

Introduction to the Collection

Margaret Kress & Evie Plaice

This collection of papers, sorted into the four areas of Renewal, Research, Reflection and Review, bring together the sharp, bright, profound and often intensely provocative voices of many Indigenous scholars and their allies. Here we describe and share the various ways in which students, faculty, elders and community members are working towards reconciliation at the University of New Brunswick and beyond. We bring together examples from education and counselling, law, nursing, social work and child welfare. We reflect, review, research and begin the slow, sure process of renewal in our relations between Indigenous and settler peoples as scholars, learners, mentors and leaders. We work together and between unique communicative strategies that highlight the strengths and creativities of both Indigenous and settler scholarship in a variety of academic forms, including storywork and narrative, transformative praxis and participatory action, reflectivity and reflexivity, ceremony and spirituality – all as ways of awakening and celebrating the power, potential and beauty of Indigenous pedagogies.

Renewal

The contributors in this section speak to their own experiences in a series of individual reflections on transforming the ways we interact with each other and extend and share our knowledges. Metis scholar Margaret Kress describes her framework of Wolostoyey pedagogy, which she is developing with knowledge keepers Imelda and David Perley. Wolostoyey words are explored for their transformative pedagogical potential. In a series of chapter

summaries, Kress's mentors, colleagues and students use their own educational stories to elucidate the meaning and praxis encapsulated in the Wolostoquey language.

Jen Rowett and Andrea Trenholm explain the complexities of applying a 'two-eyed seeing' framework in co-creating a graduate certificate in Indigenous counselling, where both western and Indigenous expertise is implemented. The particular challenges facing western academic professional programs in transforming pedagogy and practice is also central social workers Lise DeGrace and Nancy McBain. Colleagues over many decades in First Nation child services, DeGrace and McBain narrate how combining their wisdom and experience helped them develop effective strategies and the best possible outcomes for those in their care.

Nursing pedagogy at the University of New Brunswick is summarised contrastingly by Shelley Francis and Brenda Hay. As director of the Aboriginal Nursing Initiative at UNB, Francis draws upon her own Wolostoquey heritage in highlighting the rich Indigenous knowledge base available to transform nursing practice and, as a consequence, Indigenous health outcomes in the province. A nursing tutor and practitioner of many years standing, Hay reflects on the need for cultural safety training in nursing programs through an examination of UNB's clinical immersion model. Both Francis and Hay acknowledge the role of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 'calls to action' (2015) in fostering these changes to professional practice.

Nicole O'Byrne and Natasha Martin-Mitchell share stories attesting to the transformative potential in an individual's practice. O'Byrne describes her awakening as an ally and a 'treaty person' teaching Indigenous Law at UNB through inviting prominent

Indigenous lawyers such as Sakej Henderson and John Borrows to speak at the university. Transformative in an entirely different way is Master's graduate Natasha Martin-Mitchell's capstone project describing the creation of her traditional regalia. The provenance of each item is explained, along with its specific use and particular personal meaning as she wears it in ceremony and dance.

Research

Personal and intellectual perspectives are combined in the following research journeys. Interdisciplinary doctoral student Chris George has experienced the complexity of decolonizing an academic institution at first hand. George confronts the challenges of framing Indigenous knowledge in terms of western academic demands by identifying the influences of neocolonialism and cognitive assimilation in academia, and eventually finds answers in the traditional teachings of the Longhouse.

Personal experiences are again used to interrogate colonial understandings. John Sylliboy tests the definition of two-spirit for Indigenous LGBTQ Mi'kmaq, while Lucy Fowler explores hip-hop as a creative outlet for Metis youth. Researching North American Indigenous cultures for a deeper understanding of the role of two-spirit people, Sylliboy uses his own visual framework to explain why he rejects colonial and Eurocentric terms in favour of a broader, more holistic and nuanced usage. Fowler contests the way in which academic writing holds Indigenous people in a state of unchanging tradition, 'frozen in time' as she puts it. Hip-hop, Fowler explains, by its very nature as a voice for the disenfranchised, has the unique ability to give expression to local contexts.

Comparing effective strategies for teaching and learning math through immersion programmes in New Brunswick and

northern Norway bring Dicks, Culligan, Huru and Simensen to identify cornerstones necessary for transformation. They posit safe and welcoming learning environments such as New Zealand language nests must be supported by policies that ensure the vital status of minority, Indigenous and endangered languages.

Reviews

Engaging and extending the conversations started by the authors in the works under review, each reviewer in this section finds a particular angle to discuss in light of personal reflection. Extending Cote-Meek's devastating summation of the university experience for Indigenous students (*Colonized Classrooms: Racism, Trauma and Resistance in Post-Secondary Education* (2014)), emerging Indigenous scholar Allan Sabattis-Atwin reveals the depth and persistence of the racism that is rife and often goes unchallenged in academic settings. Decolonization and Indigenization are essential for the retention and sustained contribution of Indigenous students. Equally profoundly, Ruthie Fullerton sets out to document her progress as she reads Isabelle Knockwood's memoir of life at Shubenacadie Residential School (*Out of the Depths: The Experiences of Mi'kmaw Children at the Indian Residential School at Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia* (1992)) over the course of a summer. Writing her reflections as part of the coursework for her Education Masters at UNB, Fullerton finds points of intense political and philosophical intersection in her understanding of Knockwood's intentions in the writing of her memoir.

In two astute reviews of texts destined for educational purposes, Margaret Kress and Arlene Hanson highlight the transformative power of language and story. An experienced educator herself, Kress is well-able to characterise Sylvia Moore's analysis of the antics of trickster Crow (*Trickster Chases the Tail of*

Education (2017)) as an accounting of “the juxtaposed reality of a Canadian education” which honours all beings, their teachings and their relevance in the circle of life. Hansen praises Keith and Linda Goulet for their commitment to transformative teacher education which uses Cree words to explore alternative and effective pedagogies for Indigenous students (*Teaching Each Other: Nehinuw Concepts & Indigenous Pedagogies* (2014)).

Katelyn Copage and Sarah Francis mimic the irreverent yet profoundly revealing style used by Thomas King and other Indigenous humourists to speak truth to power. Francis unpacks King’s five Massey lectures (*The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative* (2008)) which expose how European colonizers have shaped our perceptions of Indigenous people. Copage captures the wonderful sense of fun and possibility in Drew Hayden Taylor’s National Film Board documentary on Indigenous humourists (*Redskins, Tricksters and Puppy Stew* (2000)). In poking fun at our efforts at reconciliation, Indigenous wit and pathos confront the damage inflicted by the stories we tell about each other and unsettle preconceptions about inequality, racism, and injustice, while challenging profoundly unbalanced Eurocentric narratives. The stories we share about one another must be just and accountable. Because, as King points out, “once a story is told, it cannot be called back.”

Reflections

Some of the most profound thinking in this collection can be found in the reflections gathered here from young undergraduates, emerging teachers, seasoned academics and career educators. They explore dangerous truths and uncomfortable revelations. Evie Plaice reflects on the many years of effort it has taken her colleagues at MWC to bring about deep and meaningful

change across the UNB campus. In his presentation at the Fredericton Playhouse, Alex Green speaks about the emotional awakening he experienced in viewing Gord Downey's *Secret Path* and taking part in the Karos Blanket exercise as part of his teacher education program. Krista Cabel reflects on two widely disparate yet horrifyingly similar experiences as a new teacher in Rwanda and Canada. Her comparison of the Rwandan genocide of 1994 and Canada's history of Indian residential schooling is shocking because it exposes assimilation in Canada for what it is: genocide.

Finally, two stories about educational journeys help us revision our approaches to reconciliation. Downey and Harkins discuss the possibilities of a unique style of writing that honours a M'kmaq worldview of relationality. Drawing on their own unique backgrounds, Downey reflects about his own Mi'kmaq identity while Harkins reflects on her role as supervisor and mentor in this process of discovery. In the process, they peel back layers of colonial 'cognitive imperialism' in their attempts at creating an authentic Indigenous voice.

David Perley's personal story commencing with Day School in Tobique reveals that abuses of power and cognitive imperialism were not the sole province of residential schools. Day schools were also mechanisms of assimilation. Perley's story makes it clear that little has changed in education over his lifetime as an educator. The ongoing struggle to rid education of its colonial burden and revitalize Indigenous knowledges and pedagogies is made even more pressing by the 94 calls to action of the 2015 report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that clearly outline what still needs to be done if we are to honour our relationships and move forward into a healthy and respectful future.

Ranging across many research interests of students and professors, both Indigenous and ally, in providing a sampling of the work of the Faculty of Education, especially MWC, at the University of New Brunswick and beyond, where scholars are transforming their teaching practices in order to address the TRC's calls to action, these papers offer excellent teaching potential. We hope you enjoy reading about our initiatives and find them informative, inspiring and, most of all, useful.]

Margaret Kress, PhD, a Saskatchewan woman of Métis, French, English, and German ancestry, is guided by the words of Elders in her quest for creating a transformative society. She has worked closely with Elders, traditional peoples, and educational and community leaders throughout Canada in the areas of Indigenous wellness and social and environmental justice. As Assistant Professor with the Faculty of Education, UNB, she supports students by focusing on issues associated with Indigenous, critical, inclusive and land-based pedagogies, Indigenous and participatory research methodologies, language retrieval and protection, matricultures and youth engagement. She is recipient of the SSHRC Insight Grant (2016-2020), *Preserving sacred landscapes: the reawakening of blood memory as justice*. As Principal Investigator, she collaborates with researchers from the Universities of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, Stockholm and the Sami University College. Margaret is published in the *Canadian Women Studies*, *kiniwan*, *Of Land & Living Skies: A community Journal on Place, Land, and Learning*, and *Honouring Indigenous Women-Hearts of Nation*.

Evie Plaice, PhD, is Associate Professor of Anthropology in the Faculty of Education at the University of New Brunswick, engaged in the challenges confronting First Nations communities in acquiring equitable and appropriate education. Dr. Plaice wrote both her masters and doctoral theses on aspects of land use and identity in NunatuKavut, Labrador, where she worked during the 1970s and 1980s. She taught in South Africa during the 1990s and researched the emerging South African Land Commission. Since coming to UNB in 1999, she has worked with colleagues and Elders as Principal Investigator for the SSHRC-funded project, *Before the Dam: Documenting Spoken Maliseet in Educational, Cultural and Spiritual Contexts*. As participant in the Community-University Research Alliance, *Understanding the Past to Build the Future*, between Memorial University of Newfoundland, Parks Canada, UNB, and NunatuKavut, Evie and her students developed a virtual world educational platform to facilitate grade school student access to the new research on Inuit occupancy in Southeastern Labrador generated by the project's archaeologists, anthropologists and historians. She is currently exploring Indigenous matricultures, and working with colleagues on the introduction of Land pedagogy at UNB.

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