in every step of the process, especially the Elders. And they were involved, yeah. There are some quotes on their that you can see that are from Kwadacha Elders on the quote wall [in the gallery].
- MP: You said you had visited the Centre after everything was put together. What are your impressions of the exhibit? Are you happy with the way it turned out? Is there anything you would change?

MM: No. No, they did actually...we were there. They gave us the option of how we would like it set up. They gave us a few plans and we all voted on how it would be.

MP: I just have a couple of final questions.

Are there aspects of work on the project that you think would be beneficial to know? Am I asking the right questions or are there questions I should be asking that I am not? Or is there anything you would like to share?

MM: I'd say keep researching for sure. Did you read Daniel Sims, Dr. Daniel Sims research?

MP: Yes, I have been. I've been looking him up and reading some of his work. I haven't gotten around to sending him an email yet, but I wanted to get a look at what he studies first.

MM: Oh, ok.

MP: He, I read a book review yesterday that he had written about "Where Happiness Dwells". So yes, I have been looking at his work.

MM: And you should probably interview Susan Hatfield, our historian. She is part of the project as well and she is an Elder Historian and she is very involved with the Elders. That is who she works for, the elders group. That is someone you should talk to. She is back in Prince George tonight but will be going back to Kwadacha after a few days.

MP: Jess sent me Susan's email, but would it be a good idea to just call the office and see if she is around or available?

MM: She is an electoral officer up there. I think is her first or second year doing it. So she will be busy with that. She will be busy next week but in the following week she should be here in the office.

MP: I'll try calling the following week and see what works for her and if she is open to talking with me.

MM: Oh, of course.

MP: I wanted to ask about the animation used in the film. IS that something that...Jess had mentioned that a workshop was done at the school...so are the kids, the youth, learning how to use media tools as well? Do animation and cameras and film? Is that something that is happening in the community?

MM: Well, the animation part...remember when you were in Grade 3 or 4 and you participate in this, where they have people come in and you are given one instrument, stuff you can find in the

classroom and you shake it and it makes noise, and everyone does it and it just gets SO LOUD! Well, that is what we did. And we did it in the classroom and it was loud and perfect, and the kids participated in that and they helped draw some of their drawings that they did are in the animation part. There is some stuff that they drew that is included in there but one of the best ones is the wind, and if you look at the animation on there, the wind, that is one of the students that did that. That is Darian, I think his name is. And Chantelle – they made the best wind. And, but the animation that was primarily completed by Dan at Lantern and he is been educated in whatever he is doing, he works with Star Wars and projects like that and has scenes that he uses. So animation is what he does and he did all that himself but the story was by Emil McCook and Dan put the animation to it. There was a neat element to it.

MP: Well, Mitchell I think that is , those are the questions that I had I think.

MM: The story – we just did a general outline for it. Jessica is the one that can fully answer some questions about it.

MP: Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to me. I wouldn't be able to learn about this without getting to speak with the people who participated.

MM: Oh, and you know what else we had updates from her and with the elders group and then we did some direction planning that way too. That was also included into here

MP: You know what I don't know, is when did the project start? What year did you all start working together?

MM: I don't know. I couldn't tell you. I seems like forever ago, but I don't know. I just got used to it being 2017 and now its 2018.

MP: They kind of fly by don't they.

MM: Yeah, I can't believe its March right now.

MP: I think I'm still writing 2017 on my dates and its already most of the way through! I'm sure I'll get it by September. Ok, cool. Well I'll definitely make sure to give a call and see if Susan is available. Do you have any questions for me at all?

MM: No, no. I think you did a great job with the questions and with interviewing and yeah. Good luck with your filming

MP: Thank you very much and I hope it goes well. If you do get the opportunity actually could you sign and send back that consent form I sent you.

MM: Sure.

MP: Do you want a transcribed version of the interview?

MM: Sure, if it's not too much.

MP: Yeah, sure. I'll email it to you and send you a text once it's done and on its way.

MM: People need to know the story and I'm glad that we have this documentary to show for people to understand it. There is a lot of healing to in this process. You can almost see, you can feel it. It's neat.

MP: There is a lot of power in that hey.

MM: Yes, there is.

(46:09)

Jessica Hallenbeck (February 2018)

Lantern Films – creative director, co-director, editor

MP: Maggie Poirier

JH: Jessica Hallenbeck

MP: I haven't heard back from them yet, but I am hoping to hear back from them shortly...yeah..yeah...mhmm....put together...the W3...ok no I haven't been in touch with them....I thought that...after especially after I spoke with you and you mentioned the non-disclosure agreement that maybe I would talk to BC hydro first. Just to get a feel for it.

Thanks again for talking to me again, especially after our conversation last year...I really appreciate it. Are you comfortable with me recording our conversation would that be alright with you?

JH: [muffled through phone] yeah that's fine

MP: If its ok I am going to put you on speaker phone then and if it's really awkward I'll take you off of it. Let me know. Ok, how does that sound?

JH: Yep, it sounds fine.

MP: Ok, um that's perfect. Did you get a chance to look at the consent form that I sent through to you?

JH: Yep, I did, I did for sure. It looks good, it makes sense. Ah, yeah.

MP: Perfect, awesome.

JH: So I guess I just wanted to ask a couple of background questions about Lantern Films and about yourself. I'd ask some questions about the planning stage and what went into the research and then maybe some things about post filming and stuff like that.

JH: Sure

MP: So I am hoping to just keep...keep specifically to the film itself.

JH: Mhmm

MP: So could you talk to me...or...speak with me broadly about the history of your company, Lantern Films?

JH: Yeah, so...haha... I'm sorry I am just laughing because of the fire alarm...

MP: Yeah, haha it does sound like a chaos zone back there....

JH: Does it? Yeah it is ridiculous. So Lantern Films is myself and Dave Short, umm who is here raising his hand joyously and we started lantern films a number of years go. We had worked together on several projects but both had our own film companies but umm we just enjoyed working together and though it kind of made sense to start something together because we had been doing so much collaborative work already....

MP: mhmmm

JH: So previously I had done a lot of work in collaborative films, umm and documentary and Dave comes from a design background and had started his own company Short & Epic. Umm yeah and it just kind of made sense we had a lot of complimentary skill sets. So the Kwadacha project wasn't the first film that we had done together but it certainly it ended up being the longest one we had done in terms of process, sure.

MP: Ok, cool. Right on. Ok, so had you had any experience in the Northeast prior to 'Kwadacha by the River', or was that your first time?

JH: In the northeast....umm I had definitely spent time in Prince George, done some work in Burns Lake and Williams Lake but I had not been...I'm trying to think now...I had not been to that area of northern BC before no.

MP: Did you know anything about the area prior to coming onto the project or about hydroelectricity within British Columbia?

JH: I had worked with Chesslata, a few years before so I definitely knew about the history of hydroelectricity. I didn't know the specifics of the Bennett Dam so when I first heard about that I was pretty shocked.

MP: It is an interesting project.

JH: It is a very interesting project

MP: I'm actually in Hudson's Hope right now, it's very interesting there is lots of snow...

JH: Yep. I heard that they got like a ton of snow a week ago in Kwadacha.

MP: I landed....I just moved back to Vancouver in January and right away my dad started telling me about the weather and the roads and how I could get back down.

JH: Right

MP: How did Lantern films become involved in the project initially?

JH: Umm...yeah. So we were asked to just come in to a meeting to discuss the possibilities of working on the project.. So, yeah we went to hydro and met with the people who were a part of that team and chatted about what could happen. It is essentially my understanding that Kwadacha had expressed an interest in possibly making a film for the impact gallery and so we had an initial meeting and then Dave and I travelled up to Kwadacha to just meet with people and hear from them about what they wanted to do basically. Yeah, so we were met at the airport up there from someone who was working with hydro but it ended up being Dave and I up there. We met with Susan, the Elder coordinator, and the chief and the school and were talking with people about what they wanted.

MP: So your relationship developed with the community just based on that initial visit?

JH: Yeah so based on that initial visit we then had a better sense of what people were wanting, both from the process but also content wise. And we also figured out that there was some capacity in the community. Two people were involved in a multiyear project using film to create an archive for Kwadacha. So we were able to build them into the proposal and kind of hire them to work alongside us.

MP: Oh, that's fantastic!

JH: Yeah, it was really great. And during that initial visit we heard from the school and learned that they wanted to do a – they had a few traditional stories that they had written and illustrated and they had wanted, were interested in having an animation workshop and having one of their stories animated. We also kind of immediately built that into the budget and into the proposal that we submitted to hydro.

MP: Ok. With the project did you have a planned timeline going in or a designated timeline by hydro? How did that work?

JH: So, basically after that we negotiated a Protocol Agreement that was between Hydro and Kwadacha and that kind of set the terms for all of that. That set the terms for copyright, who

owns the material, how that material could be used. So basically the consent process from the community superseded any timelines although it was informally agreed upon that we would try to, that all the interested parties would try to have the film ready to be shown when the Visitor Centre was first opened. But that was not, we were not, asked to follow the same timeline as the rest of the project in that way. Which was also really great.

MP: How were the interview participants chosen? The speakers in the film...

JH: Yeah, that's a good question.

MP: Was Lantern directly involved in that process or were they determined by the community?

JH: Mostly the community. I don't want to say its ad hoc so, Mitch or Sheldon – people who have already worked with Elders, with their Elders for a long time did the interviews and Dave and I....yeah they did most of the interviewing and it was kind of ...I guess we probably spent a year interviewing and filming and in that time we did screenings with Elders and I mean they were just amazing throughout this whole project just coming out to meeting and screenings and dinners and so we would get feedback from them in terms of if we needed to fill in. So I guess there was that and then Susan McCook would kind of suggest people. So, yeah it was hard because you don't want anyone to feel like they were left out and there were a lot of Elders in Kwadacha that were not recorded. So I think there was also some thought about making sure that elders from different families were there to ensure a kind of equal representation you know. So that kind of, it did not really come from us. It was suggested from Elder and the Elders coordinator and based kind of on who had already been interviewed.

MP: And so, did the content of the interviews inform how the film was structured in the editing process? Did the stories that the Elders would tell...how did that inform the film?

JH: Well for sure, the elders really wanted the boat story. They really, really wanted the boat story to be a story in the film. And they were excited about it being an animated story. So that piece, there was a slightly different process that surrounded that component. Yeah, because we talked to many elders about that story, the elders that were there that day and then animated and then edited that story, went back to them got feedback, edited again, got feedback, and then began to animate it and change some elements in the animation based on those elements that we got right or wrong. So that was a bit different and Mitchell was very involved in editing the content for that as well. He came to

Vancouver and spent a week in Vancouver with us. And the rest of the film, again was kind of an iterative process. Yeah, but ...I did more of the editing for the bookends to the animation in a way but then again we would go up and have meetings and elders would come out and provide feedback. And I mean, of course, the feedback is always that people would love to see more, they want to see even more, see longer, especially before the flooding that was a really important, was really important for people to share what life was like before and we did some mapping with them as well. So, yeah.

MP: Ok. Back to the interviews for a second...were they structured interviews – were there a specific set of questions – or did they just kind of flow from the people being interviewed?

JH: They just kind of... yeah I think we may have asked like 2 -3 questions maybe loosely structured around kind of what was life like before/after, but I think everyone kind of knew what we were there for and we didn't really....part of it was that part of some of the elders that we spoke with hadn't been interviewed before for Kwadacha's archive and so we just wanted to leave them the quote "interviews" quite open to whatever someone wanted to share with us so the nation could use those interviews later for their own purposes. And so, yeah we didn't really ask specific questions around...there certainly were no questions around "what were the impacts? How did you feel ?" or anything like that it was more just letting people share their stories.

MP: So would interview be the wrong term to use in that case?

JH: Yeah, in a way it is more of a conversation I think.

MP: Would you describe the making of the film as more participatory or more collaborative or is there a way to describe it or a term to describe the process?

JH: Yeah, I think for me participatory means that people are trained and have taken control over the process themselves and that didn't really happen I mean we trained and worked with people from the community who did have control but I think that Lantern was more active in the process than a really participatory project. But I think it was, yeah I don't know...I guess it was partially collaborative for sure. Yeah, I don't know what I would call it .

MP: No worries. I have just heard those terms used a lot, specifically and I was wondering if that was a descriptive part of the process.

JH: Yeah....I definitely think that Kwadacha had control over the content. And that that had control over the process and what

that looks like and took that in specific directions but we also did do the editing in Vancouver and go back up and have check ins about what the content was so I would be hesitant for sure to say that it was participatory and I think it was as collaborative as we could get it for sure but there were moments where there was less collaboration.

MP: I was looking at and I don't know if you would call it a mandate or what but "Our work is driven by the people who lived the story" and that's kind of tied into the way that Lantern works and tries to collaborate as much as possible and that's cool.

JH: It is really cool. We are lucky that we are able to do that.

MP: Did anything surprise you about the process?

JH: Yeah, I think that I was maybe a bit cynical about Hydro potentially controlling the process and they were actually very supportive. Lindsay especially was very supportive of the process of the film being made and they put a lot of resources to it...they bought equipment for the community, and we would have a lot of feasts and so that for me was pretty quite surprising.

MP: That makes sense. How much material was collected over the duration of the project. It was a two-year project roughly?

JH: Yeah it was a roughly two-year project. Well a lot of Kwadacha members had archives that they were really generous about and let us use. We also went to three or four different archives and gathered a lot of archival material, footage, photographs....ummm and then there was the interviews and all of the interviews and animation....I don't know what are you looking for....in terms of terabytes?

MP: Yeah, I guess so. That's not really something that you could quantify. Was there anything that you would have liked to have had in the film that was excluded? Did you have any kind of direction or hopes that way?

JH: Well, I think it would be great for there to be a kind of longer film. And maybe that will happen one day. You never know.

MP: I suppose that answers my next question, would you like to revisit some of the themes that were discussed in the project or community?.... How would you describe your relationship with the community now, does it continue?

JH: Yes it definitely continues. I am just trying to figure out now when I am going to go back up. We actually did another project with the community, with the school last year and we try to go to the Elders Gathering every year and camp out

with the Elders from Kwadacha .. So that relationship is ongoing for sure, Which I think is part of Lanterns commitment to doing the project which was to make sure that while the work with Hydro is not ongoing that we continue to have relationships with people in Kwadacha that were just so generous in sharing the stories with us. Umm so that is something that has been important for us to continue to do on our own.

MP: Is that the Aatsie Davie? That was really neat to watch.

JH: Thanks!

MP: Your experience in media projects is extensive, both as a contractor and in your own research. How does that inform the process and could you speak to me a little about the ethics of filmmaking?

JH: Yeah, I think that doing my PhD in Geography but really benefitting a lot from community (committee?) members who are in critical Indigenous studies and just from the amount of events and connections and conversation that I've had with critical Indigenous studies at UBC really did affect the protocol agreement and the priorities that went to knowledge ownership and control and copyright being held in the community that for sure would not have necessarily been on the ...I can't speak for Kwadacha in that...but for me it was clear that that was a priority. And even just in terms of negotiating with the lawyers and in terms of the interim copyright just those logistics that critical framing that I had helped for sure. And then having worked and benefited so much from that knowledge that different Indigenous leaders and communities have shared with me definitely helped me to have a basic understanding before going into Kwadacha. Yeah.

MP: So you had mentioned before that the rights to the film were maintained by the community and permissions have not been given for academic use. Umm...

JH: So that has changed. The initial protocol agreement in there that said that Lantern could approach Kwadacha at the end of the project about what could happen with the film so we did that with chief and council and we have a separate Memorandum of Understanding with Kwadacha now. Kwadacha decided that they would like to have the film out there so they gave us permission to submit it to festivals and try to talk to television networks about getting it broadcast and find a distributor. So that is something that the community decided that they wanted to do and we also met with Elders individually and had them sign it off on what they gave us permission to do. And so now, the film is showing in a

few festivals and we have a tentative contract with a broadcaster. So that is really really great.

MP: That is wonderful.

JH: Yeah we are really happy. So more people will know the story. For sure.

MP: Yeah I think that is really important. I mean for me, having grown up here, that was definitely not a story that I heard as a young person. So...

JH: I think, I mean I know for Kwadacha that it is important for them that contractors that work in their territory know the story. That people who might go to Kwadacha have access to it as well, because I think it is really important context for people who do work up there.

MP: Absolutely, If I was interested in speaking with the community about using the film in this research who would be the best person to speak with or talk to ?

JH: I would go to Susan McCook and then she would at least be able to give you advice if you want to speak with her directly or go through chief and council....

MP: Is there anything that I haven't asked about or talked to you with that you would like to speak about?

JH: Umm....I don't think so. Yeah, other than the fact that Kwadacha...I mean Hydro put in resources but Kwadacha put in a serious amount of resources as well. And I think that is really really important. Chief and council were supportive of the project and let it be steered by Elders and Susan McCook who is the Elders coordinator did not get money from Hydro she is hired by Kwadacha but she was really essential to setting up meetings, coordinating everything. She would go up with us and hold elders meetings. So I think that the film was...Kwadacha put in a ton of time and a ton of resources as well and because it was something that they really wanted to have done. And I think that that is really important and they also had healing sessions along the way because this was a story that people hadn't necessarily talked to each other about in that way for a long time. So I think just acknowledging just how much work every one there put into it is important.

MP: And is the film still used within the community as well?

JH: Yes, it is. I know that the school screened it at the beginning of their school year to students and teachers. So I think it is and I think people are excited about it being on television. And then everyone in the community has one at the end of

the project we did make copies for every member of Kwadacha. Copy of the film and their interviews.

MP: Are there any questions that I am missing that would add to a fuller perspective of that process. I guess I just asked that

JH: I think that maybe what I hadn't quite realized at the beginning of the project was how important it was to just go and spend time with people. And so we did a lot of that. We took elders out berry picking. That process of just hanging out and getting to know people and visiting was very important as well.

MP: Did you always fly in or did you drive in as well?

JH: The first couple of times we flew and then after that we drove up. Which also made a big difference I think just getting to know that land and then filming more of the territory. And then it was just really expensive to fly in with all that gear.

MP: Yeah I imagine that would be...

JH: Yeah...haha...forget it.

MP: Ok, well thank you so much for your time Jessica I really appreciate getting to speak with you.

JH: Yeah thank you. It's a really interesting project that you are doing.

MP: Yeah and thank you for your help with the contacts and everything I can't thank you enough for that

JH: Ill email you Susan's contact if that is helpful

MP: Ok great.

JH: Yeah of course have a good day.

MP: You as well

JH: Ok, bye!

Appendix B.

Film Transcriptions

'Kwadacha by the River' (2017)

Director: Jessica Hallenbeck, Dave Shortt, Mitchell McCook

Genre: Documentary (2017) Duration:18:30 Language: English Province: BC

Voice unknown: In 1961 BC Hydro began to build the Bennett Dam. One of the largest dams in the world. This is the story of what happened to us...

Voice unknown but different than previous: Kwadacha means 'by the river' you know. We come from Kwadacha. That's what it means.

Voice unknown: We live in northern British Columbia. Our territory stretches from Summit Lake far into the Rocky Mountains.

Interview with Mary-Jean and Willie Poole

Mary-Jean: They know everything off the land. They use everything off the land. For everything you do They make their own moccasins... all their clothing. I wish it would be like that again. I just wish.

Emil McCook, chief of Kwadacha for 38 years: We were all trappers then eh. And we were able to use the Finlay River to transport our goods and for travelling.

Bill Van Somer: There was trappers pretty well every 15 miles. Right from Summit Lake pretty much right to Fort Ware.

Johnny Poole: When they take their time it takes like two week a bit longer to make the trip from here to McLeod Lake. And sometimes they use uh smoke and they make dry meat along the river.

Laura Seymour: People living along the river always. And then you would land and visit them. Sometimes they do their campin'. You would just land by them and spend the night. Just pitch your tent and spend the night. Visit with them and keep going. I travel lots when I was young. I wish those were the days again.

Interview with Craig and Leena McCook

Leena McCook: I remember camping around there beside =the river and it was just like everything was just so clean, everything was just the water looked sparkly. And people were just enjoying themselves camping and I do remember a lot of good memories.

Interview with Shirley van Somer, Elsie Arthurs, Anne Timmins

Elsie Arthurs: I can close my eyes even yet and picture the way it was. The cutbacks, this little flat over here and we would see geese taking off in the summer time and I , I can I can still picture that in my mind.

Oh my god and Ingenika was so beautiful. The river water there was just absolutely turquoise. I wouldn't be able to tell you now or after the waters came where any of that was. I don't have a clue. Not at all.

Film Text: " In 1967, the flooding began"

Undetermined voice, male: The Williston Lake the dam and you know all the things we have lost. Tremendous eh. And it's not going to be replaced.

Johnny Poole: In 65, 66 they were saying that the water was going to be up here. Nobody minded about that. They just thought it was stories going round.

Emil McCook: They treat us as if we weren't here. They just go ahead and do whatever they want. There was no consultation eh.

Mike Abou (May 3rd 1936 to March 25th 2016): Everybody was pretty mad about that. Everybody says go find that guy Bennett guy and bend him over that dam. Make him swallow his dam. They said.

Chief Donny Van Somer: The government and BC Hydro they had no idea what they were doing. The water was coming up like amazingly fast. I watched it come up over a little hill over a little road way a little trail.

Bill Van Somer: I got to Finlay Forks there in July. That thing was coming up like 4 feet a day.

Laura Seymour: All of it sudden it starts rising up. Rising up. No stop to it People start moving back to our. People have everything by that river. Their cabins...

Johnny Poole: At Finlay Forks they just had to keep moving up higher and higher until they are just about right up against the mountain.

Leena McCook and Craig:

Leena McCook: Overnight some people had to jump up because `the water was come right up to their campsites. And dogs were howling and barking and they got them up. So some families had to actually pack in the night and there was crying of children and stuff like that in some of the camps.

Undetermined voice: There was an amazing amount of timber that was left. There was miles and miles of islands of debris floating and blocking the waterways. I didn't know what it meant but I did see a lot of devastation. I was there when we were at Finlay Forks when my Uncle Art the lake swamped his boat

Laura Seymour: I think it was 68 or 69.

Undetermined voice, male: It was really chaos there was lots of debris and when the lake rising it got windier in the Peace

Laura Seymour: That Peace river wind they call it. When it blows it is just too much for that lake eh?

Emil McCook: So I was with Art Van Somer he was the one that had the boat. We had to pick up groceries and fuel at Finlay Forks and of course we didn't realize that by that time the waves in the lake were 4 feet by the time we got going again.

Mike Abou & Undetermined voice, male: They were quite a ways out you could see the waves going we thought they were going to tip so we follow them.

Undetermined voice, female: Shirly and I was watching them eh. What we seen was really terrifying. Specially if your family is out there holy man. Art and Ralph. Ralph was pretty small that time.

Emil Mc Cook: Once we hit the north wave, our boat acted like a submarine eh. It cut right through the wave and it just covered us. The stern part of the boat first went down and all the stuff went back. All I heard was Art saying Emil! Emil! Throw me a plank. So I throw him a plank and he grabbed his son and hanged onto the plank. The next boat coming behind us saw us eh in trouble and so they started unloading it. They threw all the drums of fuel into the lake they were all floating around. the wind coming out of the peace some floating to the south.

Mike Abou & Undetermined Voice: First thing I do is pick up Ron, Ralph, the smaller kid and pull him in the boat and art joe he was a forestry guy he says " I couldn't swim, I couldn't swim"

Emil Mc Cook: They picked me up and we all get back in the small boat

Mike Abou & Undetermined voice: And we head back to shore. Lots of guys were watching

Laura Seymour: So that was a big scare of our life all of us. I know when my dad heard about it oh my gosh he starts using tugboat. It's too dangerous to use river boat. Certainly couldn't go to McLeod or summit lake or anywhere because of that lake it just cut off everybody.

Film text : "The flooding made river travel impossible, destroying the way of life of the Tsek'ehne Peoples".

Elder Van Somer: When it was sad to see the river our way of life disappeared.

Mike Abou: Everything turned sour for everybody because of that I don't know what to say because its bad very very bad. Now and then after

that they nothing only thing is ...one time we counted 200 some moose drowned in that lake

Johnny Poole: Those beaver, supposed to be a water animal you see their dead body floating around. Imagining beaver drowning getting killed eh

Mary Jean: it's not only the moose drowned it's all kinds bear and everything. Those goats and everything that used to cross the river where the lake is now they don't do that no more. Even the fish now. You can't eat em it's no good.

Emil McCook: All the things like that that traditionally we use again it's not there. And its underwater eh.

Elsie Arthurs: It was a horror. A real horror show what happened. I remember my mother being just beside herself because the graveyard at Fort Graham was underwater the graveyard and Ingenika was underwater.

Shirly Van Somers: How do you feel when you can't do nothing about it?

Else: And those were our ancestors. They mattered. They were us they were a part of us.

Text: My mother said all these people they are your relatives

Emil McCook: They actually are taking away our livelihood and our home. They are just misplacing people it's just like taking your house from you hey. And people haven't realized that.

Johnny Poole: I that flooding and everything it seems like everybody lost somewhere

Emil McCook: Tis a valley that we lost forever and first nation concern eh.

Shirly van Somer: The lake changed a lot of lives and we are still feeling that today

Mary Jean: Now after that lake it's just always raining and we don't have much sunshine

Donny van Somer: You see the ah destruction of the waterways and the sloughing of the water of the banks and our road way now that comes in here is almost eroded away. I don't know if it's ever going to stop, I mean you would think it would but like it just continues after almost like 40 50 years now. I don't know if it quits

Emil McCook: It makes it hard for our young generation to realize what we have been through. What we enjoyed before the lake came eh. It's unbelievable

Today we are trying to regain it trying to get it back

Undetermined voice: Towards Hudson's Hope, Dawson Creek, all down that Peace they are the one that go the benefit we never got nothing out of it just suffering.

Mary Jean: They make power out of it they don't give us nothing out of it. Why should we pay that comes off our own river? We don't need that power we tell them that but they didn't listen. That's what we were mad about.

Shirly Van Somer: But when it was promised that we would have free power from it and that was reneged on that yet too that's just another a kick in the face

Emil McCook: Not first nations looking at the all mighty dollar, get rich eh but you don't die with all the money that you make eh?

Anne Timmins: Yeah I guess W.A.C Bennett had a vision eh

Elsie Arthurs: Yeah he had a vision for the province, he did.

Anne Timmins: But it wasn't ours

Elsie Arthurs: Yeah but it wasn't ours. It wasn't ours.

Film text: "The dam affected a territory the size of France. Kwadacha's energy comes from a diesel generator. Kwadacha pays BC Hydro for this diesel power".

'Canyon of Destiny' (1968)

Director: Lew Perry

Genre: Documentary (1968) Duration: 28:00 Language: English Province: BC

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[Film opening, buses, and flags and balloons at an opening/dedication ceremony. Speaker Ray Williston. Pans over gathering. Smoking workman with balloons, bright pink.]

"On the 12th of September 1967 over three thousand people witnessed the dedication ceremonies of the W.A.C Bennett Dam. A proud and happy moment for the engineers, contractors and thousands of workmen who had brought it to completion.

Shot of earth filled dam W.A.C Bennett

One of the largest of its kind in the world today, this massive structure was built in record time and completed ahead of schedule. Here was a project wherein man had joined forces with nature to stop an ancient river, to store its might waters, and harness their wasting power.

Soon their rampant flow would be put under control to produce 3 million horse power of electrical energy.

Shot of water river flowing illustrating its strength within the canyon and trench.

But what was the background story, how had they achieved this triumph, and what part had nature played in its fulfillment?

"THROUGH ITS INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE BRITISH COLUMBIA HYDRO AND POWER AUTHORITY presents 'CANYON OF DESTINY'"

(Titles shown over flowing Peace River rapids)

Our story begins in the Canyon of the Peace, eroded deep into the shale and sandstone of prehistoric time. It was here that engineers started their first studies of the watershed in 1956. Their objective, to measure the power of the river and to find a way of harnessing it.

Rock forms and strata of the canyon walls presented a challenge in which the surveyor, the geologist, the engineer all took part. The survey extended from the mouth of the canyon to the headwaters of the Finlay and the parsnip rivers 200 miles upstream. Here in the canyon cliffs toward high on layers of sandstone, silt and occasional layers of coal (canyon walls shown). Surveyors took advantage of the low water to examine the foundation rock of the river but project required more than the finding of a dam site, they had also to find the materials with which to build the dam.

There could be no quick conclusions on a project of this magnitude but the canyon walls began to give up the secrets they had contained almost since the world began. Some dated back in the history of the ancient world, well over 200 million years ago. The surface masses of the earth were in their primal state of heaving and erosion and the land masses of north America looked something like this (map of world shown without any markers just continents kind of) with the peace area underwater. As the crust of the earth shrank through the ages the elements continued to make landforms and then to erode them away adding new silt and sand to the ocean floors to become the rock and the sandstone of our world of today. The upheaval that forced the Rocky Mountains skyward in the tertiary period drastically changed the land pattern of north America. The inland seas were gone, the landmasses were pushed above tidewater and the peace river system was born. It started in the tributary streams of the Finlay and parsnip that joined to flow out of the rocky mountain trench, eastward to the plains and then northward to the arctic. The survey concentrated in the mountain region from the canyon westward. (camping surveyors etc. shown).

Four major sites were examined and surveyed within the canyon itself. And the flags of the surveyor became a familiar site up and down 200 miles of the river. Sandstone bluffs gave up their secrets to the experienced eyes of the geologist. These men quickly deduced that the canyon was about 15,000 years old. While the peace river itself was well over 40 million. They also determined that the base rock of the canyon formed on the ocean floor millions of years ago was now about 2000 feet above sea level. The canyon appeared to have great possibilities as a dam site but where would they find the materials to build such a dam. (Roaring water and boats)

Other crews examined the 80 mile stretch of the river between the canyon and Finlay forks. The river valley here was found to be much

wider and cut deep into the base rock. The mountains were higher actually the northern outposts of the Rockies.

Shales of the river bed provided more information. The strata contained fossils that had thrived on the ocean bed of the ancient world. Layer upon layer of primitive shellfish that had lived in cambium period of time. All these findings were providing clues to the ages and nature of the foundation rock and its capacity to bear the tremendous weight of a dam and its waters.

The remains of skeletons embedded in the sandstone provided further clues. These were the ribs and vertebrae of a dinosaur, estimated to be about 120 million years old. That helped the geologists to help determine the age of this particular rock formation. It recalled a section of cretaceous time when this area was a semi-tropical swampland ruled by giant reptiles.

Lining the ancient valley were many high benches of loose gravel, clothed in green and looking deceptively solid. These were products of the ice ages, when the arctic ice cap moved down to hold half the continent in its grip. The cordilleran field moved in from the northwest, the field from the northeast. For times in the past million years the area of the peace was covered in fields of ice that graveled and pulverized the mountain rock beneath.

Engineers in their search found these extensive glacial deposits a serious drawback to locating a dam on the upper river. But something else happened in the last ice age that did in fact determine the final location of the dam. About 15 thousand years ago as the mass of ice receded up the concourse of the peace, and its lakes drained away it left behind a terminal moraine of glacial till that blocked the valley and diverted the river in a new course around Portage mountain. This new channel was destined to become the canyon of the peace and the moraine that had blocked the river and created the canyon was to meet a destiny of its own.

Three years of surveys and study of data climaxed to build a dam near the head of the canyon and to use the materials of the moraine to build it.

(FOCUSES IN ON BOOK TITLED "PEACE RIVER HYDRO-ELECTRIC PROJECT, GEOLOGY")

In essence, the basic plan was to divert the river through tunnels to dry up half a mile of the riverbed for the building of the dam,. Building would take place in five seasonal stages, to place 57 million yards of material from the moraine. A structure 600 feet high, a mile and quarter long and a half mile thick at the base. Eventually it would impound the waters of the river to form a reservoir 225 miles long in the upper valley. A power house excavated in the rock of the east abutment would house equipment for 3 million horsepower of electrical generating capacity.

Construction started in the fall of 1961 and two years later the river had been diverted around the building site (close up of diversion tunnels without put). The dry river bed became a scene of action, preparing for the construction of the dam. After scouring a square mile of rock, crews sprayed selected areas with a cement mixture to feel the surface and provide contact for the fill. Both dam and foundation would have to withstand water pressures of up to 300 pounds per square inch. Along the axis of the dam a culvert was built to shelter other crews who would be feeling foundation rock as the dam was being built up overhead. All these preparations preceded the building of the dam. In sections a barrier of 600 feet high with zones of various fill materials designed for minimum seepage and high resistance to pressures. The impervious core would connect with a grout curtain extending down 360 feet into the rock.

Nature had provided a dam site on a firm foundation and here less than 4 miles away was the moraine of glacial materials cleared of overburden and ready for the job ahead. (Moraine from dam site from the sky).

(Equipment/machinery moving material)

The material that had stopped the river 15,000 years ago was now enrooted to do it again. The longest conveyor belt in the world went into operation on July 30th 1964. At 12 miles an hour, 24 hours a day, it fed a continuous stream to a processing plant at the site. Here the raw material of the moraine is screened and processed to yield a selection of 7 basic materials ranging from large stone to pebbles and further to the final separation of sand and silt. From these stock piles the control operator under direction from the site sends new combinations of materials racing along destined for specific zones and placement within the dam.

By late summer of 1965 the fill had reached an elevation 250 feet above the river bed and the largest dump trucks in the world looked like ants on a vast tabletop.

Loads of 100 tons were quickly lost in the immensity of the structure. As graders leveled each load, vibrating rollers compacted it into bond with the dam. placing the fill had to be carried out in summer as freezing temperatures and snow made placement in winter impossible. But winter did not stop grouting crews now 200 feet down in the culvert. Day in day out these men sank their drills through the walls of the culvert in to the foundation. And they were followed by other crews whose job was to prepare the cement compound and inject it into the rock.

Down through the drill holes and under controlled pressures the grout seeks out and seals the most minute crevices in the foundation of the dam. These contractors from Yugoslavia experienced in deep grouting continued to seal the bedrock 360 feet down in the foundation.

(Shows sign "Level of water at full reservoir elevation 2200 feet)

But the action was not confined to the dam, there was the reservoir to prepare for flooding. The ancient river bed above the canyon will become a lake over 225 miles in length and averaging 3 miles in width. The upper end is in the rocky mountain trench.

The trading post of Finlay Forks, the one-time trading center of this wilderness is long deserted and ready for the days when the waters will rise and make it only a memory

And this is the Finlay river along which forestry crews of the BC Government are working against time to clear the reservoir for navigation to facilitate future resource development in the area. Access is only possibly by river boat or plane. (Shows riverboats).

Logging contractors are removing the most merchantable timber. Mainly spruce. It is limited in growth due to the nature of the soil. (machinery at work falling)

(close up of tree being fell shown, tools of machinery working, forests falling, chains used)

Scrub timber which predominates in the area is not practical to market is (chain taking down large sections pulled between two pieces of machinery) and is being removed.

The job is made more difficult by miles of muskeg which bog down the equipment. The scrub is allowed to dry out and in the right season it is burned.

(Proud music and construction scene with intakes shown)

By the spring of 1967, the intake structure that would intake structure that would admit waters into the subterranean powerhouse was nearing completion. Construction crews were preparing the concrete forms for the upper deck that would support the gate operating equipment. By this time the dam had reached an elevation 450 feet above the river bed with 150 feet still to go. While across the valley the spillway channel had been gouged out of the rock to provide an escape route for flood waters if the reservoir should ever threaten to overflow the dam. In the excavation of the spillway and the powerhouse geologists found many remnants of the prehistoric past. This semidivine is part of a fossilized tree that thrived in tidelands about 20 million years ago. To the geologist this was more than a construction job it was a treasure of geological evidence to strengthen man's knowledge of the past. A dinosaur footprint. The fossil of an ancient turtle that turned up in the excavation of the powerhouse. Fossils of tree ferns and petrified wood. The broken tusk of a mammoth estimated to be 11,000 years old was found in the moraine. And now from the moraine the endless stream continues and by July of 1967 the structure of the dam was nearing its final crestline.

Meanwhile turbine components started to arrive in Vancouver for transshipment to the project where deep down in the rock the first five

penstocks were ready to be connected to the power generating equipment.

This giant cavern 900 feet long (within the powerhouse shown with overhead crane) will house 10 turbine generators with combined capacity exceeding 3 million horse power. The first power will be produced by Canadian made electronic generators driven by turbines made in Japan. These turbine distributor casings will receive the water through penstocks from the intakes 500 feet above. Fabricated of 2-inch steel plates they will finally be embedded in concrete to withstand the tremendous pressures.

In this rugged land upset by centuries of upheaval and erosion the helicopter has proven its worth by building 570 miles of transmission line to carry the power into service. While much of the line was accessible there was many stretches where the building of access roads proved impractical. 7000 miles of aluminum cable will conduct the new power into a grid system designed to serve the expanding economy of British Columbia.

On this memorable occasion of September 12th in Canada's centennial year of 1967 Lieutenant-Governor George R. Perks dedicated this tremendous dam to the service of the people of British Columbia. The W.A.C Bennett dam one of the largest earth-filled dams in the world, ready now to store the water of the historic peace and fulfill its destiny to mankind.