

**COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT: CASE STUDY OF A PARTNERSHIP  
ON COAST SALISH TERRITORY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA**

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## Abstract

In the context of expanding community engagement efforts by universities and growing awareness of the past and current impacts of settler-colonialism in Canada, this study explores one Indigenous-settler, community-university partnership. Building on a framework of community-university engagement and decolonization, or decolonizing community-university engagement, this case study explores a partnership between Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children and Family Services Society (Xyolhemeylh) and the Division of Health Care Communication at the University of British Columbia (UBC-DHCC). The ‘Community as Teacher’ program, which began in 2006 and is ongoing as of 2013, engages groups of UBC health professional students in 3-day cultural summer camps. The camps, designed to further connect Indigenous youth and families with their culture, were initiated by Stó:lō elders over 20 years ago. Xyolhemeylh staff coordinate the cultural camp program in collaboration with Stó:lō community groups. UBC-DHCC recruits UBC health professional students to participate in camps as part of the ‘Community as Teacher’ program.

This qualitative case study draws primarily on analysis of program documents and interviews with four Xyolhemeylh and three UBC-DHCC participants. The findings of this study are framed within ‘Four Rs’, building upon existing frameworks of Indigenous community-university engagement (Butin, 2010; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991). Building on a foundation of **relevance** to the mission of both partners, both partners undertook **risk-taking**, based on their respective contexts, in establishing and continuing to invest in the relationship. **Respect**, as expressed by working ‘in a good way’, formed the basis for interpersonal **relationship-building**. This study provides a potential framework for practitioners and has implications for the Community as Teacher partnership, funding structures, and Indigenous-university partnerships.

## **Preface**

This identification, design, implementation, analysis, and writing of this study was conducted by Margaret (Mali) Bain. The study has been approved by UBC's Behavioural Research Ethics Board through a Minimal Risk Review, certificate # H12-02360.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

BC – British Columbia

BREB – UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board

CBEL – Community-based experiential learning

CSL – Community service-learning

FVACFSS – Fraser Valley Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society

SSRMC – Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre

UBC – University of British Columbia

UBC-DHCC – Division of Health Care Communication

Xyolhemeylh – Fraser Valley Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society



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Thank you to Mom, Dad, and my sibling-friends Sarah, Peter, and Melissa. Thank you to Jane Storey and Roy Jelly – your influence has and will continue to shape my world in ways you will never know. Thank you to friends who are more like family, who have been there for me throughout these years of multiple part-time jobs, research, and thesis-writing - Charlene, Elaine, Jennifer, Jon, Karen, Kate, Marian, Nadine, Rachel, Robyn, Shaya. Our ongoing walks, phone chats, music nights, and adventures have kept me balanced and grounded.

## **Dedication**

Dedicated to my grandmother, Claudia Ada Bain.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

During multiple visits to Kenya from 2007 – 2011, I became fascinated by the stories and background of white Kenyans, descendants of those who 'settled' in Kenya when it was a British settler-colony. They told stories of their grandparents, who had owned thousands of acres of land during the colonial days – land that, during the transition to Independence, was bought out by the Kenyan government and sold to Kenyan farmers (Hornsby, 2011). I wondered how it must feel to be a white Kenyan – do they feel guilty for benefiting from the acts of a racist settler-colonial government? How do they justify the wealth they acquired as a result of colonialism?

Coming back to University of British Columbia (UBC), I recognized similar features and elements of British settler-colonialism in Vancouver. I came to realize that just like white Kenyans, I am a descendant of those who have settled on Indigenous land. The difference is that here in Canada, non-Indigenous people continue to occupy much of the land. In Kenya, white and other non-African Kenyans are only 1.5% of the Kenyan population, while over 95% are Indigenous to Kenya (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2011)<sup>1</sup>; here in Canada, the Indigenous population is only 4.3% of the total population (Government of Canada, Statistics Canada, 2013). The realization that I am a settler changed my understanding of the relationships I have built in Kenya, on Maasai land, and in Canada, on Coast Salish land.

### **1.1 Background**

This study brings a decolonizing lens to a partnership stemming from the efforts of UBC to engage with the world beyond the university. UBC's strategic plan identifies community engagement as one of its top three pillars, and Aboriginal Engagement as one of its key commitments (University of British Columbia, 2013). When efforts at community engagement overlap with Aboriginal Engagement, there is an assumed congruency (Toope, 2011) but little

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<sup>1</sup> There are many more similarities between colonial history in British Columbia and Kenya than what is described here. Both were seen as desirable places for British settlement; in both, the colonial government established 'reserves', for example. (Hornsby, 2011; Lawrence, 2004)

research has been done to explore the impacts and significance of the overlap.

The focus of this study is a partnership that began in 2005, between a Stó:lō community services agency, Fraser Valley Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society (Xyolhemeylh, “hyoth-meeth” or “yoth-meeth”), and a UBC unit, the Division of Health Care Communication (UBC-DHCC). The partnership creates an opportunity for UBC students to learn about and engage with Indigenous culture by immersing health professional students into community-led youth cultural camps for 3-4 days and nights. This program is known as the Community as Teacher program.

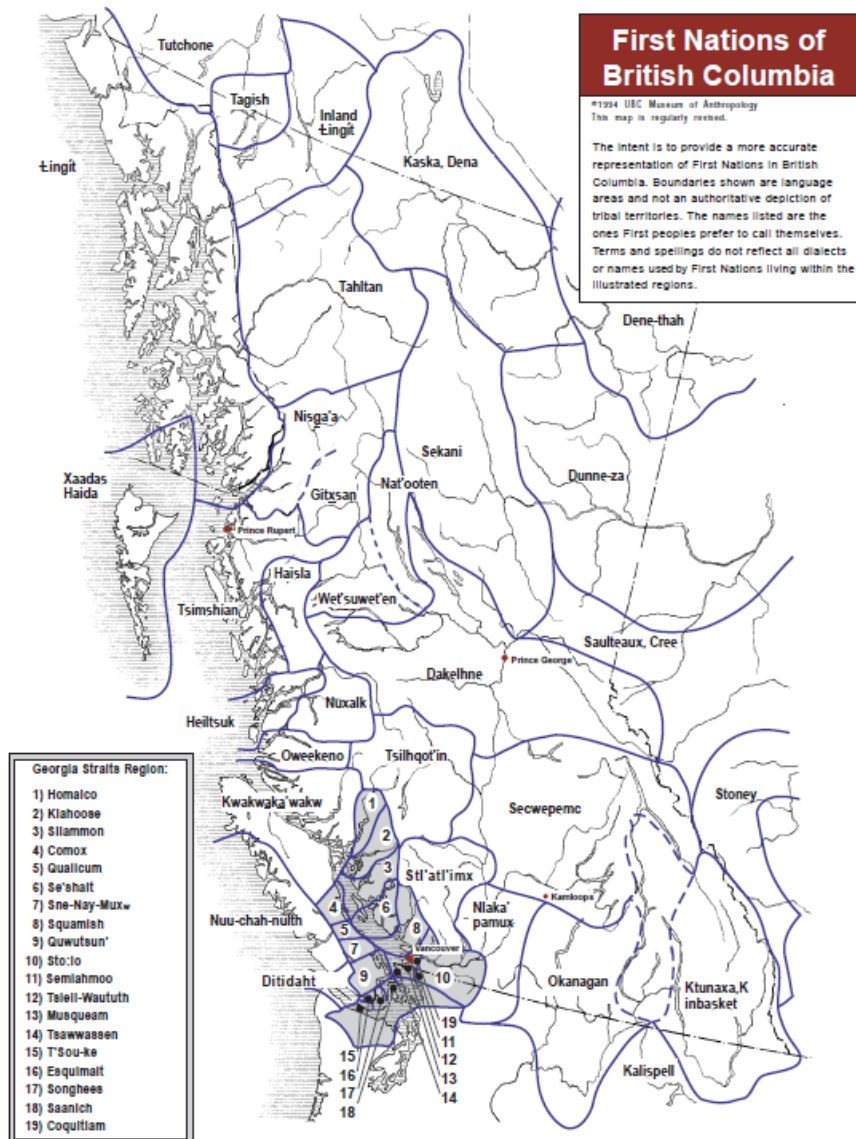
Qualitative research about the students’ experiences of immersion in this program has been conducted and the findings indicate that the program has an impact on students’ later practice as physicians by learning about cultural differences, building self-awareness of their values and stereotypes, and considering ways to improve communication (Kline, Godolphin, Chhina, & Towle, 2013). The Kline et al (2013) research also shares some initial findings around ‘community benefit’ in the form of recognition of their own role and capacity as educators of health professional students. This thesis adds to the study of the Community as Teacher program by analyzing documents and interviews to provide an understanding of the ways in which a UBC unit and a Stó:lō community agency interacted during their eight-year partnership. This study may contribute to an understanding of how to build successful, respectful and mutually beneficial Indigenous-university relationships. The research questions are as follows:

1. How did the relationship between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC come into being and how has it changed over time?
2. How do the partners describe this relationship, its purpose and objectives?
3. How do partners consider and engage with notions of Indigenous-settler relationships?
4. What are the implications of this program for undertaking respectful community engagement between universities and Indigenous communities?

## **1.2 Coast Salish Context**

One of the most significant lessons I have learned from decolonizing scholars such as Paulette Regan (2010) is the importance of situating thoughts and perspectives within the context of place, space, and history. Indigenous scholars of many nations suggest that while relationships

between people are important, relationships with land and territory are of primary importance (Carlson, 1997; Marker, 2006). Thus, before beginning this work, it is important to give a very brief overview of the history of Coast Salish lands in British Columbia, Canada.



**Figure 1-1 First Nations of British Columbia.** Reproduced courtesy of the Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia.

Historian Cole Harris (2004) refers to British Columbia, depicted in Figure 1-1, as the 'edge of empire' (p. 167), making clear that while the colonial project was undertaken across the non-

European world over many centuries, this corner of Turtle Island<sup>2</sup> represented the furthest extent of imperial reach. Coast Salish land, like so many other non-European lands, has been recently dominated by settlers. As Jacobs (2009) put it, the term settler conjures up “immigrants and emigrants peaceably spreading across continents, diligently clearing fields and erecting homes on empty land that was theirs for the taking” (p. 4). The basis of this myth is the assumption of empty land, which required not just the subservience but in fact the elimination of Indigenous peoples (Jacobs, 2009). While the first settlers may not have understood or embraced such imperial desires and interests, their actions were complicit in the development of a set of systems which ideologically, technologically, and economically found ways to create a settler-colonial reality in a land far from the imperial centre (Harris, 2004)<sup>3</sup>. In Canada, federal and provincial governments dispossessed Indigenous peoples of their land, without or in spite of treaties, and subjected autonomous peoples to racist policies such as those enshrined in the Indian Act (Lawrence, 2004).

In *Halq'eméylem*, the language of the Stó:lō, Europeans are called “*xwelítem*” meaning 'hungry people' or 'starving people', which may be a reference to the ill-prepared gold-miners who depended on Stó:lō generosity during the 1858 gold rush (Carlson, 1997). The name *xwelítem* has since gained a broader meaning as newly arriving European settlers show hunger for food, land, culture, and power. Even the concept of land as a resource is historically and culturally loaded. The Stó:lō, one of several nations whose traditional territory includes the Metro Vancouver, have conceptions of land focused primarily on respectful relationships between land and people. Relationships to land are delineated not by maps but by stories – stories that are intimately connected to the mountains, streams, and rocks of Stó:lō territories (Carlson, 1997). From a Stó:lō perspective, the idea that a flag ceremony in Nootka sound somehow resulted in a

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<sup>2</sup> 'Turtle Island' is an often-used Indigenous term for what European settlers have called North America.

<sup>3</sup> Harris (2004) draws upon colonial discourse theory as it applies to physical geography and map-making in British Columbia to understand the ways that the state provided the infrastructure and physical power and thereafter held the maps, census numbers, and laws required to keep Indigenous peoples within their control.

British land claim on their traditional territories is an obscure and flawed basis for establishing 'ownership' over the lands they have lived on for thousands of years<sup>4</sup>.

Colonization has had and continues to have significant impacts on the experience of settlers and Indigenous peoples on Coast Salish territory, in particular in relation to education. Indigenous children were often coerced into attending residential schooling away from their homes and communities. Residential schools were framed by some as part of the duty of white people to “raise [Indigenous peoples] to the level of civilization” (Furniss & Cariboo Tribal Council, 1995, p. 107). However, residential schools did not provide an adequate basic education. These schools were designed based on the paternalistic, racist assumption that Indigenous peoples were inferior. Even more crucial were settler-colonial desires to construct notions of *terra nullis*, ‘empty land’, thereby justifying settlement (Haig-Brown & Nock, 2006).

Historical records show that behind the language of residential schools was the violent sub-purpose of genocidal annihilation of culture, language, and history of Indigenous groups (Furniss & Cariboo Tribal Council, 1995; Haig-Brown & Nock, 2006). Often, the “dark side of paternalism” came out when Indigenous families resisted residential schools, warranting further abuse and injustice (Furniss & Cariboo Tribal Council, 1995). Residential schooling resulted in the separation of children from families, and was part of a deliberate, widespread, and violent effort to erase Indigenous languages – what St. Denis (2007) calls the ‘slaying’ of language (St. Denis, 2007, p. 1073). As part of a strategy of extermination through assimilation, schools and other policies aimed to decimate Indigenous peoples and thus legitimize settler-colonial rule (Haig-Brown, 2006; Regan, 2010). Residential schools and associated legislation represent a form of complete legal, administrative, and ideological control over Indigenous peoples (Furniss & Cariboo Tribal Council, 1995). The Canadian government has officially recognized Indian Residential Schools as abusive tools of cultural genocide (Office of the Prime Minister, 2006).

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<sup>4</sup> This process by which Europeans ceremonially ‘claimed’ hundreds and thousands of kilometers of land is vividly described in Carlson (1997, p. 57-65). As he puts it, Indigenous people were “unaware that such ceremonies had ever taken place; nor did they understand their European significance” (p. 57).

Given the results of past supposedly 'well-intentioned' actions carried out by educational institutions in British Columbia (BC), it is important to carefully examine the ways that universities engage with Indigenous communities.

### **1.3 Significant Terms**

As explained further in Chapter 2, this study aims to take a decolonizing approach to a case study of community-university engagement. A decolonizing framework starts by recognizing colonialism “as an ongoing process...in Canada and other ‘former’ colonies across the globe” (Haig-Brown & Nock, 2006, p. 6). Rather than claiming that we live in a ‘post’-colonial time, decolonizing perspectives recognize the complexities of the settler-colonial reality both for settlers and for Indigenous peoples (Haig-Brown, 2006; Regan, 2010). Developing a personal understanding of myself as a settler living on Indigenous land has been a significant part of my learning. This process’ has literally been ‘unsettling’ – it has challenged the ways that I see myself, my family, and my place as a resident on the traditional, unceded and ancestral lands of the Musqueam (x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm), the Tsleil-Waututh, and the Squamish (Skwxwú7mesh). My discomfort is important, perhaps even necessary, for those like myself who have become overly complacent and comfortable in places of privilege (Curry-Stevens, 2007). Learning new words, and new ways of using those words, is a part of unpacking my privilege.

In most of this thesis I use the term Indigenous, though I have quoted others who use the term Aboriginal. Aboriginal is the term used by the Canadian government to refer to the First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples. Aboriginal identifies a relationship to the Canadian state, rather than a connection to Indigenous culture and community. Some contest the term Aboriginal as being coined by settler-colonial governments as a 'catch-all' label (Ball & Pence, 2006, p. 4). For example, Alfred and Corntassel (2005) regard the term Aboriginal as serving “an agenda of silent surrender to an inherently unjust relation at the root of the settler-colonial state itself” (p. 598). Since the 1970s, the term Indigenous has been adopted by international Indigenous movements



as part of a global movement for Indigenous rights, for example in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples<sup>5</sup>. Smith uses the term Indigenous to refer broadly to “peoples and nations whose own histories were interrupted and radically reformulated by European imperialism.” (Smith, 1999, p. 19). Where possible, the remainder of this study uses the term Indigenous in this sense<sup>6</sup>.

In this study, the term ‘settler’ is used to describe non-Indigenous people such as myself, descendants of white immigrants<sup>7</sup>. The term ‘settler’ is employed in keeping with Paulette Regan's call for Canadians of non-Indigenous descent to acknowledge the destructive legacy of settler-colonialism (Regan, 2010). Given the diversity of the population currently residing in Canada, others have used the term ‘visitor-settler’ to explicitly include those who have recently arrived in Canada and to include non-white Canadians. There are a diversity of settler experiences, including the experience of racism and oppression for racialized immigrants, for example (Amadahy & Lawrence, 2009); at the same time, the word settler is a reminder that those currently in Canada benefit directly or indirectly from the historic and ongoing possession of Indigenous lands and oppression of Indigenous peoples.

During the course of this research I have had very interesting conversations about the terms used to describe non-Indigenous people, and the connotations they have. One Indigenous participant in this study stated that the word settler was problematic, as it suggested that when the Europeans arrived, there was 'something that needed settling'. Instead, this participant preferred the term 'coloniser', which makes clear the relationship between these newcomers and Indigenous peoples and brings attention to the violence perpetrated by settlers. Others suggest that while ‘settler’ or

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<sup>5</sup> The passage of this declaration was in itself a surprising feat, as Linda Tuhiwei Smith notes; the UN Declaration meant that “people who are by definition minorities in nation-states had nation-states sign a declaration that protected rights of Indigenous peoples” (Smith, 2012b)

<sup>6</sup> Where interviewees or documents use the term Aboriginal or First Nations, those words are used in quotes and in coding. This study does not explicitly define or explain Indigeneity or Indigenous Knowledges. As Alfred and Cornthassel (2005) point out, it is important for Indigenous peoples to find a grassroots definition of Indigeneity.

<sup>7</sup> The experience of being a ‘settler’ on Canadian land is different depending on the position of the person involved – for racialized settlers, or those who were displaced in Canada by imperial will, being on Indigenous land in Canada presents a more complex reality. For an excellent exploration of this, see Amadahy and Lawrence (2009)

‘settler-colonist’ might evoke an image of peaceable, hardworking immigrants, scholars have brought to light the ways in which “the ultimate goal of settler colonialism – the acquisition of land – lends itself to violence” (Jacobs, 2009, p. 4). In this thesis, I use the term ‘settler’ to ‘unsettle’ settlers who, like myself, often lay claim to being “true” Canadians, forgetting our complicity in the processes of colonialism. I use the term settler-colonial to refer to those structures and institutions that were created as part of the settler-colonial hunger for control of land and resources.

## **1.4 Introducing the Partners**

### **1.4.1 Introduction to Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children and Family Services Society (FVACFSS or Xyolhemeylh)**

Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children and Family Services Society (Xyolhemeylh) is a child protection agency set up by the provincial government with the mandate of providing “culturally appropriate and holistic services through prevention, community development and child welfare programs to Aboriginal children, youth and their families residing on and off reserve throughout the Fraser Valley” (“FVACFSS,” 2012). Recognizing the wrongs done by government child protection both through residential schooling and the 60s scoop<sup>8</sup>, a child protection program was set up under the Stó:lō Nation built on Indigenous culture, values, and family systems. Stó:lō elders gave the agency the name Xyolhemeylh, a Halq’eméylem name which describes a relationship based on caring, respect and love (C-C; FVACFSS brochure). In 2008 Xyolhemeylh became an independent society with the name Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children and Family Services Society; it is now registered under the Society Act in British Columbia, with an independent board of directors.

Xyolhemeylh's services are “based on the best interests of the Aboriginal child within the context

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<sup>8</sup> The 60s scoop was the removal of massive numbers of Indigenous children from their families through foster care and adoption (Lawrence, 2004). While this continues today it was particularly prevalent in the 1960s as residential schools began to close.

of the child's family, culture, and... kinship ties” (FVACFSS brochure). One such program is the summer cultural camps, started in 1996 by a Stó:lō elder who saw the need for youth to experience and learn Stó:lō culture, history, and ways of being. Cultural camps are seen as one of many cultural programs offered through the agency, intended to:

Provide the opportunity to experience many of the healthy and contemporary and traditional lifestyles of Aboriginal Peoples including all aspects of the medicine wheel (spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional). (FVACFSS camps brochure).

Overnight camps offered include a 'warrior camp' for young men 12-18 years old, a 'natural changes' camp for young ladies 10-16 years old, a 'family spirit camp' for families, and a youth camp offered in its most recent version as three day trips throughout the summer. The camps are offered free of charge to “Aboriginal people and FVACFSS participants” (FVACFSS camps brochure) as part of what has been called ‘prevention services’.

The camps are structured as an opportunity for experiential learning and immersion within Stó:lō traditions and ways of being. Participants bring their own tents, sleeping bags, and utensils for group camping experiences which take place in campgrounds or longhouses on Stó:lō traditional territory. The camps are developed by Xyolhemeylh workers in collaboration with the community, who identify camp workers for their Stó:lō knowledge or experience rather than their formal training. Xyolhemeylh receives funding from the federal government to hire Indigenous youth as camp leaders, and works with these youth to prepare and lead activities throughout the camp. The camps, building on Stó:lō traditional practice, include activities such as drum-making, playing traditional games, evening storytelling, shared meals, and early-morning spiritual baths in the cold lakes (for warrior and natural changes camps).

Throughout this thesis, Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children and Family Services Society is referred to as ‘Xyolhemeylh’ (hyoth-meeth or yoth-meeth). When the partnership with UBC-DHCC began, the agency was using the name Xyolhemeylh as its primary title, and both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants refer to the partnership as being with ‘Xyolhemeylh’, rather than using the full organizational name or the FVACFSS abbreviation. In this study, document, interview, and field notes originating from staff who have worked at some point with the Community as Teacher program are referred to as the perspective or contribution of ‘Xyolhemeylh participants’. Those who work with the Community as Teacher program do not

by any means represent the work, relationships, or approach of Xyolhemeylh as a whole or of any person or group within the organization.

#### **1.4.2 Introduction to UBC Division of Health Care Communication (UBC-DHCC)**

As stated earlier, Community as Teacher is an extracurricular learning experience for UBC health professional students from a wide range of health care disciplines including medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, social work, pharmacy, pre-medicine, midwifery, dietetics, dentistry, land and food systems, and psychology. The Community as Teacher program engages UBC students as participants and learners within Xyolhemeylh-run camps. The relationship and program are hosted by the Division of Health Care Communication (DHCC), a unit of the College of Health Disciplines at the University of British Columbia (UBC), a large research-intensive university. UBC-DHCC aims to “train health professionals in effective and efficient ways of helping patients take an informed and shared role in making decisions about their healthcare (Division of Health Care Communication, 2013). The strong focus on patient involvement in health professional education has an international element, demonstrated for example by the unit hosting the first international “Where's the Patient's Voice in Health Professional Education” conference in 2005.

The Community as Teacher program takes place outside the formal curriculum of health professional students, as part of an inter-professional learning opportunity, and is meant to offer a counter-narrative to the way Indigenous patients and communities are described in the formal curriculum of health professional programs. As one UBC-DHCC participant put it<sup>9</sup>:

Students should begin to understand the Aboriginal culture [sic] as one that has strengths, assets and resources to bring and to dispel some of the negative attitudes that they have through what they learn about in their formal curriculum, which is all about the bad things. And there are bad things, of course, but that's not the whole story. (U-C)<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> While this comment acknowledges the need to challenge the negative stereotypes in the main curriculum, this perspective include the problematic assumption that there is one Indigenous culture. For discussion of this, see Chapter 2.

<sup>10</sup> U-A, U-B, and U-C refer to participants in this study – for more information about how quotes are used, see page 69.

UBC-DHCC participants interviewed in this study expressed that they see themselves as a “small specialized unit within UBC” (U-B), and that using the abbreviation UBC to refer to the work of UBC-DHCC would imply that UBC-DHCC staff and faculty are presenting an overall UBC perspective. In this thesis, the term ‘UBC-DHCC participants’ refers to the documents, field notes, and interview perspectives shared by UBC-DHCC faculty and staff. The abbreviation UBC is kept to refer to UBC health professional students, within participant quotes, and to refer to the larger organization of UBC.

### **1.4.3 Introduction to the Partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC**

From a Xyolhemeylh perspective, the Community as Teacher program and partnership is the culmination of what could be seen as decades or generations of work as carriers of Indigenous culture and tradition. The desire to partner with non-Indigenous organizations was inspired in part by the work of Dr. Cindy Blackstock<sup>11</sup>, and was seen as part of an overall understanding of the role of Xyolhemeylh as an educator and leader within society. When contacted by UBC-DHCC, Xyolhemeylh staff proposed the idea of including UBC students as participants in cultural camps.

From a UBC-DHCC perspective, the Community as Teacher program grew out of a research project funded through the Faculty of Medicine 'Special Populations Fund'. Initial research beginning in 2001 involved interviews with doctors, Aboriginal patients, and members of the 'Aboriginal community'. The work resulted in a paper by Towle, Godolphin, and Alexander (2006) and identified a need for health professional students to 'spend time in the community'. Several years later, in response to a call for assistance with that goal, a partnership emerged between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC.

While the idea to place UBC students in summer youth camps came from Xyolhemeylh, very

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<sup>11</sup> Blackstock is a member of the Gitksan Nation and the Executive Director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada. For more information, see Chapter 4 page 66.

quickly UBC-DHCC came to see the ways in which this program was a good fit, allowing students to learn in a pre-existing cultural education program. Each year UBC health professional students, joining through the Community as Teacher program, participate in one of four already existing cultural camps. Since 2006, 188 students from 12 health professions have participated in the program. The costs of all camps, including food, supplies, honoraria, and coordination are covered by Xyolhemeylh. On the UBC-DHCC side, the cost of research coordination, student project assistants, staff and student transportation for meetings, and other research costs such as transcription have been funded through the UBC Faculty of Medicine Special Populations Fund.

Research conducted by UBC-DHCC (Kline et al., 2013), involving interviews with students and community members, demonstrated that through participating in the cultural camps, UBC students developed awareness of themselves, of cultural differences, and of ways that they can overcome communication barriers with Indigenous patients. Follow-up interviews 6 months to two years after the camps showed that students find ways to integrate learnings into their practice as health professionals. The research suggests that the 'Community as Teacher' program is a model for health professional education, and that the relationship between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC is a positive example of community-university partnership (Kline et al., 2013).

### **1.5 Where I Come From: Positioning**

Throughout the preparation for this study it has become clear that the questions, approach, and findings in this study must be situated within a wider context than just institutional relations, and that a part of this study would include a deeper understanding of my position as a settler on Coast Salish territory. This study follows a somewhat typical Western approach, with respect to its epistemological framework, the definition of research, construction of methodology, and establishment of theoretical frameworks. In recognition of the importance of relationships, place, and history to the research context, I have spent considerable time exploring my location and identity as researcher, both in terms of family history and personal reflexivity.

Kinsella (2006) suggests that our own worldviews, as well as those of participants and research texts, each have a particular 'horizon' or limit, beyond which we cannot see; it is through the 'fusion of horizons' that the interpreter can claim some kind of understanding (p. 4). I share how

my awareness of colonial thinking began with first an expansion of horizons that occurred in my travels, and now a fusion of horizons as I return to the lands that I and my family occupy.

Family research is an important part of my own process of decolonization, which can and must begin with truth-telling (Regan, 2010). I began this research with the feeling that by turning from international work to look more deeply at the stories and context of my home place, I was going to find ways to 'unsettle the settler within' myself, as Regan (2010) puts it. Having chosen a case study of a program I am not directly responsible for, it was possible that the entire study might be completed without affecting my understanding of who I am, how I approach the world, and how I am implicated in what I study. As part of my own decolonizing process and as a part of this study, I did research which began to unravel some of the ways in which settler-colonialism plays out within my own family history and the history of the place I call home here on Coast Salish territory. I was encouraged in this approach by authors such as Haig-Brown (2006) and Regan (2010), who suggest an approach to decolonization which reflects upon personal historical and present-day connections to Indigenous peoples.

Like Freeman (2000), when I began the work of personal and family research, I had an unspoken sense that my “ancestors were essentially decent and well-intentioned people... [and] had simply inherited the aftermath of an already accomplished dispossession” (p. xvi). In the course of Freeman’s volume, she unpacks the ways that her family was and is active in the process of settler-colonialism. Recognizing in myself and my family the assumptions named by Freeman and others, I was compelled to explore my own family history, to better understand my relationship to colonization, this land, and Indigenous peoples. As part of my research I began to ask questions of family members about family connections with Indigenous peoples and land; I read or re-read books related to my family history (Bain, 2006; Palmer, 1998), Coast Salish history (Stó:lō Heritage Trust, 2001), and BC History (Barman, 1996, 2005; Furniss & Cariboo Tribal Council, 1995).

I see family history work as bringing together two narratives which I, and I believe others in Canadian society, prefer to keep separated. The first narrative is that told in Canadian textbooks and in national propaganda; it is the story of Canada's 'kind' relationships with Indigenous

peoples. Mackey (1999) has called this the 'benevolent Mountie Myth': the idea that “the process of civilizing the frontier occurred in a gentler, less violent, manner in Canada than in the USA” (p. 76). My grandmother continued this tradition in the memoir I helped her to write, *Lilies of My Field* (2006), by extolling the virtues of our ancestors and the lands they settled on all across Canada. Though there are elements of these stories that resonate with lived experience, the deeper truths concealed by the 'polite Canadian' myth are significant. The second narrative is a tale Canadians have been hearing more recently as a result of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Regan, 2010). The horrific tales of sexual, emotional, and physical abuse in Indian Residential Schools are being told and talked about publicly, often for the first time. The abuses that took place in these schools were brushed over in earlier accounts of British Columbia history (Barman, 1996, pp. 161–162), which tended to either ignore Indigenous peoples or include them in stereotypical roles.

Being aware of the danger of re-centering the dominant narrative, this thesis includes only a brief summary of some findings from that family history work. While autobiographical examination is an important piece of my own decolonizing process, it is not the central focus of this study.

### **1.5.1 Jelly and Bain Family Connections**

On my mothers' side, the Jelly family, my great-great-grandparents Harry and Mary-Anne Foote<sup>12</sup> moved to Vancouver and purchased several islands off of the Sunshine Coast<sup>13</sup> soon after the land was first given as a Crown Land Grant in 1885. The land was 'owned' by a government which did not have the legal right to sell that land – Indigenous land that had never been ceded to the British crown or the Canadian government. Indigenous residency on, stewardship of, and relationship with the land was invalidated by their status as less than fully human, as prescribed by the Indian Act. Members of the Tla'amin nation who attempted to purchase or pre-empt their

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<sup>12</sup> Harry Foote was born in London, England; Marry-Anne Brook was born in Straford, and grew up in Portage La Prairie.

<sup>13</sup> Jedediah, Bull, Rabbit, Round and Sheer Islands.



traditional lands were refused the right to own these territories (personal communication, Roy Francis, May 31 2013).

On the other side of my family, my great-great-grandfather Jacob Bain moved to British Columbia in the 1920s. He settled first in Vancouver, and then moved to purchase a home on unceded Stó:lō territory in Fort Langley. In the course of research my grandmother shared a letter from Jacob Bain containing this thought:

The lumber mills are dispensing with their Oriental labour and taking on white men, they say that white men are more satisfactory although their wages higher and it is a good thing for the labouring man. (Letter from Jacob Bain to Will Bain, dated March – year unknown, likely between 1922 and 1926)

The “labouring man”, from Jacob's perspective, was a white man, not an 'Oriental' man, revealing the deep racism of the time and the ways that it changed the lived economic realities of my family at the expense of other families. While the institutionalized racism of the past can seem distant, reading this letter helped me recognize my personal connection to my family's privilege as settlers.

As the great-great-grandchild of settlers, I grew up in rural British Columbia. I grew up in a culture which devalued and in some cases completely erased the contributions and culture of Indigenous people. The assumption was that 'authentic' Indigenous ways of living were far in the past (Battiste, 2012a). By recognizing the racist assumptions that I grew up with, I have begun to reshape my thinking; I'm also aware that my own perspective several years from now will doubtless reveal additional assumptions that I am not currently aware of.

After leaving Port McNeill, I had an interest in and desire to experience and 'consume' the cultures that my own culture, and settler-colonialism, had destroyed – what Rosaldo called 'imperialist nostalgia' (Rosaldo, 1989). I was completely unaware of the ways in which my own settler upbringing brought with it a set of cultural assumptions, biases, and norms.

I had been a resident of Indigenous land for my whole life, helped my grandmother to write a family history (Bain, 2006), and travelled to Kenya multiple times before I understood that the best parallel to white Kenyan settlers are people like me and my family who are living in a former settler-colony on what was Indigenous land.

Colonialism is not a ‘legacy’ of the past – it is an undeniable present-day reality for all those who reside in what is called Canada. I have and continue to benefit from settler-colonial occupation of Coast Salish territory. It is my hope that by connecting my research to my own and my family identity, I might be able to move beyond an essentially colonial exploration of the 'Other' to a meaningful, self-reflexive study of settler-Indigenous relationships here on Coast Salish lands.

## **1.6 Overview of the Thesis**

This partnership can be considered a case of community-university engagement, as manifested in a partnership between a research-intensive university and an Indigenous social services organization. The study applied a decolonizing approach to community-university engagement, looking to understand the ways that this community partnership depicts dimensions of decolonization and the disruption of cognitive imperialism. Chapter 2 highlights scholars whose writings inform this study around community engagement and decolonization. As described in Chapter 3, this study drew upon the perspectives of Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants through document analysis, interviews, and field notes. The analysis of data is based on a qualitative research approach whereby the construction of themes from the data were not decided in advance, but emerged in an iterative process throughout the process of data collection, analysis, and writing. Chapters 4 and 5 provide an overview of the findings from this study, framed within the notion of ‘Four Rs’. Chapter 4 presents the familiar “R” of relevance, a concept common to both existing frameworks (Butin, 2010; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991), and a new “R” of risk-taking. Chapter 5 takes up the “R” of respect, another concept common to both Butin (2010) and Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991), and adds to the discussion the “R” of relationship-building. Chapter 6 provides thoughts and recommendations for practice and further research both within UBC and beyond.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review: Decolonizing Community-University Engagement**

Academic literature in this chapter has been selected to help make sense of a partnership between the Division of Health Care Communication (DHCC) at UBC, and an Indigenous community organization, Xyolhemeylh. To understand the research questions posed by this study, this chapter brings together conversations happening in the typically disparate fields of decolonization and community-university engagement.

The first part of this chapter reviews literature of community-university engagement, examining its history, ways of classifying partnerships, facilitators/barriers to partnership, and critiques of community-university engagement. The next part of this chapter explores the literature of decolonization and suggests that decolonization is one lens through which to view community-university engagement and partnership-building, in particular by examining the assumptions of cognitive imperialism. The chapter concludes by sharing some emerging conversations around 'decolonizing community-university engagement', and examining other studies that have focused on this issue.

### **2.1 Community-University Engagement**

#### **2.1.1 Community Engagement: History and Context**

Although universities' commitment to serving communities is not a new topic or concern, in the past twenty years, universities have increasingly sought to engage with community. In a 1996 speech, Ernest Boyer, former president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, spoke to the importance of a continuous dialogue between universities and the broader public, stating that "both the civic and academic health of any culture is vitally enriched as scholars and practitioners speak and listen carefully to each other" (Boyer, 1996, p. 25). Boyer (1996) popularized the term 'engagement', defined as "connecting the rich resources of the university to our most pressing social, civic, and ethical problems" (Boyer, 1996, pp. 32–33).

Weerts and Sandmann (2008) review 10 years of engagement literature emerging after Boyer's call to renew their civic mission. They note how scholars began by differentiating outreach, in which resources are extended from the university to the community, from engagement, with a

focus on a 'two-way' or collaborative model and Weerts and Sandman (2008) suggest that the shift to a two-way model began with business and corporate partnerships, and from there spread to the community-university engagement sector. The focus then shifted to “engagement as a scholarly process” or “engaged scholarship” (p. 96), connecting civic engagement to the core scholarly work of universities. One commonly used definition of engagement, presented by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, is:

Engagement is collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2013)

Several scholars have defined models and definitions for engaged scholarship. Van de Ven (2007) proposed that engaged scholarship is a “participative form of research for obtaining the advice and perspectives of key stakeholders (researchers, user, clients, sponsors, and practitioners) to understand a complex social problem” (p.10). Franz (2009) defined engaged scholarship as “academia-community legacy that grows the field” (p. 33). Her model for engaged scholarship provides 'entry points' through the academic, teaching, and service missions of a university. Each of those entry points creates opportunity for “critical reflection, enhanced action, and the production of scholarship between faculty and community members” (p. 38). Community-engaged scholarship brings together the research, teaching, and service functions of a university in order to benefit communities (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). This definition of engagement broadens the work of community-university connections to include partnerships such as the Community as Teacher partnership that is the focus of this research.

One aspect of community engagement, combining teaching and service missions, is service-learning or community service-learning (CSL), known at UBC as community-based experiential learning (CBEL). Service-learning is credit-bearing activity which combines organized community volunteering and course-based reflection (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995). Community service-learning generally takes places in the communities surrounding an educational institution, while international service-learning takes place in another nation, often in the ‘developing’ world. This study began as an exploration of what had been labelled a 'community service-learning' (CSL) program in an Indigenous context; however it soon became clear that the

partnership of Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC presents a unique perspective on both CSL and the wider field of community-university engagement.

Many scholars are critical of 'traditional' models of service-learning and community engagement. In the early years of service-learning research, there was an underlying assumption that communities would benefit from the 'services' provided by students and academics. Recent research into community partner perspectives has shown that community partners benefit through fostering a positive relationship with post-secondary institutions, increasing community partner capacity to fulfill its mission, and expanding existing services or programs (Blouin & Perry, 2009). There are costs of service-learning for partners, however, including wasted time, inadequate student commitment, and requirement of supervision and project management (Stoecker, Tryon, & Hilgendorf, 2009). Some suggest that in fact service-learning is a service provided by communities to the university, not vice versa (Mitchell & Hennig, 2012; Stoecker et al., 2009). Other studies show that service-learning can reinforce existing cultural and social biases or stereotypes (Dunn-Kenney, 2010). Critiques of traditional forms of community engagement have led some to completely disassociate themselves from either CSL or community engagement. Whatever the form of community-engaged work, careful study is necessary to completely understand the impacts and influence of the work for all involved.

Weerts and Sandmann (2008) outline what facilitates and what impedes effective community-university engagement. They suggest that significant barriers to faculty involvement include devaluing of engaged or service-based scholarship, imbalances in power between faculty and community, and fiscal or structural constraints on faculty members. Facilitators of community-university engagement include strong interpersonal relationships, flexible and shared governance structures, institutional commitment to engagement, and institutional culture and mission. Weerts and Sandmann's later work (2010) introduces the concept of 'boundary-spanners':

For engagement to work effectively, multiple boundary-spanning roles - community-based problem solvers, technical experts, internal engagement advocates, and engagement champions - must work in harmony. Institutional leaders must recognize that building relationships with community partners is complex and not confined to the jobs of community relations staff. (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008, p. 721)

They suggest that, among other things, boundary-spanning individuals play key roles in building interpersonal relationships between university and community and translating knowledge and

ideas. Weerts and Sandmann's work provides a useful basis for understanding a partnership taking place at UBC, a research-intensive university.

### **2.1.2 Models of Partnership**

This study draws on the understanding of partnerships as described by Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, who suggest the following definition:

Collaborative solutions which bring communities and institutions together as equal partners and build upon the assets, strengths and capacities of each. (Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, 2013)

This section shares some existing models and studies of community-university partnership. Baum (2000) suggest that a partnership should focus on addressing community issues.

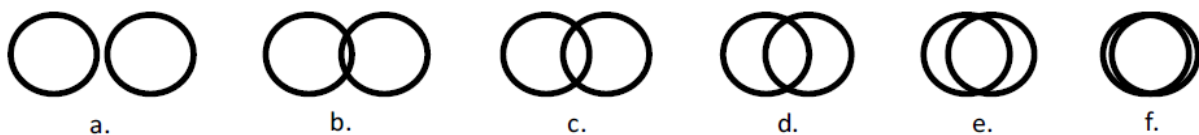
A significant distinction in roles is outlined by Bringle, Clayton and Price's (2010) SOFAR model which distinguishes between five major stakeholders in service-learning: students (S), community organizations (O), faculty (F), university administration (A), and residents in the community (R). In the university context, the word 'community' is often used to represent both community-based organizations, many of which are large institutions unto themselves, and members of a broader community. In the context of this study, the SOFAR model provides a significant differentiation between 'community organizations' and 'residents', or community members<sup>14</sup>. The term community has been called a "nearly bankrupt concept... applied to almost any gathering of persons, ideas and products" (Ibáñez-Carrasco & Riaño-Alcalá, 2011, p. 73). This study makes an ongoing effort to speak specifically of a participant or organization, rather than lumping non-university individuals or groups into the generic category 'community'.

Community-university relationships can be seen as part of a continuum of relationships, often culminating in a partnership. Dorado and Giles (2004) propose a framework that focuses on the overall intent of a partnership, moving from 'tentative', to 'aligned' to 'committed'. Enos and

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<sup>14</sup> The SOFAR model makes a distinction as well between 'faculty' and 'university administration'; this study combines those into the category of 'UBC-DHCC participants', meaning faculty and staff who are involved in the Community as Teacher program.

Morton (as cited in Bushouse, 2005) propose a framework for campus-community partnerships that increases in time and depth from one-time placements, to mutual dependence, to interdependence, to transformation. Bushouse (2005) builds on the work of Enos and Morton (2003) to explore community partner perspectives on relationship-building, finding that some community organizations strongly prefer 'transactional' over 'transformational' relationships due to capacity restraints. They suggest that transactional relationships tend to be short-term relationships where each party benefits, while transformative relationships involve both interdependence and the co-creation of work and knowledge. Finally, Clayton et al (Clayton, Bringle, Senor, Huq, & Morrison, 2010) developed a scale from 'transactional' relationships, where each partner benefits, to 'transformational' relationships where each partner grows. From that scale, Clayton et al developed a 9-question survey covering outcomes, common goals, decision-making, conflict management, power, significance, and satisfaction (Clayton et al., 2010). They found that a series of Venn diagrams (see Figure 2-1 below) graphically depicting closeness “can be considered a good summary of closeness that is short, nonverbal, and user-friendly” (Clayton et al., 2010, p. 15). This study builds upon the work of Clayton et al (2010); the Venn diagrams were offered to interviewees as an easy to understand and graphic depiction of partnership closeness, focusing on making the community-university partnership the unit of analysis. As suggested by Clayton et al, “a better understanding of the dynamics and aspirational qualities of relationships may enable practitioners to strengthen their own relationships” (p. 6).



**Figure 2-1 Venn Depiction of Closeness (Machek, Cannady, & Tangey, 2007, as cited in Clayton et al, 2010)**

Bringle and Hatcher (2002) look to the study of interpersonal relationships to find analogies for the types of connections developed in campus-community collaborations. In the initiation phase, they suggest that key elements include having a clear mission, providing a campus office focused on community engagement, ensuring open and effective communication, and engaging the support of skilled staff. To build strong relationships they suggest regular monitoring, establishment of advisory groups, building interdependency within close partnerships, and finding ways to affirm the value of the partnership. They describe relationships ending either

because the joint mission has been completed or because differences arise in the course of the partnership. Their comparison of the community-university relationship to an interpersonal relationship brings to light the importance of individuals within institutions and agencies, and highlights the importance of positive interdependency and relationship-building within a community-university relationship.

In many studies of community engagement there is an assumption that reciprocity or mutuality is a natural goal (CCPH Board of Directors, 2006; Clayton et al., 2010). For example, Henry and Breyfogle (2006) differentiate between traditional and 'enriched' reciprocity, the latter involving deep collaboration and transformation of both stakeholders and activities. Some authors prefer to use the language of mutuality to express a less exchange-based and more holistic partnership. Participants in a study by Baum (2000) shared an understanding of three stages of partnership – altruism, in which each partner felt good about their contribution; exchange, where partners provided something to serve the others interests; and mutualism, where they worked together toward common goals. Seeing community partnerships as reciprocal helps focus on the benefit being provided to each half of the partnership and the relative value of these benefits to both partners.

### **2.1.3 Critical Approaches to Community-University Engagement**

Community engagement within higher education has been widely critiqued. Weerts and Sandmann (2008) suggest that community engagement might be promoted “as a public relations tag to garner public and private support” (pp. 99 – 100). Morton (1995) suggests that campus-community partnerships are often motivated by charity rather than justice. Some critique elements of community engagement as a 'charity' endeavour, short-hand for “shallow, sometimes harmful, instances of social participation” (Taylor, 2002, p. 49). Some authors argue against a linear ranking from 'charity' to 'citizenship' or 'social justice' approaches, arguing that both approaches can be useful in different contexts (Morton, 1995; Taylor, 2002). The question of whether students and faculty should take a `social justice` or a `charity` perspective, or whether that scale is at all relevant, misses an important question – not what perspective is chosen, but who is choosing the perspective. Community perspectives and philosophies may have a



completely alternate perspective, emphasizing other aspects of the project such as the tangible benefits to community (Smith, 1999).

It is important to begin by questioning the assumption that community engagement activities are inherently benign. While there are many positive intentions behind community engagement work, the work can also contain unthinkingly violent language. Taylor (2002) examines the metaphors associated with service: service as war, service as business and service as citizenship. The metaphor of war is particularly evocative in contexts such as the American Peace 'Corps', which are 'deployed' to 'combat' social problems in other parts of the world. Taylor suggests that the utility of these metaphors is that they bring with them an assumption of large-scale spending and unquestionable common purpose; however, in the context of such language, communities are framed as “residents of the battleground, often suffering huge casualties” (Taylor, 2002, pp. 46–48). As a mentor once said, “Usually, you only become engaged to do two things - get married or go to war. I wonder, is 'community engagement' more like marriage, or more like war?” (Personal communication, Margot Leigh Butler, October 30, 2013).

This study fits within the broader literature of community engagement and community engaged scholarship, which includes elements of teaching, research, and service. As a case study of a community-university partnership, the study draws on the literature of community partnership, in particular, literature that explores the relationships between university faculty and staff and community organizations’ staff. Building on the work of the authors above, this study seeks to understand the intricacies of community-university relationship dynamics within the context of UBC-DHCC’s partnership with Xyolhemeylh.

## **2.2 Decolonizing Approach**

### **2.2.1 Decolonization**

Decolonization, according to Smith (1999), is a process which engages with imperialism and colonialism at multiple levels, including “a more critical understanding of the underlying assumptions, motivations and values which inform research practices” (p. 20). A decolonizing framework can contribute in significant ways to both the study of interactions between

Indigenous and settler-colonial peoples, and to community engagement work on Indigenous lands. In this case study, the partners are located in Stó:lō territory in the Fraser Valley and at UBC's Vancouver campus, which is on traditional, unceded and ancestral territory of the Musqueam people ("About UBC's Vancouver Campus," 2013). A decolonization framework is one way to acknowledge and forefront Indigenous land and title within the context of community engagement.

Conversations around decolonizing research owe much to Linda Tuhiwei Smith's work, *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999), in which she challenges researchers "to demystify, to decolonize" (p. 16). Smith, a Maori scholar, takes a clear look at the ways in which imperial thought and colonial realities are implicated in research methodologies, and how the very acts of writing history, and building theory tend to silence Indigenous voices. The process of much formal and informal research aims to collect Indigenous Knowledge and re-represent it, therefore creating a dehumanized 'other' while also privileging the Western researcher as the holder of Indigenous artefacts, practices, or even language. Her book sets an agenda for Indigenous People's Research which centres on self-determination and encompasses decolonization, transformation, mobilization, and healing through three layers of survival, recovery, and development. In the most recent edition of her work, Smith (2012a) outlines five conditions that frame the struggle for decolonization. The first is critical consciousness, as conceived by Freire, which she re-defines as "awakening from the slumber of hegemony, and the realization that action has to occur" (p. 201)<sup>15</sup>. Her other conditions include: re-imagining the world and the position of Indigenous peoples; "drawing upon a different epistemology to... enable an alternate vision"; observing intersections between ideas, events, and the historical moment; disturbing the status quo through movement or struggle; and understanding the structure of imperial power relations. Reading Smith's work invited me to reconsider assumptions I had made about the 'public good' of sharing knowledge, for example, as it arises in the process of this study and in the relationship between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC.

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Building upon the work of Smith among others, Paulette Regan (2010), a white settler Canadian, describes her personal path of decolonization. She advocates for the importance of 'truth-telling' by debunking the myth that Canada's history of relations with Indigenous peoples was peaceful or benevolent (Regan, 2010). Her discussion of the role of settler-allies is particularly insightful. In her view, settler-allies have the important role of educating themselves about settler-colonialism and about the histories of settlers and Indigenous peoples in Canada. Settler-allies work to “re-story” aspects of colonialism, for example the Indian Residential Schools’ history and legacy. Regan suggests that hearing the truth of colonizers and Indigenous peoples is important:

As allies, we learn to listen with humility and vulnerability to the history of dispossession, racism, and oppression that is still alive. We critically reflect on those stories as a catalyst for action. (Regan, 2010, p. 230)

This study kept an open ear to hear the ways in which settler-colonial practices and assumptions shape contemporary relationships.

Just as colonial states have complex and culturally-influenced sets of policies, institutions, and cultures, Indigenous nations have developed internal and external ways of relating through nuanced systems of justice, health, education, and service, often referred to as Indigenous Knowledges (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). Kawagley and Barnhardt (2005) demonstrate, in their study of Alaska Native education systems, that Indigenous peoples have thousands of years of success in understanding processes of learning in their own education systems. They suggest that colonial education efforts in Indigenous contexts have focused on how to transfer a Western scientific viewpoint to Indigenous peoples. Rather than this, they advocate having Westerners “understand Native worldviews and ways of knowing as constituting knowledge systems in their own right” (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005, p. 9). Awareness of and connection with Indigenous Knowledges is important not just because “all communities live as, or in relation to, Indigenes” (Findlay, 2000, p. 308), but because Indigenous Knowledges provide a different lens through which to understand the world. As Battiste (2002) puts it, “Indigenous Knowledge benchmarks the limitations of Eurocentric theory – its methodology, evidence, and conclusions” (as cited in Barnhardt & Kawagley 2005, p. 16).

It is important to note that while decolonization and Indigenization are complementary as they both seek anti-colonial ends, the process of Indigenizing, or re-centring Indigenous Knowledges, is best taken on by Indigenous researchers and practitioners (Aveling, 2012; Erfan & Hemphill, 2013). Given my complete 'marination' in colonial ways of thinking (Battiste, 2012a). I can begin to learn from Indigenous Knowledges but cannot claim to centre my research within that realm. My work is part of a decolonizing effort and in doing that, I seek to work in solidarity with Indigenous practices. Aveling (2012) argues convincingly that “non-Indigenous people cannot engage with research that is truly decolonizing” (p. 7). Interrogating the privilege associated with being a settler is one aspect of the work that non-Indigenous scholars and practitioners can take on as allies. As Aveling states,

I can use what I know – rather than imagining that I know about Indigenous epistemologies or Indigenous experiences under colonialism – to work as an ally with Indigenous researchers (p. 8).

Aveling describes a journey of critical reflection and decolonization that led to her to realize that it was not her place to conduct research in Indigenous contexts. As a non-Indigenous researcher I resonate with her approach, and have reminded myself that the impetus for this study is less to examine the ‘Other’ than to examine my own settler-colonial assumptions. The remainder of this section explores these assumptions through the framework of cognitive imperialism.

### **2.2.2 Cognitive Imperialism**

In contemporary Canada, the colonial legacy continues to shape the psyche of non-Indigenous and some Indigenous peoples through often invisible attitudes and beliefs (Battiste, 2012a; Dion, 2008). Battiste (2012) calls these attitudes 'cognitive imperialism', defined as “white washing of the mind as a result of forced assimilation, English education, Eurocentric humanities and sciences and living in a Eurocentric context complete with media, books, laws, and values” (Battiste, 2012a, p. 21). She understands Eurocentrism as an ‘ultra-theory’, which “is the context for many smaller historical, geographical, psychological, sociological, and philosophical theories” (p. 208). Cognitive imperialism is one way in which Eurocentric thought has come to dominate society and education. Battiste (2012a) suggests that by identifying specific aspects of the Eurocentric agenda, we can disrupt existing hegemonic structures and begin the process of decolonization.

Cognitive imperialistic thinking is embedded into every aspect of Canadian life, and beyond, and is particularly significant in the institutions and disciplines which structure post-secondary education in Western institutions. As Henderson suggests, universities were and are the site where intellectual elites have rationalized, justified, and promoted their imperialist agendas (Henderson, 2012). Findlay (2000) states:

The consequence of academic complicity with colonialism has been a massive and persistent deficit in the national understanding of the rights of Indigenous peoples and the value and potential relevance of Indigenous Knowledge to economic prosperity and social justice in Canada. (2000, p. 311)

As a part of this work it is important to recognize that sites of education such as UBC are not neutral, and in fact are complicit in constructing and reifying cognitive imperialism (Battiste, 2012a).

As Battiste (2012a) puts it, we are all 'marinated' in cognitive imperialism, and like the fish that cannot see water, we are often unable to name the very structures that define our perspectives. Cognitive imperialism is a significant part of my self-understanding, the structure of this study, and the community-university partnership this thesis explores. Even the very act of reading books and articles, thinking, and writing a paper in English reveals the Eurocentric assumption that knowledge is best interpreted through text and through access to (university-based) experts (Henderson, 2012). Here I explore four aspects of cognitive imperialism as suggested by Battiste: Indigenous as problem, Indigenous as add-on, the discourse of authenticity, and universalism.

### **Indigenous as problem**

Battiste and Smith explore the ways in which dominant colonial society frames the 'Indigenous as problem' (Battiste, 2012a; Smith, 1999). Indigenous peoples worldwide have been subjected to marginalization through persistent colonially-reproduced power differences (Coulthard, 2007; Smith, 2012a). Indigenous communities have a long history of being defined by others and considered the 'natural subject' of research, service, tourism, and other activities by which dominant culture labels and claims ownership over Indigenous experience and knowledge (Smith, 1999). Those who tell the story choose the language they use, consciously or unconsciously. Rather than seeing the systemic layers of injustice built into the colonial

worldview, many research projects focus on the deficiencies of Indigenous communities. For example, statistics which compare Indigenous student success to other students locate the problem – and therefore the solution – at the level of the individual Indigenous student (Battiste, 2012b).

One step toward challenging the ‘Indigenous as problem’ assumption is to understand the challenges faced by Indigenous peoples as a long-term problem of colonization (Smith, 2012a). Ireland (2009) takes this approach to decolonizing education, suggesting reframing education as “The Indians' White Man Problem” (Ireland, 2009 as cited in Battiste, 2012a). Beginning to recognize the ways in which settlers are complicit and engaged in Indigenous-settler politics begins to complicate what was first seen as a problem of the ‘Other’.

### **Indigenous as add-on**

When Indigenous perspectives are considered by a Western system, solutions are often seen as an 'add-on' to centralized colonial systems (Battiste, 2012a). For example, by adding an Indigenous perspective to an advisory panel, administrative units appear to work 'with' rather than 'for' Indigenous communities. As a part of the Canadian multiculturalist framework, Indigenous perspectives are often presented as an 'add-on', another cultural perspective which can be dealt with in an Indigenous project or course, but not considered in the entirety of the curriculum (Battiste, 2012a, pp. 91–93). As Smith frames this, Indigenous perspectives represent the struggles and experiences of the margins; as such, the discussion or study of those perspectives are often relegated to the margins of academic, policy, and programming (Smith, 2012a, pp. 200–205). As Marker (2006) explores in his study of reactions to the Makah whale hunt, interaction between Indigenous peoples and mainstream society becomes a ‘flashpoint’ within classrooms and the wider public, rather than a reason to re-examine assumptions of mainstream culture.

### **Authenticity and universalism**

Cognitive imperialism, according to Battiste (2012a), brings with it the ideas of 'authenticity' of Indigenous worldviews, and 'universalism' of Eurocentric worldviews. The discourse of 'authenticity' attempts to freeze Indigenous Knowledge systems in a time, usually 'pre-contact',

while allowing Eurocentrism to progress, shift, and adapt with time. Smith refers to a similar process as essentialism – the idea that “Indigenous cultures cannot change and be re-created – only the West has that privilege” (p. 74). Even the presumption that time can and should be quantified, valued, and parsed out into snippets for various productive purposes is an aspect of the Eurocentric perspective on time, space, and progress (Smith, 1999, pp. 56–58). As long as Indigenous worldviews remain frozen in time, Eurocentric worldviews will continue to adapt and thus maintain dominance.

Universalism, according to Battiste, “underpins cultural and cognitive imperialism, which establishes a dominant group's knowledge, experience, culture, and language as the universal norm” (Battiste, 2012a, p. 209). Recognizing the significance of context to knowledge is a key part of finding a respectful way to understand both Eurocentric and Indigenous Knowledges (Battiste, 2012a). Universalism can be disrupted by an acknowledgement and recognition of the importance of context and history, as demonstrated through the positioning and contextualization for this study.

## **Racism**

The work of decolonization takes place within a context of racism and discrimination within mainstream society, which is often ignored. As Dion (2008) says, “Canadians 'refuse to know' that the racism that fueled colonialism sprang from a system that benefits all non-Aboriginal people, not just European settlers of long ago.” (p. 56). Amadahy and Lawrence (2009) take this one step further, exploring the relationships between racialized Black peoples and Indigenous peoples in Canada:

The reality is that in both the past and the present, in Canada and the United States, Black people and Native people have been subjected to different forms of racism and racial categorization by Europeans and their descendants, in the interests of exploiting both peoples. (Amadahy & Lawrence, 2009, p. 125)

Racism thus affects a broad range of peoples in Canada. While blatantly racist policies are a prevalent part of the North American past, they are also a significant and under-recognized part of present-day life.

As Battiste (2012a) says, racism has become 'unmentionable' in Canada, thus masking perspectives and histories apart from the normalized white perspective. Peggy McIntosh (1989) and others have detailed the many ways in which 'white privilege' finds its expression in everyday interactions. The reality is that in dominant North American society, whiteness as a characteristic is not noticed, and is considered 'normal'. As Ahmed describes, this sense of whiteness 'trails behind' a person, and the assumptions of white people are taken on by systems and institutions (Ahmed, 2007). Dominant culture tends not to address the categories of 'white' or 'coloured', and in doing so reifies the normalcy of dominant, primarily white-oriented institutions. Some authors recognize the importance of addressing the race of students involved in service learning (Green, 2001), few address the whiteness of the structures of service-learning. Verjee (2005), in her study of UBC's community service-learning programs, discusses "perceptions and experiences of systemic racism" (p. ii). Carol du, in her study of a Canadian university, finds that white teacher-candidates identify as being the "'rightful occupants' of university space" (Schick, 2000, p. 70). In this research I aim to use what Battiste calls the 'r-word' where appropriate, and speak of dominance of whiteness as a constructed norm, in an attempt to make visible the hidden hierarchies within our world.

### **2.2.3 Contributions of a Decolonizing Perspective**

By employing a decolonizing approach for this research on community engagement, I hope to both expose and counteract the cognitive imperialist assumptions of Indigenous as problem, as add-on, and as authentically past, and of Eurocentrism as universal. Decolonizing approaches implicitly recognize the violent and racist systems of colonial power. Re-centring the focus of decolonization on the ways that Indigenous systems and structures relate with settler-colonial systems moves from viewing the 'Indigenous problem' to seeing a broader set of problems which include a 'settler problem' (Regan, 2010), or perhaps a 'settler-Indigenous problem' of settler-colonialism.

Within the settler-colonial nation of Canada, decolonization is an important priority. In keeping with Battiste's recognition of 'cognitive imperialism', and Smith's recognition of the ever-present danger of reinstating colonial ways of thinking, a significant part of my personal decolonization as a settler involves identifying and understanding the aspects of a cognitive imperialistic



worldview both in myself, in this study, and in my life more broadly. I resonate with Smith's suggestion that decolonization can come about when the focus shifts from the margins to the spaces in between programs, structures and institutions (Smith, 1999). A decolonizing framework is particularly important within the context of this study, which investigates the partnership between a settler institution and an Indigenous-led social services organization.

### **2.3 Decolonizing Community-University Engagement**

This section explores critical and decolonizing perspectives of community-university engagement, and reviews other studies which take up this decolonizing perspective.

Community engagement with Indigenous communities can risk falling prey to the cognitive imperialist assumption of 'Indigenous as problem' and 'Indigenous as add-on', particularly when community engagement is constructed as a service provided by the university. The construction of Indigenous peoples as a problem is closely connected to the construction of service as a heroic journey as described by Taylor (2002). Service-learning can be portrayed as an 'adventure' reminiscent of explorers' journeys to 'discover' the New World, or anthropologists' journeys to record 'savage' peoples (Smith, 1999). In such cases, the protagonist is construed as a white, middle-class individual with a desire to do research 'for the general good' (Smith, 1999). Where explorers 'discover' land and anthropologists research cultural customs, university faculty, staff and students travel to 'help' people they label as vulnerable or poor. The assumption implicit in all of these constructions is that the Western world represents progress, and that Indigenous systems of organising work, education, and social welfare systems are either non-existent or inadequate (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). One could say that similar to the ways in which maps help explorers claim ownership over land, community engagement claims ownership by creating boundaries between the privileged and less privileged, allowing those holding privilege to visit the other side and return 'unscathed' (Razack, 2000; Skilton-Sylvester, 2000). The tendency to exoticize communities is in many ways an iteration of Rosaldo's concept of imperialist nostalgia, the "yearning for what one has destroyed" (Rosaldo, 1989, p. 108).

Some caution is needed when using the term Aboriginal or Indigenous 'community' as it implies

that there is one Indigenous community, rather than a nested set of communities including family, clan, band, regional, international, and interest-based communities (Alfred, as cited in Smith, 1999). Using the term 'community' inadvertently erases the differences between groups, and suggests some kind of organized coalition of groups beyond the university.

Within the community engagement literature, researchers are beginning to take steps toward decolonization. Weerts and Sandmann (2008) identify the importance of understanding the institutional history and context of the university. One participant in their study specifically identifies the 'imperial' elements of university service: "extension and outreach [are] old thinking... They represent an imperial, uneven relationship with community" (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008, p. 88). John Guffey (2008) brings together four service-learning pillars of commitment, learning, reflective thinking, and reciprocity with the Lakota Way as described by Joseph Marshall<sup>16</sup>. Significant research is needed to ensure that Indigenous perspectives on community engagement and service-learning as shared by Indigenous voices become a part of the literature of the future.

Within the community-university engagement literature, theorists are beginning to explore Indigenous alternatives to service-learning. McNally (2004) explores how Indigenous philosophies can intersect with service-learning, which is in some ways a practical implementation of what Stewart calls 'Indigenous Standpoint Pedagogy' (McNally, 2004; Stewart, 2010). McNally explores Ojibwe pedagogy and lays out several points of connection between Ojibwe pedagogy and service-learning: an emphasis on orality, experience, reflection, and responsibility. He names and acknowledges that native communities have their own sovereign ways of knowing, and attempts to share some of his own learnings. Porter (2001) gives an overview of 'Ayni', a conception of interdependent, respectful reciprocity garnered from her experiences in the Andes of South America. She presents Ayni-based relationships being built upon eight aspects of Ayni: building on need expressed by recipients, shared ownership, personal

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<sup>16</sup> Connected to commitment are love and sacrifice; to learning, perseverance, honour, and bravery; to reflective thinking truth, and wisdom; and to reciprocity, humility, respect, compassion, and generosity (Guffey, 2008)

obligation to hands-on work, strenuous physical engagement, working with an open and generous spirit, relationship continuing across space and time, giving as much as received, and understanding value not just in simple monetary terms (Porter, 2001, p. 8). Steinman (2011) explores the ways in which Indigenous-university collaborations can allow for relationships and ways of knowing which are deeply counter-hegemonic and decolonizing. Drawing upon Regan's concept of 'making space' (2010), Steinman suggests that “incorporating sustained and holistic efforts to meet Indigenous people on their cultural terms” (p. 11) is at the core of meaningful efforts to decolonize service-learning partnerships. McNally, Porter, and Steinman display a strong sense of respect for the Indigenous communities they have worked alongside, however none of the authors are Indigenous.

Community-university partnerships that operate from a decolonizing approach are imperative. Regan's work suggests the possibility of re-establishing relationships between Canadian and Indigenous institutions (Regan, 2010) by destabilizing existing power dynamics; truth-telling and debunking myths of Canadian history; and re-centring Indigenous protocols, institutions, and peace-making traditions. Smith similarly suggests that relationships amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities can be characterized by reciprocal 'sharing' (Smith, 1999, p. 160). This is echoed by Steinman (2011), who builds on Regan (2010) and Smith (1999) to suggest that universities can build relationships and approaches that 'make space' for Indigenous community partnerships.

When constructed by and for Indigenous peoples, some conceptions of community-university engagement may provide a means of building community and civic responsibility. Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991) suggest that Indigenous students ask to be treated with ‘The Four Rs’ – relevance, reciprocity, respect, and responsibility. This bears an interesting parallel with service-learning literature, particularly Butin (2010) who suggests a set of four ‘Rs’ for service-learning: relevance, reciprocity, respect, and reflection. What is left out in the community-university engagement list is 'responsibility'; which in the Indigenous conception, means responsibility to communities, responsibility to follow rules of ownership, control, access and possession (First Nations Centre, 2007) as well as other community protocols. This potential overlap between the ‘Four Rs’ of service-learning and the ‘Four Rs’ of Indigenous perspectives provides a useful

framework for thinking about decolonizing community-university engagement, and has become the basis for sharing the findings of this study.

### **2.3.1 Similar Studies**

Very few studies to date have focused on the Indigenous-university relationship in the context of community engagement; here I share an overview of two related studies.

Ball and Pence (2006) review the experience of the University of Victoria First Nations Partnership Programs in creating a “bicultural university diploma program in child and youth care focusing on early childhood” (p. xi). The programs are delivered on-site involving local participants, elders, and community members. They describe a Generative Curriculum Model, a set of guiding principles which “set in motion a process from which unique programs can emerge according to the needs, aspirations, and strengths of diverse communities” (p. 17-18). Their study explores the evolution of partnerships with 10 First Nations, each of which delivered a 2-year early childhood education program.

Steinman’s (2011) article explores the ways in which a community service placement ‘makes space’ within the context of community-university relations and within the broader field of Indigenous-settler relationships. In his view, making space “can be considered a way of supporting Indigenous people, even as it does so without... more explicit or obvious agency” (p. 11). He argues that making space can bring about changes in structures of inequality in two ways. First, by opening an unmediated collaboration, making space opens the opportunity for co-definition and alignment with community interests. Second, making space opens room for a focus on the ways that Indigenous and settler collaborators decolonize through acts of relating.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have explored some key literature on community engagement and the work of authors and their sensitizing concepts that serve to disrupt and inform how I view community engagement strategies. These ‘sensitizing concepts’ shared in this chapter have shaped the questions I ask, the responses I hear, and the way I share and present data throughout this study. This study is guided by a conception of community engagement as a way of connecting

university resources with community needs and vice versa, and by models of community-university partnership. I have taken a decolonizing approach to this work by identifying within myself and this study facets of cognitive imperialism. I view this thesis as contributing to literature focused on a decolonizing approach in the field of community-university engagement, with a particular focus on one partnership on Coast Salish territory.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

I do not approach this research as a 'blank slate'. The processes of research are inextricably tied up in my conscious and unconscious prejudices, preconceived ideas, and social location as a white, able-bodied, middle-class, settler woman (Wolcott, 1994). This chapter ties my own positionality to a discussion of how and by what means the research was conducted. As Rausch (2012) puts it, “being reflexive in engaged work means recognizing and interrogating how the researcher also contributes to and reproduces social problems” (Rausch, 2012, p. 60). In this research, this means being particularly aware of the ways that colonial thinking imbues the work that I do.

This research process is very much embedded in a Western viewpoint and literature. While I have taken a decolonizing approach to the extent possible, I am not positioned to adopt Indigenous methodologies. Rather, I have used my best efforts to deconstruct and become aware of my colonial assumptions<sup>17</sup>. One example of this learning has been my growing understanding of the importance of relationship-building, what this study calls the ‘hidden R’ because it underlies many existing principles (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991; Butin, 2010). This research case study began with a chance encounter with a Xyolhemeylh participant outside a building in Saskatoon, followed by conversations, meetings in Vancouver and Chilliwack, and eventually a decision to focus this study on the Community as Teacher partnership. While the study began with a connection that evolved into a relationship, throughout the process of conducting this research there has been a tension between building relationships and ‘getting it done’ in accordance with the institution’s timeline. Some of these tensions and understandings are explored further in this chapter.

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<sup>17</sup> Aspects of my decolonizing journey are shared below in stories of my own reflexive process and discussion of research validity later in this chapter .

I begin with an overview of the study design, share stories of significant learning, reflect on the process of data analysis, and conclude with thoughts on validity in relation to Kirkness and Barnhardt's (1991) 'Four Rs'.

### **3.2 What I Set Out to Do...**

This study emerged from a process of dialogue between myself, committee members, and friends and colleagues. Beginning with my critique of the colonial processes at work in my own international engagement, conversations led to a local focus. Recognizing a tendency to easily critique the words and work of others, my intention was to find a way to take on decolonizing work in a way that might leave myself, and readers, with a feeling of hope rather than despair. The best way to do this, it seemed to me, was to take on a potentially hopeful case study, and to make a significant part of the work real interpersonal interaction with individuals – i.e. qualitative interviews.

The case study was a useful structure, given that the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC was ongoing, and the boundaries between the partnership and the context were at first not clear (Yin, 2009). In addition, a case study allowed the study to take into account the details of the specific context and the broader experiences of power relations (Rausch, 2012; Skilton-Sylvester, 2000).

#### **3.2.1 Data: Documents, Interviews, Conversations, and More**

The process of conducting research often begins with the question of collecting or generating 'data'. I resonate with Gildersleeve & Kuntz (2013), who suggest that data themselves are best represented in dialogue:

Data as dialogic trope, then, can recognize that data are fiction. Data are generative. Data are expressive. Data are relational. Data are in active (or agentic) relation. (Gildersleeve & Kuntz, 2013, p. 265)

While this study began by proposing a simple ‘interview’ process, the process of data generation, interaction, and member-checking led to a dialogic, relational, and active process.<sup>18</sup>

This research began with a connection with one UBC-DHCC and one Xyolhemeylh participant. Participant selection happened in several phases, in a ‘snowball’ process, and evolved over the course of the year between original research design and final completion. Interviews, follow-up interviews, ongoing conversations, and member-checks were part of ongoing conversations from approximately November 2012 to December 2013.

I worked with research participants to identify documents related to the Community as Teacher program and partnership. Program related documents were useful in that they provided perspectives on the historical, political, and institutional contexts of the program (Rausch, 2012). These documents were an additional source with which to confirm emerging themes and concepts (Bowen, 2009). Funding applications, annual reports, brochures, and newsletter articles provided a sense of the ways in which the program was organized, conceptualized, and communicated to various audiences. As suggested by Bowen (2009) and as encouraged by my participants themselves, I worked hard to consider the context and intended audience of each document<sup>19</sup>.

I chose to conduct interviews as a means of gaining a complex and nuanced understanding of the relationship between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC. I was particularly interested in the ways that interviews can help to get beyond the ‘official history’ to access first-hand experiences of an event or institution (Dei & Johal, 2005). In most interviews I aimed to follow the suggestions of authors such as Kvale and Brinkman (2009, p. 164) by keeping interviewer questions short, following-up to clarify answers, and engaging in some interpretation throughout the interview.

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<sup>18</sup> In some ways this dialogic process could be seen in keeping with a community-based participatory research approach. In this study, although a participatory process was not an integral part of designing the research, study participants were involved, through multiple conversations and member-check processes, throughout the process of data generation, analysis, and writing.

<sup>19</sup> For example, many of the UBC-DHCC Annual Reports cited in this study were created in the context of acquiring funding.



The initial research design involved document analysis and one set of interviews with a member-check process. The final study involved a more complex and dialogic set of conversations and interviews, as summarized in Table 3.1. In initial interviews, a total of five participants were interviewed including two staff from Xyolhemeylh and three UBC-DHCC staff and faculty. The second round of interviews involved two additional Xyolhemeylh participants, and follow-up interviews with the same three UBC-DHCC staff and faculty. In addition, I analyzed thirteen documents provided by Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants and maintained field notes and transcript-like notes from interviews and interactions with UBC-DHCC and Xyolhemeylh participants. Initial interviews were held with UBC-DHCC participants in December 2012, and with Xyolhemeylh participants from May to August 2013; the total data collection period was November 2012 to December 2013.

**Table 3-1 Data Sources from Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC**

	Data sources <sup>20</sup>
Xyolhemeylh	4 participants (C-A, C-B, C-C, C-D), 3 interviews, 2 follow-up interviews Multiple conversations 3 documents 1 video (made by UBC-DHCC and Xyolhemeylh)
UBC-DHCC	3 participants (UBC-A, UBC-B, UBC-C), 2 interviews, 2 follow-up interviews Multiple conversations 10 documents

For the first interviews, participants received the consent forms by email for their review at least one week prior to the interview. In a follow-up email prior to our meeting, I informed

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<sup>20</sup> During the member-checking process, participants suggested that they prefer generic abbreviations rather than pseudonyms.

participants of my role as a Masters' student, and referred to provisions laid out in the consent form around anonymity. Before the interview, participants were provided paper copies of the consent forms and invited to ask any questions before signing. At the end of the interview, they were reminded that they could revise the consent form, or withdraw from the study, at any time. The interviews took place in a space chosen by the participant, which meant meeting in participants' office spaces or over lunch.

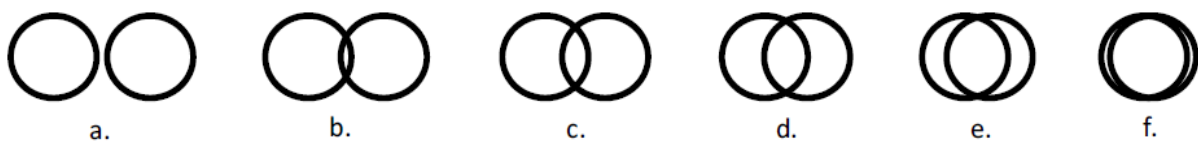
The interview guide was organized as a script which was followed most carefully at the beginning and end of each interview. This was done in order to ensure that for each interview, I followed the same opening and closing protocols where I outlined participants' rights and confirmed their consent. Throughout, there was a balance between asking basic questions and giving time for participants to share their perspectives on the program and partnership. The script consisted of a list of questions, sub-questions, and a list of possible prompts. While the longer list of questions and sub-questions evolved over the course of the study, the following was the approximate flow of questions in most of the interviews:

1. What is your past and/or current role in relation to the Community as Teacher program? Thinking back to when the program was first envisioned or when you first heard about the program, what was your understanding of the goals of the program?
2. How has the UBC-Xyolhemeylh relationship and the Community as Teacher program evolved over time and what changes (in goals, delivery modes, etc.) have occurred? Why did these occur? If you are ready to draw at this point, feel free to draw... what you draw doesn't have to be artistic, it can just show how you visualize the relationship.
3. Given the problematic relationship between Indigenous peoples and the federal and provincial governments, a university might be seen as having more power than indigenous communities. How have any such power differences been dealt with in this relationship?
4. From your perspective what can be learned from this program with respect to creating good partnerships between the university and an Indigenous community organization?
5. Do you have any other thoughts about the Community as Teacher program or the UBC – Xyolhemeylh relationship that you'd like to share?

Not all of these questions were asked in this way in each interview, as the interview followed the flow of conversation. Probing questions were used primarily to define terms as used by interviewees and to connect responses to overall research questions. Drawing upon the metaphors shared by Rubin and Rubin (1995), the interviews were somewhere between 'opening the locks', where a few questions unleash a story and exploration, and 'tree and branch', where

questions are logically linked and ordered. As Berg put it, “interviewers must develop, adapt, and generate questions and follow-up probes appropriate to each given situation and the central purpose of the investigation” (Berg, 2007, p. 94). Initial interviews lasted between 60 - 123 minutes each.

Graphic elicitation was employed within the interviews to help expand participants' interpretation of questions and allow participants to “investigate layers of experience that cannot easily be put into words” (Gauntlett, 2007 as cited in Bagnoli, 2009, p. 548). Participants were asked to use a blank sheet of paper to draw or diagram how they saw the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC<sup>21</sup>; the drawings often became a point of reference throughout the interview. Later, toward the end of the interview, participants were asked to indicate where they saw the relationship between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC on a standardised visual, a set of Venn diagrams (see Figure 3-1 below) which approximate relationship closeness (Clayton et al., 2010)<sup>22</sup>. The objective of this exercise was to get a better sense of the first two research questions focusing on participants' perception of the partnership or program, and changes over time. In initial interviews, participants were asked to do a free drawing usually within the first 30 minutes of the interview (see question 2 in the above interview script), and were given the Venn diagrams usually within the last 30 minutes.



**Figure 3-1 Venn Depiction of Closeness (Machek, Cannady, & Tangey, 2007, as cited in Clayton et al, 2010)**

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<sup>21</sup> Note that throughout the interview process, the term ‘UBC’ was used to refer to UBC-DHCC participants. As explored earlier (p. 68), this thesis has used the term ‘UBC-DHCC’ to differentiate the unit engaged in the partnership, the Division of Health Care Communication, from the broader context of UBC.

<sup>22</sup> For more information about this model, see Chapter 2 page 28.

The first ‘pilot’ interview, included in this study data, was particularly broad and open-ended, and included several repetitive or unclear questions and under-explored directions. Later interviews improved in quality, however I also encountered several logistical challenges which impacted the interviews including problems with voice recording, snow delaying my arrival, and cancelled meetings. Interview data were affected, in at least one instance, by my skill as an interviewer. For example, in response to a question about the meaning of ‘settler problem’, I proceeded to talk for several minutes explaining the literature around this topic, without inviting specific response or comment on what I had shared. This gap in the data is noted, and is in itself part of the learning experience of researching and writing a thesis.

### **3.3 What Happened: Learnings from “The Field”**

This chapter shares pieces of the 'uncomfortable reflexivity' (Pillow, 2003) that I have sat with and learned from throughout this research.

#### **'Set-the-table'**

In summer 2012, I met with Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC representatives, and both suggested that it would be useful to them to involve past camp leaders or past camp participants in my research project. Near the end of a follow-up meeting with Xyolhemeylh staff, one staff person suggested that the most appropriate way to move forward would be to 'set the table' by inviting participants to a gathering, perhaps in a longhouse, that involves food and where I could introduce the suggested project. In fall 2012, after UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB) approval, I went to Chilliwack for a planning meeting with Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants, during which again we agreed that a set-the-table event would be the next best step for this research. This plan was in keeping with my desire to engage in a reciprocal exchange as part of my research, and to respect Stó:lō protocols.

The day of the event I made a phone call and learned that there had been no confirmed attendees for the event, and so I made the decision not to drive to Chilliwack. The cancellation of this event was for me an opportunity to reflect on my own approach to this research:

*Dec 14, 2012*

*I wonder if perhaps the lack of a 'real' relationship between myself and the program is a hindrance. I am here researching as an outsider, in many ways I haven't made a commitment to Xyolhemeylh or even to DHCC, so why should they invest time and energy into me? I wonder if there is an element of colonial assumptions in my presumption that because I am doing 'research', they should bare their soul to me without asking really what my longer-term relationship is to the project or to the Stó:lō.*

*When talking to [a mentor] the example of a house came to mind. An old colonial house can be remodeled, refurnished, and repainted to be more a part of its environment but it will never be a locally-made dwelling, it can't be. I feel that way about myself: the more I strip down the layers, the more clear it is that my foundations, the frames and structures that hold me together, are in themselves colonial. If my colonial framework cannot be changed, what is the function of revealing it? In admitting my colonial structuring, what then is left as a step forward?*

In reflecting on the 'set the table' event, I became aware of my own assumptions and process. Although I in theory valued relationship-building, I had not even considered the idea of engaging in-person with Xyolhemeylh staff or any potential participants of the 'set the table'. Once a date was set, I had shifted my focus to the administration of details such as logistics, room bookings, driving directions, and meeting locations (Sork, 2010). When the set the table event was cancelled by community members, rather than driving out to Chilliwack to connect regardless, I cancelled my trip thinking it would not be sufficiently 'productive'. I had made the assumption that 'set the table' was an event with defined outcomes, rather than a part of an overall process of relationship-building.

In the member-checking portion of this research, I engaged in a conversation with Xyolhemeylh participants about this event. As one participant put it,

Set the table is the right way, but the timing was bad: summer had finished, fall is short, and then Christmas. For people to come together is asking a lot (C-C).

C-C further shared that many people involved in the summer cultural camps are busy in the winter, with smokehouse, a Stó:lō tradition, and other activities. The relevance of conversations about a cultural summer camp was limited in the winter.

The process of first planning for, and then the cancellation of the set-the-table event were my first opportunity to begin to understand the nuances and complexity of establishing Indigenous-university partnerships.

## Time to end?

Several months later, I had reflected on the importance of relationship-building and so had refocused my energy on connecting in-person rather than planning information sessions or interviews. In February 2013, I had booked a lunch meeting to reconnect with a Xyolhemeylh staff person. The morning of the meeting, I received a call from the Xyolhemeylh staff, cancelling our lunch meeting and passing on some surprising news: the cultural camp program itself was in jeopardy, and given the organizational turmoil it would be unlikely for me to interview anyone at Xyolhemeylh until June or later, much later than my original research timeline.

Recalling Smith's (1999) admonition not to continue doing research for the sake of the 'public good', I was convinced that perhaps I should pull out entirely:

*February 8 2013*

*I feel very hesitant to impose my timeline on this research project if it's really not good timing for Xyolhemeylh or UBC. One of the things that came through loud and clear from the UBC interviews and from lit review was the whole idea of looking for the common vision, building relationships over time - I don't want to push that aside because of my graduation schedule...*

*This leaves me with possibly not doing the thesis I intended... However I think that having gone through the entire proposal/BREB process once it would probably be faster a second time.*

I began to think and imagine possibilities of doing a completely different masters' thesis. I felt that as a member of dominant settler-colonial society, it was not my role to persist in doing a research project when an Indigenous organization was potentially indicating a lack of interest in the project. I saw my own willingness to walk away as a type of humility or willingness to put my own needs outside of the centre of decision-making; if community members had decided they did not want this research, I must follow their lead.

I engaged in an open conversation with UBC-DHCC participants, sharing the latest updates and the possibility of changing my thesis topic. They suggested that I not take this change of heart personally, and that it would likely 'work out in the end'. They suggested that I not interpret silence as a lack of interest, and that if I were patient, the project would unfold as it was meant

to. They also recommended additional contacts at Xyolhemeylh who might be available for interviews.

Upon reflection, I saw how I had leapt to the assumption that cancelling a meeting and postponing interviews meant Xyolhemeylh staff were not interested, rather than considering that again it was a question of timing. The community was facing the potential demise of the program which meant that my research was of lesser priority. Upon reflection, I began to wonder if my very willingness to abandon the project reflects my position as a privileged researcher who can, when the going gets tough, pick up and move to another place to 'do' research (Smith, 1999). Such a move, after over 6 months of collaboration and planning with Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants, would have been in many ways an abandonment of the relationships built up so far. I needed to respect the process that Xyolhemeylh was going through while also looking for ways to live up to my responsibility to continue with what I had said I would do in a good way.

I made the decision to continue with the study and relax my research timeline. A few months after the above situation had occurred, I had completed several community interviews and was in contact with Xyolhemeylh participants.

These examples are only two of the many moments during which I reflected on the process of data generation and research coordination work. As a novice researcher studying the process of community-university engagement, my critical reflexivity as described above was an important part of the research process and also a source of data about the process of building relationships between community and university (Rausch, 2012; Stoecker et al., 2009). In my attempts to be respectful of protocol and establish reciprocity, I had failed to establish relevance, or to build relationships based in respect. In both stories, the advice and perspectives of Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants were a key part of my learning process and thus a part of this research in process as well as in content.

### **3.4 Working with Data**

Having at last begun to collect data, next I began a process of data analysis. Wolcott (1994) differentiates between analysis, or a “procedure that impose order on the data themselves, no matter how unruly the data themselves” (p. 27), and interpretation, which “transcends factual data and cautious analyses and begins to probe into what is to be made of them” (p. 27). This section explores the ways that I went about initial analytic thinking and allowed interpretation to emerge.

Immediately after most interviews, I completed post-interview field notes, where I noted the location of the interview, time of day, the tone or mood of the conversation and what seemed to be salient parts of the interview. I also suggested questions for follow-up interviews, and recorded reflections on the interview process. I then made a complete transcription of the interview; I was especially careful to include what participants actually said rather than what I thought they 'meant' (Roulston, 2001). Transcriptions attempted to record the length of pauses, and indicated where possible the direction and significance of gestures or pointing at self-created drawings. Recognizing the significance of the dialogue between myself and interviewees, I made a consistent effort to include my own questions and comments throughout the transcript. Below I share the process I took in analyzing data: coding, visual mapping and memo-writing.

#### **3.4.1 Coding and Analysis**

For the first interviews with UBC-DHCC participants in December 2012, drawing from my own background in facilitation, I began with compilation of interviewee responses to interview questions. Starting with the verbatim transcripts and documents, I selected quotes from the interview that seemed to directly speak to my research questions. Using this list of significant quotes, I then compiled a list of key points from the interviewees. As I continued on to do coding of UBC-DHCC data, I found these ‘key points’ were not as useful as I had thought they might be, and so I did not compile key points for subsequent interviews with Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants.

With the interview, document, and field notes collected in this study I used an open coding approach. During the first cycle of coding, I aimed to assign codes to approximately every 10



words of text, or approximately 'line-by-line' coding (Charmaz, 2006). The first time through each document, I used open coding techniques, consisting primarily of action codes and descriptive codes (Saldaña, 2013). With interview data, for this first set of codes I used Microsoft Word, using a table format, in order to keep the codes close to the text and unimpeded by other influences. Despite the excitement of beginning to see possible order in amongst the messiness of this early data analysis, I tried hard to keep in mind Silverman's (2011) advice to 'avoid early hypotheses'. As ideas and concepts began to emerge, I wrote analytic notes, what Charmaz (2006) would call memos.

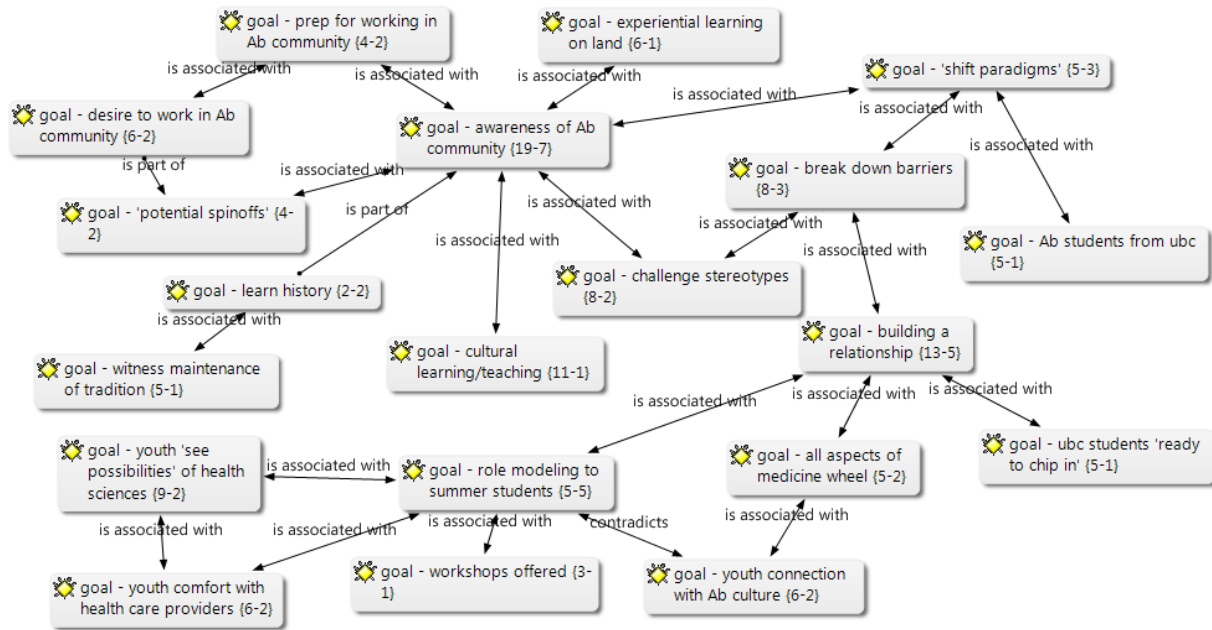
I completed the bulk of the process of data analysis for the university-side interview and document data from April to October 2013. I completed coding first for UBC-DHCC and later for Xyolhemeylh data, as dictated by interview schedules. After UBC-DHCC interviews in December 2012, the future of the Community as Teacher program and of my research was uncertain, as shared above; community interviews did not begin until May 2013. Thus before interviewing Xyolhemeylh participants, I had already begun analysis of UBC-DHCC data. Beginning analysis with only one set of data had an influence on the ways in which I asked questions, listened, and later coded Xyolhemeylh data. By June of 2012, I began analysis of Xyolhemeylh interview and document data, which continued from June to October 2013. I began a 'fresh' coding system, beginning again with line-by-line coding, so that my analytic work, theming, and categories could be influenced by the language and understandings of Xyolhemeylh participants.

Having assigned initial codes to each set of data, I engaged in a similar process with two separate sets of data – from Xyolhemeylh and from UBC-DHCC. I used the language of participants as much as possible in creating the categories. For example, 'Aboriginal as' was the code used for sections of the transcript text where UBC-DHCC interviewees talked about Indigenous people; the term 'Aboriginal' was the term used by interviewees.

Again working with Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC data separately, I went back through and engaged in additional cycles of coding, comparing codes with data and with each other, to confirm and disconfirm emerging clusters and themes (Charmaz, 2006). I then reviewed the

complete list of codes and began to cluster or group the large number of codes into categories or groups. For example, within Xyolhemeylh data, I began to group codes that spoke about program goals or vision with the prefix 'goal-'. I found that some statements spoke less to the goals for the Community as Teacher program as it was, and more to future ambitions, so I separated out that cluster with the prefix 'future-'. These categories were not themes in themselves, but rather convenient labels for groups of similar data. While the structure, language, and organization of codes emerged from the separate Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC datasets, the overall choice of categories was shaped by the research questions.

Once most codes had been sorted into categories, I then focused on one category at a time and compared codes and associated quotes, looking for ways to connect, merge, or differentiate codes, using a 'constant comparative method' (Charmaz, 2006). For the most part, I found this process allowed me to reduce the codes to a shorter list of more focused codes that related to a particular area. For a complete list of codes, see Appendix A. Using the visual mapping software provided by Atlas.ti 9, I took this smaller group of codes and created a map of the connections that I saw between the codes in a specific category. I labelled these relationships with indicators provided by Atlas.ti such as 'is associated with', 'is part of', and 'contradicts'. Throughout this process, I continued to compare data within each code with the larger set of data and codes, and at times merged or split codes to more accurately capture emerging themes and codes. For an example of one of these visual charts, see Figure 3-2 below.



**Figure 3-2 Sample Coding Visual for Category "goal-", from Xyolhemeylh Dataset**

The above process helped me to create a network of linked ideas that responded in some way to my research questions. Using the code map(s) as a guide and outline, and beginning with the first two more descriptive research questions, I wrote narrative responses to the research questions. Each research question was associated with relevant categories as they had emerged from coded data in each dataset. For example, in response to the research question ‘how do the partners describe this relationship and its purpose and objectives?’, I used categories in the Xyolhemeylh data for ‘relationship’ and ‘goals’, where in the UBC-DHCC data I created used the categories for ‘goals’ and ‘future’. Within each category, I used significant visual clusters within the visual map to define sections of the narrative. For example, in Figure 3-2 the narrative could be structured around the three hubs of ‘goal - awareness of Aboriginal community’, ‘goal - role modeling to summer students’, and ‘goal - building a relationship’.

I then began constructing two narratives about the partnership, from each partners’ perspective. However, as I wrote the prose summaries of UBC-DHCC and then Xyolhemeylh data, it became apparent that the stories were not separate narratives but rather branches of the same stream. To continue the analytic process, I merged the data and coding sets from Xyolhemeylh and UBC-

DHCC, and worked to tell a complete story including both community and university voices. Weaving together these stories initiated a set of analytic thoughts regarding the last two research questions exploring the Indigenous-settler relationship and recommendations; I continued the process of memo-writing to work through these ideas.

### **3.4.2 Analysis, Follow-up, and Writing**

The above process of iterative coding and analysis resulted in a first draft of descriptive writing addressing the first two research questions, with a preliminary set of analytic memos beginning to explore the second two research questions. I sent copies of the preliminary descriptive summary and analytic findings to my supervisor for feedback and revisions. I then condensed the descriptive work into a 4-page descriptive summary and a 2-page list of initial analytic themes. In July 2013, I contacted Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants suggesting a ‘member-check’ conversation to review these documents.

I engaged in three follow-up interviews with all three UBC-DHCC participants, and with two Xyolhemeylh participants, C-C and C-D<sup>23</sup>. These recorded follow-up interviews, along with unrecorded ongoing conversations, ranged from 5 minutes to over 3 hours in length. I transcribed and/or wrote reflective notes for these conversations, and drew upon them as needed to explore or deepen concepts emerging in the study.

Having engaged in follow-up interviews, I and my supervisory committee made the decision to continue with a single ‘descriptive’ chapter and a second more analytic chapter. I told a story in response to the first two research questions – the origin and evolution of the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC – in one chapter. The next chapter focused on the last two research questions, Indigenous-settler relationships and implications for Indigenous-university partnerships. At this point, I began to remove repeated words and fillers such as “um”, “like”, and “you know” from quotations except where they were significant to the meaning or tone of

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<sup>23</sup> In this follow-up conversation, an individual who had not yet been a participants in the study participated, thus shifting the conversation to be midway between an initial interview and follow-up conversation.

the quote. In early October 2013, the descriptive chapter went to all research participants for ‘member-check’ comments. I heard feedback at this point from 3 out of 4 Xyolhemeylh participants (C-A, C-B, and C-C) and all 3 UBC-DHCC participants; I met in-person with one Xyolhemeylh and two UBC-DHCC participants to discuss their suggestions and revisions. Their factual corrections, edits, overall suggestions, and insights enriched and deepened the learning of this study.

At this point, my supervisory committee suggested taking a broader perspective on the descriptive and analytic work that had been separated into two separate chapters. Working with a paper copy of the chapters, scissors, and a highlighter, I looked for emerging themes. What emerged from that analytic process was a more holistic picture of learnings from the partnership. These new versions of Chapters 4 and 5 were sent out to all participants. Given only 10 days to respond with comments or suggestions, I received feedback from 1 out of 4 Xyolhemeylh participants and all 3 UBC-DHCC participants. After the thesis defense, participants had two weeks to review the entire thesis; I received feedback from one Xyolhemeylh participant (C-A) and one UBC-DHCC participant.

When conducting this research I considered the first set of follow-up conversations, what I am now calling ‘follow-up interviews’, to be a first round of member-checks. As Koelsch (2013) suggests, “Participants can be seen as functioning as the researcher’s conscience to assist with researcher reflexivity” (p. 171). Recorded interviews and ongoing conversations with Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants are in my view part of an ongoing dialogic process that have influenced my thinking and understanding of this partnership and program.

### **3.5 Ethics**

The ethical accountability for this study comes from two vastly different epistemological contexts – one institutional, based in a settler-colonial society and one Stó:lō or Indigenous. In both cases, this research has passed through an ethics approval process as a basic starting place for ethical research.

While the UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB) did ask whether the study took place in an Aboriginal context, the process did not require or suggest that research involving Indigenous participants and context might require an additional ethical process through the band.

Having asked friends, contacts, and UBC contacts connected with the Stó:lō nation for an ethics process, I was referred to the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre (SSRMC) and given an application document which stated:

Researchers who plan to involve Stó:lō community members should register their research proposal with the SSRMC so that researchers can make use of pertinent oral history and research already in the Stó:lō Archives collection. (Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, 2012)

The SSRMC requested that that consent forms from this study include permission to leave complete interview audio files and transcripts in the Stó:lō archives, as a resource for future researchers. I made this change to consent forms, had the revised consent forms approved by BREB, and have submitted to SSRMC the consent forms, audio files, transcripts, and this thesis. The Stó:lō process is in keeping with the principals of 'Ownership, Control, Access and Possession' (OCAP), which is a set of principles developed for “all research, data, or information initiatives that involve First Nations” (First Nations Centre, 2007, p. 2) in response to a history of colonial and exploitative research. OCAP establishes community ownership of data, control of research projects at all stages, access to information wherever it is held, and the right to assert possession of data held in principle.

Registering the data from my study (interview transcripts) with the Stó:lō registration database, while significant, does not mean that Stó:lō communities gave consent for this research or that the research met goals or priorities of either Stó:lō communities or Xyolhemeylh<sup>24</sup>. One study participant, U-A, had learned that when working in Indigenous context, one needs to enter with a commitment for life, not for the life of the project. If I were to repeat similar research I would

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<sup>24</sup> If the study was an exploration of the Community as Teacher program and its role in Stó:lō communities, rather than a study of how the partnership was developed and sustained, then meaningful and broad community involvement and community approval of the research would have been an essential part of the work.

begin with a commitment to spending considerable lengths of time on Stó:lō land listening, learning, and building connections before shaping the study.

A large part of my ethical approach is inherent in my attempt throughout this thesis to be critically reflexive, that is, transparent about my own assumptions, approaches, and learning. I can only represent where I am at in my own current understandings, and I am confident that several years from now I will have deeper and perhaps different understandings of how I brought my settler-colonial worldview to this study.

### **3.6 How This Study Connects – Or, validity**

Kirkness and Barnhardt's (1991) 'Four Rs' for how universities engage with Indigenous students – relevance, reciprocity, respect, and responsibility – are important concepts for considering what some might call the validity of this study.

The relevance of this study to program participants was a consistent concern throughout this study. As this study began I asked Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC representatives for areas of interest or concern for them. Xyolhemeylh staff suggested follow-up with past youth participants or youth leaders in the camps; UBC-DHCC staff expressed interest in understanding how the Community as Teacher model might be translated into other contexts. Xyolhemeylh's suggestion to involve past participants became a part of the research proposal and ethics application, and was a part of the research plan until spring of 2013, when the series of events described above led to a change in plans. The final study has evolved to understanding the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC. At the time of writing this thesis the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC is in jeopardy due to changes in Xyolhemeylh's structure; as a result Xyolhemeylh participants have expressed the perspective that perhaps this research is more important than ever, to celebrate and document the eight-year partnership.

The processes of reciprocity and respect in this research have been an ongoing journey. Throughout the research I found ways to bring snacks or other small items, as one way to appreciate the time of those I learned from. This way of appreciating time, while in keeping with 'reciprocity, felt most significant when in the context of an ongoing connection. During the

course of the research, thanks to funding from my supervisor and the conference, a Xyolhemeylh staff person, two committee members, and I presented a panel at the Community-University Expo in Newfoundland. I have aimed throughout this process to find ways of showing respect for research participants and to work ‘in a good way’; however my learning process continues from week to week. Persisting with this research and telling the story of this partnership both in this thesis and through my own connections and networks, is one way to honour the vision of those involved. I have learned from their respect and continued engagement with me, despite my continually steep learning curve in this process.

A sense of responsibility, as articulated by Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991), is perhaps the most challenging for me to resonate with. My responsibility, in the case of this research, is to be careful to fairly represent the words of participants, through an extensive and iterative member-checking process. As Linda Tuhiwai Smith says, our challenge is to go beyond knowing into the transformation of practice itself (Smith, 2012b). The process of extensive member-checking and follow-up interviews is a part of that desire for transformation of research into practice. As Koelsch (2013) suggests, “member check interviews can be utilized to bridge a gap between transactional and transformational validity” (p. 175). While it is too early to see how those learnings translate into practice, the process of drafting, sharing, and continuing conversations related to my thesis has in itself been a significant process of learning for myself and research participants.

A final piece of my responsibility, in my view, is to share this work with those concerned, including at an oral defense to which I invited all research participants. I have offered to give a similar presentation at Xyolhemeylh. A shortened “executive summary” version of the thesis, as well as the full thesis, will be made available to all participants and both partner organizations.

### **3.7 Reflections**

In this chapter I have laid out the details of my data generation methods, including several stories of critical reflexivity, and shared my approach to coding, analysis, and member-checking.



There can be no full conclusion to work that is built upon relevance, reciprocity, respect, and responsibility. As I close, the questions I began the study with continue and shift. How can I engage in decolonizing research without either re-centering the settler, or appropriating Indigenous methodologies? To what extent has my position as student and staff at UBC influenced the ways that I hear Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants? What is my long-term relationship to the people and program I have come to know in this research?

These meta-questions, or process-questions, are both about both learning through the process of research and part of the content of this study itself. Building on the process described in this chapter, in the next two chapters I share a narrative of my findings framed within ‘Four Rs’: **relevance** as a foundation for **risk-taking**, and **respect** as key to **relationship-building**.

## Chapter 4: Relevance and a New R: Risk-taking

### 4.1 Introduction

Four central themes emerged from this study of a partnership between Xyolhemeylh (hyoth-meeth or yoth-meeth) and the UBC Division of Health Care Communication (UBC-DHCC): **relevance** as a foundation for **risk-taking**, and **respect** as key to **relationship-building**. These constructs emerged from the analysis of the data of this study, however the naming of these themes was inspired at least in part by the work of scholars in both decolonization and service-learning.

**Table 4-1** Relevance and Risk-taking with in the ‘Four Rs’ of Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991) and Butin (2010)

<b>Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991)</b>	<b>Butin (2010)</b>
<b>Relevance</b>	<b>Relevance</b>
Reciprocity	Reciprocity
<b>Respect</b>	<b>Respect</b>
Responsibility	Reflection

**Note:** Bolded concepts are comment to Kirkness & Barnhardt, Butin, and this study.

In the remainder of this chapter I aim to present Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC perspectives while honouring the different viewpoints and understandings of each partner. During the member-checking process, participants suggested that they prefer generic abbreviations rather than pseudonyms. Thus, I have identified anonymous interviewees with the following letters:

- U-A, U-B, and U-C are UBC-DHCC interviewees, and
- C-A, C-B, C-C, and C-D are Xyolhemeylh interviewees

Documents have been identified by a short name which makes reference to the context of the document.

### 4.2 Relevance: “Why” Partner?

As a Xyolhemeylh participant described it, the partnership began from independent “thoughts on

each side” (C-B) – reasons on each side to connect through a partnership. Xyolhemeylh participants came into the partnership as long-standing educators with an openness to partnership based on prior research, and a goal of finding role models for Indigenous youth. UBC-DHCC participants came with a focus on informed shared decision-making, research into doctor-patient relationships, and a funding opportunity. This section explores how, building on their background, Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC created a shared sense of relevance around UBC student learning.

#### **4.2.1 Relevance: Connection to Core Mission**

Xyolhemeylh’s role as educator of emerging health professionals, and UBC-DHCC’s role in promoting the voice of patients, are central to their motivations for engaging in a partnership.

##### **Relevance to core Xyolhemeylh mission: agency as educator**

Xyolhemeylh participants described Xyolhemeylh as an agency with a desire to play a role in education. The agency has considerable experience working with students from neighbouring post-secondary institutions doing practicum placements, primarily in social work and related fields. There was a consistent sense that Xyolhemeylh includes teaching and training as part of its mandate:

It's good for our agency to be involved with students, and we are involved with students year-round... it allows us to remember that we're also in a teaching role as an agency. (C-A)

In addition, there was a sense for some participants that, as Indigenous people, the role of teaching is particularly significant:

It's always teaching... it's one of the things as a First Nations person, when you're interacting with the outside world, it's always teaching... if that's what people need you're there to help them along to understand (C-B)

UBC-DHCC participants also recognized that Xyolhemeylh had a longstanding educational role:

I think one thing that made it kind of a little bit more straightforward, was that their camps or at least some of the camps were designed for them to be teaching their youth, about their culture, so we weren't asking them to do anything particularly different to what they were already doing, just... include our students in that. (U-C)

Some Xyolhemeylh study participants spoke of ways that they respond to, engage with, and guide the learning of those who are ignorant of protocol, tradition, and other processes. One story that illustrates this is a time when a Xyolhemeylh participant brought a new social worker with

her for training:

She was going to train [the new social worker] how do you approach an elder in the community, especially one we really want to have a good relationship with, and as [the Xyolhemeylh staff] was talking the other worker got frustrated I guess, it seemed to be taking too long, and said, well, we're here to talk to you about renting [the longhouse]... She cut into the conversation... when [the elder] was actually talking... about a death in the family. [The elder] didn't say to that worker "I can't believe you're that disrespectful to me", and provide the teaching... "you listen, you might learn something"... She didn't say that, she just got a look on her face and said ok, we'll talk about that then – but it didn't help the relationship, and it made [ongoing] work so much more difficult. And a lot of the elders are a lot like that (C-C)

While the Community as Teacher program has focused primarily on health professional students, Xyolhemeylh participants expressed a broader vision for the program. A recurring theme was the focus on the education of social work students, and the problems faced as a social services agency with newly trained social workers who lack appropriate training or approaches. Some assumed that social workers made up a portion of the participants; others suggested that if they were given a choice of which UBC students to invite, "we'd probably place the priority on social work, because that's the reality" (C-C). At the same time, Xyolhemeylh participants see their work as teachers not only of social work students but of "folks who work with First Nations peoples" (C-D). For Xyolhemeylh, the role of teaching came as a part of their work – teaching new social workers, teaching student interns, teaching settlers in a broad sense.

### **Relevance to core UBC-DHCC mission: patient's voice in health professional education**

The broader goal of the Community as Teacher program from a UBC-DHCC perspective was to find ways of influencing health professional education as a whole, specifically by increasing the community or patient voice in health professional education. UBC-DHCC researchers have established a model which they call 'informed shared decision-making' (Towle & Godolphin, 1999). A key component of this approach is placing the community as holders of expertise concept that is "almost the reverse of the way that [universities] approach education" (U-C)<sup>25</sup>. Because community is seen as having expertise, the ideal educational approach would be

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<sup>25</sup> For a further exploration of the risks taken in situating expertise in the community, see the section starting p. 89

community ownership over the program and in the health professional education process, culminating in a completely community-run health professional education centre:

A spinoff from [Community as Teacher] has been another idea that we've been working on, and that is the notion of a community center for health professional education...which would be run by the community, governed by the community, largely supported by the community (U-B)

The Community as Teacher program was for UBC-DHCC an opportunity to explore the patient's voice in health professional education, in this case in an Indigenous context.

The importance of connecting to the mission and mandate of both partners is in keeping with existing literature which suggest that enhancing community partner capacity to fulfill its mission is a significant benefit to the community partner (Blouin & Perry, 2009) and leads to enhanced community-university engagement.

#### **4.2.2 Relevance: Connection to Research**

In addition to seeing a connection between this program and their overall mission or mandate, both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC were inspired by recent and relevant research, of various kinds, to engage in partnerships that were 'outside the box'.

##### **Research of relevance for Xyolhemeylh: "outside of the box" research**

Several Xyolhemeylh participants described the origins of the program as tracing back to the research and work of Cindy Blackstock. Blackstock is a member of the Gitksan Nation and the Executive Director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada<sup>26</sup>. One interviewee describes the impact of Blackstock's research:

Dr. Cindy Blackstock did some work in her MBA... about how First Nations communities do not engage with partnerships, nor do they access dollars from the volunteer sector. And so because of that work... [Xyolhemeylh] started to reach out and open up the doors to people like UBC, Scouts Canada... (C-B)

Part of [Blackstock's] work was... colouring outside of the box, and building those partnerships outside of that box – which is normally just with federal government. (C-B)

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<sup>26</sup> Blackstock is also a faculty member at the University of Alberta, Faculty of Extension.

Through Blackstock's efforts, Xyolhemeylh was the host for a grant called "Caring Across Boundaries", which was funded by the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation<sup>27</sup> and resulted in partnerships with Scouts Canada and several other organizations. Several of these partnerships, such as the connection with Scouts Canada, continued for many years and were often mentioned in connection with the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC. Participants recognized Blackstock's applied research as an early impetus for building partnerships with non-Indigenous agencies through her initiative and openness to respond to opportunities that arose.

In addition to academic research and practical work, Xyolhemeylh staff drew upon a long history of Stó:lō research in initiating, designing and implementing the cultural summer camps that are the basis of the Community as Teacher program. Linda Tuhiwei Smith (2012a), in the second edition of her classic *Decolonizing Methodologies*, asserts that 're-search' is a part of many worldviews; curiosity and the search for new knowledge are not uniquely European. Expanding the definition of research to include community-held knowledge suggests that the ongoing work of the cultural summer camps, and in fact much of Xyolhemeylh's educational and social service work, is based on a living and ongoing process of re-search that goes back hundreds, even thousands, of years. This collectively held understanding of learning, education, history, and relationship, in addition to recent academic research, is a strong basis for Xyolhemeylh educational initiatives.

### **Relevant research for UBC-DHCC: doctor-patient relationships**

In UBC-DHCC summaries of the Community as Teacher program, academic research is often described as the origin of the idea to establish a relationship between UBC-DHCC and an Indigenous organization:

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<sup>27</sup> This is the same foundation which years later awarded the Community as Teacher program a national community service-learning award – a fascinating coincidence. The McConnell Foundation "engages Canadians in building a more innovative, inclusive, sustainable, and resilient society". The foundation provides programs, grants, and resources to support social innovation that has potential impact on communities across Canada ("McConnell Foundation: About," 2013).

[UBC-DHCC] did interviews and focus groups with physicians who worked with Aboriginal patients and also with people who identified themselves as members of the Aboriginal community, and they asked them about what sorts of communication problems they experienced in the doctor-patient relationship (U-A)

This initial research uncovered a relationship between history, time, and trust in the context of doctor-patient interactions (Towle et al., 2006). This earlier work is summarized in a more recent publication:

The negative legacy of history (e.g., residential school experience) was a barrier to communication (and trust) that could be attenuated by the physician taking time to know the patient as an individual and member of their community. (Kline et al., 2013, p. 4)

After this initial study, UBC-DHCC researchers went back to Indigenous participants to ask about possible educational interventions, and were told that students should 'spend time in community'. This then became the primary goal of the program, as described here:

Consultations with key informants from the Aboriginal community suggested that students needed to “*spend time*” in the community to “*get to know them as an individual and as a member of their community*”. (McConnell Award Attachment p. 2, italics in original)

These layers of research established a foundation for UBC-DHCC’s interest in establishing an Indigenous community partnership.

### **Relevant research: thoughts**

Both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC refer to research, from different sources and of different types, as the backing to their work. Academic research is often represented as the sole basis for UBC-DHCC’s community engagement work. As UBC-DHCC participants shared during the member-check process, the process of writing research grant applications is a matter of “playing the game” (U-C), and as part of that, UBC faculty and staff are required to align these applications with the expectations and structures of funding agencies as well as the broader university.

Our [educational program] development is always cast as being partly research. The business the university is in research. (U-B)

Within the context of a research-intensive university, UBC-DHCC’s research into the Community as Teacher program (Kline et al., 2013; Towle et al., 2006), published in peer-reviewed academic journals, is regarded as significant and meaningful.

UBC-DHCC staff and faculty were encouraged to secure funding that allowed them to focus on the role of research and the work of their own office. As a result, UBC-DHCC introductions to the Community as Teacher program rarely mention that Xyolhemeylh cultural camps had been in place for 10 years when the partnership began, or that Xyolhemeylh staff implement and fund the cultural camps. The bias toward centering the contributions of UBC-DHCC tends to inadvertently underplay the significant role that Xyolhemeylh staff played in designing and leading the Community as Teacher program, and the role of Indigenous-led research in leading to the partnership.

#### **4.2.3 Relevance: Connection to Goals**

In addition to tapping into each partners' mandate, and accessing research in some form or other, both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC had specific goals which the Community as Teacher partnership met: the lack of post-secondary student role models in cultural summer camps and need for patient-led health professional education, respectively.

##### **Relevance to Xyolhemeylh's goals: student role modelling**

Xyolhemeylh staff had been operating cultural summer camps for approximately 10 years before partnering with UBC-DHCC. In that time they had identified a need for post-secondary students to act as role models, particularly for Indigenous summer students who were hired as camp leaders:

I really think the modeling of the students with our summer students, or the older teens in the program, is really... important, because they can see the possibilities of maybe getting into medicine, nursing, any one of the helping fields, that it's a possibility and that they can talk to those students about kind of how they got to where they are (C-A)

This was reiterated in the community section of a service-learning award application:

Our camp participants also benefit in other ways. For example, although a career in a science/medical field is not common for Aboriginal youth, particularly females, since UBC has been involved in our camps many of the young ladies have started to consider a career in medicine/health care. (McConnell Award Attachment, p. 5)

One aspect of UBC student role modelling that was significant was how these students represented an approachable health professional. Xyolhemeylh participants suggested that connecting with UBC health professional students might encourage an increased sense of comfort for Indigenous youth and families when talking to health and other professionals.



### **Relevance to UBC-DHCC's goals: providing funding for patient-led initiatives**

Finding avenues and funding for patient-led health professional education was seen as an important part of UBC-DHCC's work:

The reality is that we'll go to any group – marginalized groups have problems that are more likely to be funded... and are a way for funders to tackle the most serious problems (U-B)

The Community as Teacher program was seen as an initiative that would be eligible for funding, and a way to build upon prior research that UBC-DHCC considered to be their core mandate: patient-led health professional education. U-C expresses this perspective:

[We] have a set of beliefs, principles, etc., and we work in an environment that doesn't share those, or that sees them in a different way... we have to play the game... So [Special Populations Fund] comes along, they have aboriginal in the list...[we] put aside some of the other things about is this really a marginalized population and all of that, and... we can position ourselves in a way that does fit. There's an element of being opportunistic (U-C)

For UBC-DHCC, involvement in the Community as Teacher program relied upon consistent funding from Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC. The original funding for the UBC-DHCC-based research and educational development work came from the Faculty of Medicine 'Special Populations Fund'. The fund was available for projects in community geriatrics, emergency medicine, maternal and child health, and Aboriginal medicine, among others<sup>28</sup>. The funding was a significant impetus to the start of the program:

Our program of work began with the initial allocation of Special Populations Funding in 2001. (UBC-DHCC Letter of Intent 2006-07; UBC-DHCC Annual Report 2007-2008)

While UBC-DHCC participants may not have necessarily bought into perspectives shared by the Special Populations Fund, they met their goal of finding sustainable funding and used that

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<sup>28</sup> The list of 'marginalized groups' as defined by the funding is as follows:

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Health (MOH) for the Strategic Teaching Initiative cited the following as potential areas of need to be addressed by special populations funding: Community geriatrics, Emergency medicine, Inner-city medicine, Palliative care, Aboriginal medicine, Rural health, Maternal and child health, Chronic and severe mental illness. (Guidelines for Allocating Funds, May 2001)

funding to establish a partnership with Xyolhemeylh. UBC-DHCC could be seen to be playing the role of an ally (Aveling, 2012; Regan, 2010) – finding ways to contribute, based on their strengths, to Indigenous-led initiatives such as the cultural camp program.

The funding and structures that created this program are embedded within cognitive imperialist assumptions about Indigenous peoples (Battiste, 2012a)<sup>29</sup>. The ‘Special Populations Fund’, from which UBC-DHCC received funding, uses language of marginalization which implicitly depends on the assumption of ‘Indigenous as problem’ and ‘Indigenous as add-on’. Given the long and sustained relationships between Indigenous peoples and settlers, and the fact that much of British Columbia remains unceded Indigenous land, the relationship between settlers and Indigenous peoples is significantly different from that of other ‘marginalized’ groups such as immigrants or the chronically ill. As Marie Battiste (2012a) reminds us, the colonial relationship is not a thing of the past, it is ongoing. Indigenous peoples are not merely one in a long list of marginalized peoples in our society. The assumption that Canadian land was ‘empty’ before colonialism, and that Indigenous peoples are just one of many groups upon that land, are based in the assumptions of cognitive imperialism. While UBC-DHCC staff and faculty could be seen as respectful with Xyolhemeylh staff and community participants, the funding that was the catalyst and motivation for this partnership created structures and language that are consistent with inferiorizing and marginalizing Indigenous peoples.

The partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC was relevant to the core mission of each partner, built upon related research, and connected to goals that each partner had for their work.

#### **4.2.4 Relevance for Partnership: A Shared Vision of Student Learning**

While it may seem, from the above narrative, that Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC were a ‘textbook match’ in terms of partnership, Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants made little explicit mention of the ways in which organizational mandate, research, or specific goals motivated the other partner:

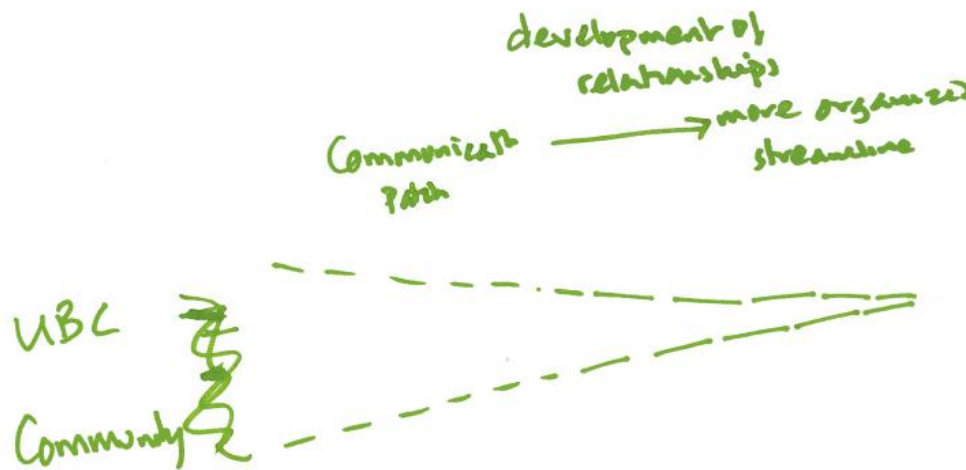
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<sup>29</sup> For more about cognitive imperialism as a construct, see Chapter 2.

At some point something got them in touch with us... I never reached out to UBC, so why did they reach out to us? I don't know, I don't know what happened there, or what even gave them the thought to reach out to [Xyolhemeylh]. (C-B)

I'm not sure [Xyolhemeylh] had in mind UBC students going to summer camps when they suggested that the agency do more partnership work in the community. (U-A)

While Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC may not have been explicitly aware of the others' motivations, they had evidence to believe that the partnership was relevant to both. Diagrams created by UBC-DHCC participants illustrated a growing congruency between their own and Xyolhemeylh perspectives. This is evident in Figure 4-1, a diagram created by U-B:



**Figure 4-1 UBC and Community - U-B**

From a UBC-DHCC perspective, the fact that Xyolhemeylh staff have become increasingly involved was in itself a sign that partnership held relevance for these staff:

I'd call them each year and say, do you want to do this again, and they said oh sure, and so... we set it up – and then... that year that they picked up the phone and called me first, for once, and said... are the students coming again this year – that to me told me that there was some benefit to them, it wasn't just about what the students were getting out of it but that they obviously recognized the benefits as well. (U-A)

From a Xyolhemeylh perspective, the continued persistence and 'willingness' of UBC-DHCC to engage was enough to suggest the partnership was relevant:

I would argue it's by the willingness of UBC and the determination of UBC because they're the ones who initiate every year the conversation and that piece again. (C-D)

Regardless of who initiated the contact from year to year, it is clear that the partnership over time has become an assumed part of programming and that both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC found ways to build it into their regular program. Within the context of the Community as Teacher program, the partnership continued with success for many years in part because of its focus on generating shared vision around student learning, as will be explored in the next section.

This section explores the ways that Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC worked to first establish a sense of shared vision, and then nurture and build that vision through ongoing research.

### **Relevance: generating shared vision**

Right from early meetings, Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants described a sense that they were able to share a common vision of student learning. Xyolhemeylh staff regarded including non-Indigenous students in this Stó:lō educational context as a natural fit:

If you spend time with folks learning will happen... that was the goal, that was the reason for having [UBC students] there. [Xyolhemeylh staff] knew she was putting elders in the camp, cultural people in the camp, and if they came, they would learn – that's all there was to it. (C-C)

In a video created for the program as part of a national service-learning award, a Xyolhemeylh staff person starts the video by stating:

We see students... many of them didn't have any opportunity to actually meet Aboriginal people in an ordinary setting (Fuller, Jak, & Hunt, 2012).

Xyolhemeylh participants speak to the needs of UBC students to develop skills and to challenge their own stereotypes:

A lot of doctors have to take their stints or something in northern BC, where the [Indigenous] population is 50% or whatever... So they're needing to learn, they're needing to develop their skill base and understanding base, even some of their... biases (C-B)

They speak to their desire to help break down those stereotypes, in particular, as a far-reaching and significant part of the work done by camps:

Even if two of them changed their minds by coming to camp we've changed the Aboriginal experience for ever... [it] breaks down stereotypes (C-D)

The objective of it in many instances is just... how do we engage young students, who are probably non-Aboriginal, right, to come in to an Aboriginal context, which is completely foreign to them, and open themselves up to learning. (C-B)

For some, there was a direct connection between learning about Indigenous culture and the skills and/or desire to work with Indigenous communities. As one participant put it:

After their experience with the summer camp, maybe... a spark goes off, maybe further down the road once they're completed to apply and to work with our agency. And or if not ours, to say going back home, wherever, to work with another Aboriginal child protection agency (C-A)

Here Xyolhemeylh participants begin to articulate connections between the education of UBC students and potentially improved staffing in years to come. These kinds of connections and associations begin to 'generate' relevance within the partnership.

UBC-DHCC participants and documents, including research completed by Kline et al (2013), similarly report that student learning is the primary goal of the program. From a UBC-DHCC perspective, student learning was framed primarily in two related ways – as being about “health care communication between physicians and Aboriginal people” (McConnell Award attachment, p. 17), and about the “patient's voice in informed and shared decision-making” (U-B). There was a sense from very early on that the connection between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC was both focused on student learning and was relevant to the existing work of both partners.

Community-university engagement scholars confirm that a sense of shared purpose or vision is an important element of community-university partnership. Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (2013), participants in Baum's (2000) study, and Bringle and Hatcher (2002) suggest that working together toward a common goal or mission is a key component of effective community-university partnership.

What is surprising is that the vision shared by Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC was not focused on a 'community issue', as assumed for example by Baum (2000) or even Boyer (1996). Instead, student learning was the explicit and oft-repeated focus of the Community as Teacher partnership. While much of community-service learning (CSL) literature has focused on student learning, critics have made the call for additional research focused on 'community outcomes'. In much of the earlier CSL literature, university staff and faculty assumed that the primary benefit

of student participation was ‘service’ to the community. More recent research has shifted attention onto the perspectives of community partners who indicate that one of their primary motives for participating in CSL is to have an opportunity to educate and work alongside university students (Steimel, 2013). In this case, it seems that the main focus of the program was addressing UBC student learning, which was a priority for both community and university. In fact, given the grounding of the program in addressing the stereotypes held by UBC students, the program could be seen as a service that the community is providing to the university, not vice versa, as suggested by some scholars (Mitchell & Hennig, 2010; Stoecker et al, 2009).

### **Establishing shared relevance: ongoing research into student outcomes**

UBC-DHCC faculty and staff communicated student learning from the program right from the beginning:

[UBC-DHCC faculty and staff] always comment quite a bit about how much their students get from that experience, so I think that's really important for the agencies to hear rather than what we just get out of it... it's that shared experience rather than just how we're benefiting. (C-A)

I think the excitement even just after the first year was around what a difference this has made in some of the students' lives already. (C-B)

Ongoing research into student learning experiences provided evidence and impetus for the continuation of Community as Teacher program. Recently published research explores student learning outcomes (Kline et al., 2013)<sup>30</sup>. UBC-DHCC participants spoke to an initial skepticism about what students might get out of the camp, and how they changed their perspective because of the interviews conducted:

Probably what really changed my mind was doing the interviews, the one-on-one interviews and focus groups with the students after, and hearing from them what they were getting out of it, and feeling quite surprised by that. (U-A)

When the first batch of students that we had go to the summer camps came back, we interviewed them – and they had such wonderful things to say about their experience, that

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<sup>30</sup> For a brief overview of the Kline et al research, see page 73. In addition, very preliminary sense of student learning can be derived from the list of codes in this study associated with student learning (Appendix A)

we knew we had to be on the right track... the rest of it was largely trying to maintain that (U-B)

One of these realizations was that students were “getting it” (C-C) in only a few days spent in the summer camps.

Findings from this research were shared with Xyolhemeylh in the form of a poster of student quotes. The poster, created by UBC-DHCC staff and faculty proved to be a significant element of the communication between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC. Entitled “Getting Involved in the Community” (see Appendix C), the poster started with the phrase:

University of British Columbia Health Professional Students come to the Stó:lō Nation summer camps to be taught about the culture, history and traditions so that they can become better Health Professionals. In their own words, here is what they learned... (Get Involved in the Community poster, Appendix C)

On the poster was a collection of nine quotes taken from students’ post-camp research interviews, describing ways that UBC students had learned from their experience in the Xyolhemeylh cultural camps. Hearing from students the ways in which they had learned from the program had an impact on Xyolhemeylh participants:

When UBC presented us with a poster, with all the students' comments about... their paradigm shifts, and their desire now to work with First Nations communities... for me that was powerful, really powerful (C-C)

UBC-DHCC participants were aware of the impact of the poster on Xyolhemeylh as well:

Sending that poster with the quotes from the students, although to me I thought oh that's nothing, compared to... what they do, it's still in their office five years later... it's obviously important to them. (U-A)

Participants at Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC spoke to being motivated by seeing the impact on UBC students through other means as well. Xyolhemeylh participants witnessed student learning at the camps:

At the end of camps I would go and close the camp... just to see the students there with the youth... seeing that connection over just a short period of a few days with the kids was really powerful. (C-B)

Both the poster and the ongoing research conducted by UBC-DHCC were a significant part of ongoing communication around student learning outcomes. The research conducted by UBC-DHCC faculty and staff can be seen as part of engaged scholarship because it involves advice and perspectives of key stakeholders, and seeks to understand a complex social problem (Van de

Ven, 2007). UBC-DHCC staff have made deliberate efforts to engage in ongoing dialogue with Xyolhemeylh staff, for example as part of the poster described above, and were joint applicants for and recipients of the McConnell CSL Award. Community members were invited as co-authors to the recently published article (Kline et al, 2013); they were not interested in co-authorship but were acknowledged as contributors. The Kline et al (2013) article, which identifies community participation in interpretation of findings and manuscript review, identifies the lack of participatory research design as a limitation of the research. While academic research has been lead primarily by UBC-DHCC, ongoing dialogue around the Community as Teacher program have continued to articulate and develop a sense of shared vision within the partnership.

#### **4.3 Relevance: One “R” of Decolonizing Community-University Engagement**

Both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC had established relevance for the partnership based in their own respective core mission, research, and goals; together, they developed through their partnership a shared vision around student learning. The work of this partnership ties in well with Community-Campus Partnerships for Health’s definition (see p. 20), building upon the “assets, strengths and capacities”(Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, 2013) of Xyolhemeylh as an educator and leader and UBC-DHCC as a leader of patient-centered initiatives in health professional education.

Relevance to core functions of partners, and finding relevance in shared vision, are a solid foundation for partnership. However merely establishing relevance of a potential partnership would not have been enough to start a partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC. The next section describes the ways in which, building on a foundation of relevance, Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants shared their perceptions of the risks necessary to establish and sustain a partnership.

#### **4.4 Risk-taking: Outside of the Mainstream, Beyond the Norm**

Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC took differentiated risks in establishing and maintaining their partnership. Starting with setting up the partnership on the margins of existing organizations, this section moves to exploring the risk of bridging the Indigenous-settler divide, for Xyolhemeylh,



and the ways that the partnership was a ‘luxury’ that did not conform to ‘traditional academic ways’, for UBC-DHCC.

#### **4.4.1 Element of Risk-taking: Continuing Outside of the ‘Mainstream’**

While in some ways a research-intensive university and a child and family services agency could be seen as vastly different organizations, both are large organizations, primarily government-funded, with a wide array of programs, units, and divisions. Both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants shared a perception that the partnership fits well into the vision and mission of their respective organizations. At the same time, participants at both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC saw the partnership as ‘not a part of the mainstream’ and rarely highlighted within their respective organizations. Xyolhemeylh participants suggested the cultural summer camps and other ‘prevention’ programs were not seen part of the main thrust of Xyolhemeylh’s child protection services, which focus on protection of children and families in crisis or near-crisis.

The marginal position of the program at UBC may be seen as a surprise given the overlaps between the Community as Teacher program and UBC strategic priorities. At the time the partnership began, in 2006, the UBC Trek 2010 Strategic Plan focused on People, Learning, Research, Internationalization, and Community (“Principles, Goals, and Strategies - UBC Trek 2010,” 2006). Within the Faculty of Medicine, Health Trek 2010 had three goals: educate learners to meet the needs of society, advance inter-professional learning and collaborative practice, and link to social determinants of health; the UBC-DHCC Annual Report 2007-2008 made explicit links to all of these overall goals. UBC-DHCC reports consistently made a connection between the Community as Teacher program and broader university priorities because “that’s the thing you do in order to please the people who are giving you money” (U-C). After 2010, UBC’s new strategic plan, *Place and Promise* came into effect, with nine commitments including community engagement and Aboriginal engagement<sup>31</sup>. Despite these

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<sup>31</sup> UBC has three core commitments to academic excellence, student learning, and community engagement, as well as six strategic commitments to aboriginal engagement, alumni engagement, intercultural understanding, international engagement, outstanding work environment, and sustainability (“Commitments, Goals, and Actions: UBC Strategic Plan,” 2010)

efforts on the part of UBC-DHCC to connect to broader priorities, prior to the receipt of the McConnell CSL award in 2012, the program was not known at the university beyond those who were directly involved. UBC-DHCC participants described UBC-DHCC as “a very marginal unit” (U-B) within the overall UBC structure, again because their work differed from a perceived mainstream. Describing others doing similar work at other universities, U-B states that “involving patients in health professional education.... was not mainstream, not respected, not high-profile in the institutions” (U-B).

Thus, both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC interviewees regarded themselves as distanced or marginal from the ‘mainstream’ within their respective organizational structures. From one perspective, the fact that a university and a social services agency were able to connect in this way made the partnership function in a way parallel to the survival of Indigenous peoples:

It makes the partnership even more real and valid in a sense because that's the way aboriginal people have always functioned in society, right – so to have a mainstream become part of the undercurrent is really cool. (C-D)

At both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC, the marginal position of the program meant that the program was often in jeopardy. For Xyolhemeylh, the challenge was to ensure that the camps would continue to be supported as an element of prevention services. Several times throughout the partnership, the Xyolhemeylh participants believed that the cultural camps were about to be cancelled; as this thesis is being written, the future of the camps is uncertain. UBC-DHCC participants experienced a sense of risk in committing to sustain a long-term partnership within this environment. Being a marginal program meant continually working to find sustainable funding sources. Although the program could run on minimal funds, as U-A stated “it doesn't cost a lot, but it costs something” to promote the program, solicit student applications, and hire a student coordinator and community liaison. UBC-DHCC participants continue to search for small amounts of funding to hire a student who promotes and supports student participation in the camps. Both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants find ways to continue the partnership ‘off the sides of their desks’ with limited strategic or funding support from their respective organizations.

While there were risks involved for both partners, the institutional and community contexts within which the partners work are very different. For Xyolhemeylh, if the partnership had resulted in an exploitative relationship, it would have meant not only the loss of time and energy put into the partnership, but also a potential loss of hope in 'beyond the box' partnerships. For UBC-DHCC, if the partnership with Xyolhemeylh had not materialized it would have had very little impact on their conception of themselves as academics.

For the first seven years of the partnership, neither of the larger organizations of UBC and Xyolhemeylh recognized the Community as Teacher program or the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC in any formal or public way. Merely continuing to commit to, find funding for, and run the Community as Teacher program, in addition to 'core' programs and services, was a marginal and risky endeavor.

The position of the programs changed, at least temporarily, when Xyolhemeylh and UBC jointly applied for and received one of three J.W. McConnell Family Foundation National Community Service Learning Awards. After winning one of three McConnell CSL national awards, the program was featured in a UBC First Nations House of Learning newsletter and in the quarterly Xyolhemeylh newsletter. From a UBC-DHCC perspective, the award led to an increased profile for the program not only nationally but also within the UBC context, as units across campus became aware of the existence of the program. Winning a national award meant, for this program at least, a sudden significant increase in attention and publicity. As a UBC-DHCC participant put it:

Having that award was actually very useful to us, in terms of disseminating info around the program, disseminating information around the university (U-C)

The increased attention increased support for the program in a variety of ways. It was at the Canadian Association of Service Learning conference and awards presentation in Saskatoon that I learned of the program and months later decided to focus this masters' research on the partnership. The award also brought the Community as Teacher program to the attention of the UBC service-learning unit, the Centre for Community-Engaged Learning, which has now provided research funding support to UBC-DHCC. As mentioned previously, through similar funding from my research supervisor a Xyolhemeylh staff person was invited to present on a panel at the Community-University Expo in Newfoundland. While the partnership between

Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC was low profile in early years, winning a national award increased the profile of the Community as Teacher program at UBC.

Despite winning a national award, this program continues to be marginally positioned within university structures and supports. The fact that the Community as Teacher program and partnership is seen as marginal is, in some ways, not surprising within the context of a settler-colonial institution like UBC. One element of cognitive imperialism, as described by Marie Battiste (2012a), is the concept of Indigenous as add-on. Indigenous perspectives, programs, and initiatives are often found in the margins of academic work and outside of regular curriculum.

The position of this partnership, despite UBC's commitments to community engagement, provides a counterpoint to Weerts and Sandmann's (2008) review of research-intensive universities, which suggests that institutional commitment to engagement, as demonstrated for example by UBC strategic commitments, should be a facilitator of community-university engagement. The later work of Weerts and Sandmann (2010), exploring the roles of boundary-spanners, provides a useful framework through which to view the situation facing the Community as Teacher partnership. UBC-DHCC staff can be seen as playing the roles of what they would call community-based problem solvers, focused on site-based support and partnership development. UBC-DHCC faculty play the role of technical experts, focusing on knowledge creation for applied purposes – i.e. the development of health professional education programming. The strength of community engagement within relevant UBC strategic documents suggests a strong presence of 'engagement champions', leaders who focus on building external and political support. The fact that the Community as Teacher program does not benefit from supports and structures to enable effective community-engaged work suggests the need for what Weerts and Sandmann (2010) call 'internal engagement advocates', who find ways to "build campus capacity for engagement" (p. 721). Finding ways to facilitate and support internal engagement advocates would be one way to ensure the continuation of the Community as Teacher partnership.

#### **4.4.2 Element of Risk-taking: Bridging the Indigenous-Settler Divide**

Perhaps the best depiction of risk-taking is C-B's depiction of a butterfly (Figure 4-2), indicating

the ways in which Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC started from different places but merged together, in the body of the butterfly, as a symbol of transformation. On the left side of her diagram she includes some of the barriers – fear, doubt, racism, and lack of time – that from this participants’ perspective made this partnership such a risk:



Figure 4-2 Community as Teacher Partnership - C-B

A significant part of the risk of building a relationship, for Xyolhemeylh in particular, was addressing the pervasive influence of the past and continuing colonial reality.

### **Risk-taking across the Indigenous-settler divide: colonial context**

Xyolhemeylh participants spoke broadly about a colonial past and how, as a result, staff were hesitant about taking a 'risk' in building a new partnership with a non-Indigenous organization. As a Xyolhemeylh participant put it, "there has been a history with our Aboriginal First Nations people with large institutions, mainstream institutions" (C-A). This sense of a negative legacy

left by previous researchers is one aspect of why it took time to build a sense of trust and it speaks to the significant risk undertaken by Xyolhemeylh:

I do remember now... [the camp founder] was really unsure about the partnership at the beginning, really unsure. (C-D)

In C-B's depiction of a butterfly to represent the overall partnership (above), the note 'how is it going to fly' is above a list of barriers on the left side of the diagram. That hesitancy sprung at least in part from wondering "is this engagement going to be balanced" (C-B). C-C spoke to the ways that the research process has been frustrating for Indigenous people, who have experience with researchers who "come in and take their information". As C-C put it,

A lot of that is historic... concern about what's going to happen in this relationship... are you going to be like Columbus and come in and take over everything (C-C)

Xyolhemeylh participants recognized that UBC students have "misconceptions of who native people are" (C-C). One Xyolhemeylh participant shared this, for example:

I have even met people where they thought that if they went on a reserve they would get scalped, I mean literally, literally thought that. And it was really scary that people had that kind of concept, but I think there's a little bit of fear of the unknown that goes on there (C-C)

Xyolhemeylh participants interviewed, most of whom were Indigenous, spoke about the potential for damage from the settler population. As C-B put it, "you always have to be a little bit guarded, because it's not everybody has good intentions". Xyolhemeylh participants shared stories of extreme ignorance, insensitivity, and racism from members of settler society – newly trained social workers, non-Indigenous partner organizations, health professionals, and students.

Establishing a relationship between Indigenous and settler institutions was a significant risk for Xyolhemeylh and this risk is not shared by UBC-DHCC partners. From a UBC-DHCC perspective there was a sense that "we were very different people around the table" (U-C) in those early meetings. The original meetings were described as "patchy" (U-C), that it "seemed to take more effort" (U-C). As UBC-DHCC interviewees put it:

I wouldn't say they were difficult conversations, they were really quite interesting, but there was a lot of back and forth because... first of all I guess it took a while for them to even – install a bit of trust in us (U-B)

UBC-DHCC participants recognized that it took time to build trust between themselves and Xyolhemeylh, but did not connect that lack of trust to the Indigenous-settler relationship within a

settler-colonial context.

While UBC-DHCC participants referenced colonialism within the relationship between health care provider and patient, in this study, they did not name how colonialism might have an impact on their relationship with Xyolhemeylh. In a publication from early research that led to the Community as Teacher program, UBC-DHCC staff spoke to the impact of colonialism on Indigenous peoples' health:

Reasons for health disparities are multifactorial and include historical loss of cultural and political institutions, colonialism, racism, and residential school experiences that have had multigenerational impacts. For example, the mental health of Aboriginal people in Canada has been linked to the history of colonialism and government interventions, including the residential school system, out-adoption and centralized bureaucratic control (Towle et al, 2006, p. 340)

While UBC-DHCC participants did not identify as settlers or as being a part of past and ongoing settler-colonialism, they were aware of stereotypes held by settler health professional students<sup>32</sup> and medical professionals through their initial research into communication between doctors and health professionals (Towle et al., 2006). In fact, the focus of the Community as Teacher program on student learning is based on the acknowledgement that health professional students are a part of the problem. At least one UBC-DHCC participant expressed an awareness that a broad range of professionals might hold problematic assumptions. U-A, reflecting on an experience interacting with a trained health professional, articulated the origins of those stereotypes in education:

I was astounded that someone close to my age, working in health professions, would have such a limited lens in looking to the impact of the residential schools... [that person is] a very good person, but I think it's a consequence of the way [he/she] was educated. (U-A)

The challenge of racist stereotyping is more broadly spread than just amongst health professional students, and is in fact a part of the settler-colonial reality. Decolonizing authors such as Linda Tuhiwei Smith (1999) have laid out carefully the ways in which universities, and by extension

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<sup>32</sup> Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants expressed an awareness and almost an assumption that UBC students participating in the camps were non-Indigenous – although as several Xyolhemeylh participants mentioned, they hoped that someday the UBC student participants might be Indigenous youth.

faculty and staff at universities, have been implicit in imperial and colonial agendas. Many individual researchers hold an ‘imperial gaze’ of authority and judgment over Indigenous cultures and ways of being. Institutions provide the structures, processes, and systems of legitimizing the work of those who aim to work toward the ‘public good’, without considering the potential for Indigenous ownership, control, access, and possession<sup>33</sup> of this work. Scholars have argued that the university is not a neutral, political uncontested site of ‘higher learning’ (Findlay, 2000; Henderson, 2012). Findlay (2000) argues that the ‘academic way of being’ and negative stereotypes of Indigenous peoples are not accidental outcomes of a well-intentioned system, but rather a significant part of the way universities operate:

Canadian universities remain complicitous with residually colonial and defiantly neocolonial policies and practices... that define what counts as knowledge and who will benefit from its acquisition and exercise, while the beneficiaries and casualties of colonialism stay much the same as they have always been. (Findlay, 2000, pp. 311–312)

Scholars such as Regan (2010), Smith (1999), and Haig-Brown (2006) broaden the lens even further to look at the Canadian settler population in general. They suggest that, in a settler-colonial society, the most important decolonizing work begins by looking within at the assumptions made about dominant society and by dominant society of Indigenous people. These are aspects of what Regan (2010) has called the ‘settler problem’ – not just the ignorance of individual settlers, but the prevailing myth that settlers and settler-created institutions are not complicit with colonialism. Without simply reversing the ‘problem’ from one pole to the other, an important first step of decolonizing work is to “conceptually focus a mirror rather than a magnifying glass at native people” (Marker, 2006, p. 499). Marker points to how colonial-settlers need to examine themselves and the problematic stereotypes and assumptions they hold before focusing energy on Indigenous ‘issues’.

As Dion (2008) suggests, racism is part of the fuel for colonialism, which benefits all non-Indigenous people. McIntosh (1989) and Ahmed (2007) suggest that not addressing categories of ‘white’ or ‘coloured’ tends to favour the dominance of normalized whiteness. Whiteness is so

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<sup>33</sup> For a brief summary of OCAP (ownership, control, access, and possession) principles, see page 59.



completely normalized that it is likely that a reader of this text may have assumed that university faculty and staff interviewed in this study are white. All UBC-DHCC participants were white – a symptom of the dominance of whiteness within universities and specifically within UBC. As Verjee’s (2005) research shows, UBC has “low representation of racialized faculty, low representation of racialized staff in management and senior management positions, and... general lack of supports for racialized people at UBC” (p. 227). The ‘whiteness’ of UBC-DHCC faculty and staff, and the ‘unmentionable’ presence of racism, have significance for the relationship between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC.

Xyolhemeylh staff took a significant risk in establishing a partnership with UBC-DHCC, given the possible stereotyping and imbalance that has typified Indigenous-settler relationships. UBC-DHCC staff identified the impact of colonialism on the relationship between health providers and patients, but did not identify the ways in which their own perspectives might be part of a ‘settler problem’. Taking the additional risk of naming and acknowledging the complicity of universities in colonialism would be an important part of decolonizing work within community-university engagement.

#### **4.4.3 Element of Risk-taking: Beyond the Academic Norm**

The final element of risk-taking speaks primarily to the experience of UBC-DHCC participants, who recognized that the work they took on would, for the vast majority of university faculty and staff, be seen as a risky endeavour. Even with the support of tenured faculty and initially stable funding, partnership-building was ‘tenuous’ at best; engaging in the partnership was a risk because it was uncertain.

Having identified a need for students to ‘spend time in community’, University staff and faculty looked to build or initiate relationships with Indigenous organizations through any means possible. As one participant put it, UBC-DHCC was:

Just sort of pounding the pavement... starting with the connections that you already have and... branching out from there (U-C).

These early connections were numerous, and tenuous. During those early years the unit made connections with at least six separate Indigenous communities and/or Indigenous organizations, and placed students in several different organizations. UBC-DHCC participants described the

difficulty of making connections and the lack of success in creating partnerships:

We'd tried to make connections with a variety of different groups, going through contacts and contacts to kind of make those connections, and finding [it]... quite difficult to make connections (U-A)

Given their previous struggles to find a partner, Xyolhemeylh's response came as a surprise:

The fact that this... was ... just an email out into the ether, that got a response back, seemed to be quite amazing considering how difficult all the previous connections had been to make. (U-B)

UBC-DHCC participants went on to recall that when they connected successfully with Xyolhemeylh they felt a sense of “relief that we'd actually found a community” (U-B).

The process of continued and repeated attempts at partnership, described above, was possible because of significant supports within the Division of Health Care Communication (DHCC).

With a combination of tenured faculty in the lead role and what had been stable funding from the Faculty of Medicine<sup>34</sup>, the Community as Teacher partnership was a ‘luxury’:

It takes a long time to get here, you've got to be in it for the long haul, and be prepared to spend the time... nurturing the relationship and having the luxury to... drive all the way out to Chilliwack several times a year to chat, and have lunch, and develop a relationship. That's a luxury that I don't think a lot of programs have. (U-A)

Both faculty leading this project had the security of tenured positions within the Faculty of Medicine, which allow them to take on work that produced relatively few publications, required continual investment in relationship-building, and provided learning opportunities for less than 20 students per year. This type of work, given its labour-intensivity, does not align with evaluations of productivity in a research-intensive university, which has consequences for opportunities for further promotion and therefore gaining influence:

You don't get as many publications out of doing community-based research, if you're serious about involving the community you've got a long time before you've even got anything to publish... So people who go in for these kind of stuff are people who are full professors, so it doesn't matter if they're not so productive in university terms, or they're people who simply don't care, and their passion or what they're focusing on – they know that they're not going to be a successful academic. (U-C)

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<sup>34</sup> Participants spoke about how the funding for the first many years of the program was not project-based, which enabled a continued investment in ongoing projects such as Community as Teacher.

Thus, UBC-DHCC participants are clear that while with the support of tenured faculty they have taken on this work, it would be far too ‘risky’ for untenured or pre-tenured faculty to take on this work. The description of a long-lasting partnership being a luxury and a challenge highlights the fact that for UBC-DHCC participants in their academic context, building these partnerships was seen as an exception to the norm.

While community engagement is part of UBC’s broader mandate, evaluations of scholarship tend to undervalue the time and labour invested in sustained partnerships, implementation of collaborative initiatives, and joint publishing with community members (Wallerstein & Duran, 2006). Freeman, Gust, and Aloschen (2009), as community partners themselves, write about the ways in which they have come to see “the university promotion and tenure process as the way to truly tell if a university’s articulated commitment to and valuing of community engaged scholarship are a reality in practice” (p. 92). From the perspective of participants in this study, community-engaged work is not valued or recognized within the institutional context.

In this case, both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC staff identify that the ways in which UBC-DHCC engaged in partnership were not the norm in academia, and given the challenges involved in partnership-building, would not be easily replicated by faculty seeking tenure and/or promotion. The experience of UBC-DHCC in this regard is in keeping with Weerts and Sandmann’s (2008) review of research-intensive universities, in which they found that devaluing of engaged scholarship and fiscal or structural constraints on faculty members are barriers to faculty involvement in community-university engagement. Building systems and structures to allow non-tenured faculty and staff to engage in the ‘luxury’ of building meaningful relationships requires first recognizing the faults of current systems.

#### **4.5 Risk-taking: A New “R”**

This chapter shares ways in which “risk-taking” was important in the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC. For both partners, the program was run on very little funding and on the margins of their institutions. For Xyolhemeylh, engaging in a partnership with a colonial institution was a significant risk. For UBC-DHCC, the partnership represented a risk

primarily in its uncertainty. UBC-DHCC participants suggest that they avoided significant potential risks due to a combination of initially stable funding and tenured faculty.

In discussing the first two R's, relevance and risk-taking, this chapter suggests that both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC had strong reasons for engaging this partnership, reasons that had as much to do with prior projects and ongoing work as with their own ongoing research efforts. Each partner saw this program as significantly relevant in that it connected to their past work, was a part of core organizational mission, had ties to prior research, and fit well with future ambitions. In addition to establishing relevance to their own core mission, Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC found ways to generatively create and maintain dialogue about shared relevance or vision in new and sometimes unexpected ways – through a shared focus on UBC student outcomes, for example. Regardless of the content, it is clear that for both partners, sharing the relevance or motivation behind the partnership was a key component of creating the partnership.

Despite the successes of the Community as Teacher program, and the ways in which both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants find relevance for their own and shared visions in the program, they continue to struggle to find ways to maintain or grow the partnership. At the time of writing this thesis, the future of the partnership is in jeopardy. Xyolhemeylh staff have been re-organized, and the place of the Community as Teacher program is uncertain. The camps may be contracted out to Stó:lō community organizations; if that happens, UBC-DHCC will be in the position of rebuilding a shared sense of relevance with a new partnership – with even less funding. Perhaps there is no better time to name, acknowledge, and respect the foundation of relevance and the risks that Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC have taken throughout this partnership.

## Chapter 5: Respect and Relationship-building

Having explored the significance of **relevance** as a foundation for **risk-taking**, this chapter moves to understand how **respect** was key to **relationship-building** in the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC.

Beginning with a foundation of respect, this chapter suggests that interpersonal relationship-building is a core element of an effective partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC. As noted in the previous chapter, respect is common to both Butin's (2010) and Kirkness and Barnhardt's (1991) 'Four Rs' and also emerged as a major theme within this study. The first part of this chapter explores the ways that respect, or what participants in the study might call respectful engagement or 'working in a good way', is understood within this partnership. The section starts with the broad sense of listening to community respectfully, continues to the more specific context of following cultural protocol, and ends with the example of reciprocity as a manifestation of respect.

This chapter draws out a theme of a fourth "R", relationship-building, within the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC. Relationship-building emerged first as an assumed basis for partnership-building, then as a 'hidden R', intertwined throughout existing 'Four Rs', and finally a significant theme within this data. Relationship-building between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC relied on understanding relationally-based student outcomes and building face-to-face meetings between people, not organizations.

### 5.1 Respect: Working in a Good Way

Respect and working in a good way has many dimensions, and this section explores just a few. 'Working in a good way' is the expression many Xyolhemeylh staff used to describe a respectful way of being in relationship. As C-C said, "it's difficult to describe and pass it on, it's learned over time".

A UBC-DHCC participant spoke about the ways that working in a good way was motivated by a sense of personal connection and responsibility:

Personal connection with a community [C-C] over the years, having that continuous person on the other end – when you know people personally you feel... a personal responsibility to them to do a good job. (U-A)

The underlying core of relationship-building work is, in many ways, respect. Both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC shared the belief that respect is about ‘listening to community’. For Xyolhemeylh participants, listening to Stó:lō community in structuring the cultural camps was key, and for UBC-DHCC participants, respect was about listening to Xyolhemeylh in designing the Community as Teacher program. A more general sense of respect underlies respect for Indigenous protocols and ways of being. One very specific example of that respect for protocol lies in the gift-giving element of reciprocity, described in the last section.

### **5.1.1 Elements of Respect: Listening to Community**

It is clear that for almost all the participants in this study, a key part of working in a good way involved building upon and listening to the leadership of community members. Study participants used the term community in a variety of contexts – at times referring to a community organization, a broader set of community members, or a more general population<sup>35</sup>.

Xyolhemeylh participants shared a view of Xyolhemeylh’s role as a facilitator of the involvement and leadership of members of the Stó:lō community. Xyolhemeylh participants saw themselves as community development practitioners. As one Xyolhemeylh participant put it, “you’ve got to find where the people are and go to them” (C-A). Part of that involved working alongside communities, and the cultural camps were one way of doing that:

We had community engaging at that full level – because we’re hiring community people, community buildings, community catering, so money was funneling into communities too, which... was part of that programming of being empowering to communities (C-D)

For C-A, the growing relationship between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC was also part of growing relationships between the agency and the community, elders, and beyond. In C-A’s

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<sup>35</sup> For more exploring the ways in which ‘community’ might be problematic language, see literature review p. 31

diagram<sup>36</sup>, the centre contains four bubbles, all interconnected with double-ended arrows, representing UBC-DHCC, Xyolhemeylh, UBC students above, and summer students (Xyolhemeylh-hired youth camp leaders)<sup>37</sup>. Working in this context is seen as a part of a nested, interconnected, and dynamic web of relationships, embedded within the context of listening to community voice and valuing communities.

In keeping with this approach of listening to community, the Community as Teacher program itself originated from qualitative research with Indigenous participants. Having determined a need to ‘spend time in the community’, UBC-DHCC participants created a flyer that was circulated widely to numerous Indigenous community groups. The flyer started with the following in bold letters:

**Will you help us improve health care in the Aboriginal Community?  
Help develop educational programs for medical students**

The flyer then shared a quote from an elder, from earlier research studies, and described both what students might be able to learn and what the students could offer in terms of 'first aid and other volunteer services'. The flyer ended with this (see Appendix B for the complete flyer)

How can you help?

We know medical students who would like to learn more about Aboriginal history and culture, but we need your help. We are looking for partners who will offer learning opportunities for students.

If you're interested in helping to teach medical students or want more information, please contact [UBC-DHCC contact]

It was clear from both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC study participants that although UBC-DHCC had approached with an initial request for ‘help’ in educating health professional

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<sup>36</sup> This diagram is described rather than shown as C-A did not provide consent to share the visual image created during our interview; any errors or in clarity in the description are my own.

<sup>37</sup> Beyond this central set of bubbles was another set of four – other volunteers, families, elders, and youth, all of whom are linked to each other and to the central four circles. Finally, beyond that, ringing the edge of the page, was a set of four circles that were the backdrop to the program: cultural teachings, socializing, physical wellness, and leadership.

students<sup>38</sup>, the idea of having UBC students participate in Xyolhemeylh camps was a Xyolhemeylh idea. UBC-DHCC participants and documents confirm that the idea to place UBC students in summer youth camps came from Xyolhemeylh staff, as shared in this report:

[we had] meetings with a program supervisor for an Aboriginal child and family services agency of the Stó:lō Nation (First Nations people inhabiting the Fraser Valley of British Columbia), who agreed to offer placements for students at summer camps for Aboriginal youth organized by her agency (Kline et al., 2013)

Building on research originally conducted, UBC-DHCC participants saw Xyolhemeylh as holding expertise and approaches that are valuable for health professional students.

U-B, whose diagram is pictured below (Figure 5-1), was careful to note that although partners had become closer, they were not overlapping circles because Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC each held their own expertise - it is the 'quality of the overlap' that counts, as indicated by the double-ended arrow<sup>39</sup>.



**Figure 5-1 Relationship between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC - U-B**

Listening to community voice involves admitting that universities, while they hold expertise, are not the only holders of knowledge or expertise. In the language of UBC-DHCC participants, this might be considered either the 'patients voice' or as a 'meeting of experts', in which health professionals and patients are perceived to share differing but complementary areas of expertise. Within the field of community-university engagement, it represents one aspect of what Weerts and Sandmann (2008) call the 'two-way street':

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<sup>38</sup> For an overview of this early contact, see page 108.

<sup>39</sup> While the participant did not comment specifically on the single arrow drawn on this diagram, there was an indication that the left circle represented the university, and thus the implication that the university was somehow moving 'toward' the community.



A shift away from an expert model of delivering university knowledge to the public and toward a more collaborative model in which community partners play a significant role in creating and sharing knowledge to the mutual benefit of institutions and society (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008, p. 74)

As Weerts and Sandmann (2008) suggest, in academic culture, “knowledge is often viewed as residing with [university-based] individuals rather than being embedded in a group or community” (p. 81). Claiming ownership over knowledge, generating knowledge, and disseminating knowledge are perceived by many to be the domain of universities. Finding ways to both recognize community expertise and enable community leadership is one of the challenges faced by community service-learning and community-university engagement.

The intention with the Community as Teacher program was to have community members involved actively in determining educational content, location, and community connections. Within the Community as Teacher program, Xyolhemeylh took responsibility for the education and support of UBC students for three to four days and nights. One UBC-DHCC participant speaks to this when describing the extent of Xyolhemeylh’s responsibility for both the content and method of instruction:

The community should develop the objectives, and decision about... not only what they thought the students should learn about them, and their culture, but the way in which they wanted to teach it. (U-B)

This community involvement is significant in terms of the ways this program could be seen as a model, and as unique:

This work has led to the development of an educational model of informal community placements where the partner community determines the content and format of the educational intervention (UBC-DHCC Annual Report 2007-2008)

Just as Xyolhemeylh facilitates involvement of Stó:lō community members, UBC-DHCC staff and faculty can be seen as a facilitator of Xyolhemeylh’s involvement. This is a parallel pointed out by a Xyolhemeylh participant:

We go to them and say this is the camp we're trying to do, what do you want – the same way [U-A] does to us, we do that in our communities, and then we listen to what they say. So we don't go in with a camp, we go to them to partner for the camp. (C-D)

The emphasis in this study on the importance of listening to and working alongside community resonates strongly with aspects of an asset-based approach to community development. Listening

to community voices, both in the context of UBC-DHCC listening to Xyolhemeylh and Xyolhemeylh listening to Stó:lō community voices, is a key element of respect or working in a good way.

### **5.1.2 Elements of Respect: Following Cultural Protocol**

University partners such as UBC-DHCC can work ‘in a good way’ by remaining open to cultural protocols and coming with an attitude of humility. As U-A put it, “I think definitely one principle that works really well is... following their... protocols for doing things”. Rather than seeing protocols as a set list of procedures to be completed, following protocol involved maintaining openness by not imposing values or ways of doing things:

Then awareness of protocol – there are different protocols in each context – if you come to one Stó:lō group, there will be one protocol, and if there are 12 families there will be 12 different protocols. The key there is being open to those protocols. (C-B)

One significant element of protocol mentioned by both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants was the participation of UBC-DHCC staff and faculty in ceremony. From a Xyolhemeylh perspective, it was particularly notable to have invited a UBC-DHCC participant to act as ‘witness’. As C-C put it, “when you get asked to witness it is a show of respect”.

In many ways, Xyolhemeylh participants identified behavior of UBC-DHCC staff and faculty as being in keeping with cultural protocols. As one participant put it:

They didn’t have, there was no power, control... they must have been trained maybe by somebody at UBC, First Nations instructor, I don’t know – on how to conduct themselves in a good way. (C-B)

Xyolhemeylh participants describe working with other non-Indigenous partner organizations who needed “teaching moments” (C-D), but in the case of the UBC-DHCC connection they “didn’t seem to go through that” (C-D). Xyolhemeylh participants commented on the ‘down to earth’ (C-A) approach of UBC-DHCC:

I would think not coming in as... this large institution... I never got that sense from [U-B] and [U-C], I just think you have to have that real down to earth kind of approach. (C-A)

They also noted how UBC-DHCC staff and faculty came ‘humble’ (C-B), both through physical presentation in terms of having an open body language and in the sense that they came open to new ideas:

They didn't come with any preconceived ideas – I mean I think they did, everybody has a preconceived idea, but they weren't driven to having it their way. They were open to whatever we think is going to work. (C-B)

We don't want to see somebody coming in and saying you know we think this is really good, so do it – you would just kind of get a lot of resistance that way, and... then it's going to be really difficult to overcome that. (C-B)

This approach of humility and openness to cultural protocols falls in line with Xyolhemeylh organizational values, which reads “We do our work in a good way and practice humbly” (FVACFSS brochure).

For UBC-DHCC participants, a part of this ability to respect Stó:lō protocols was a recognition of the limitations of “traditional Western, academic ways of teaching and learning” (U-A), and how academic culture shapes the structure and tone of meetings and relationships. UBC-DHCC participant spoke about an awareness or recognition of different ways of operating within the context of a relationship with an Indigenous community. One UBC-DHCC participant referred to the “cut and thrust” (U-B) of academia. Another suggested that generally meetings at the university start by “diving straight into the agenda” (U-C), or with a printed out agenda (U-A). These references to academic ways of working were contrasted with the ways that UBC-DHCC staff and faculty operated in meetings with Xyolhemeylh, or in meetings that involved Indigenous contexts. For example, U-B talked about becoming “comfortable with 2 hour meetings instead of half-hour ones”. Some participants suggested that based on their understanding of Indigenous culture and awareness of their own assumptions, they would in fact behave differently in meetings with an Indigenous focus:

I was a nicer person in those meetings [relating to Aboriginal people] than I used to be in the faculty meetings, because... there was much more proper listening... much more thoughtfulness went on, even the starting of meetings with a prayer, that set a very different tone to us starting a meeting (U-C)

While exact ways and approaches to working in a good way vary depending on context, openness to local protocols is a key component of building mutual respect within a partnership.

### **5.1.3 Elements of Respect: Reciprocity as a Demonstration of Respect**

Following the lead of Xyolhemeylh participants, reciprocity is seen as one component of a broader approach of ‘working in a good way’. For UBC-DHCC participants, finding ways to

reciprocate within community-defined structures was important. In the ongoing relationship, the reciprocal gesture most commonly referred to was driving to Chilliwack for in-person meetings<sup>40</sup>:

I think definitely one principle that works really well is going out to them, not asking them to come meet with you here (U-A)

Gift-giving was also an important part of reciprocity, particularly in relation to ceremony. On one occasion, two UBC-DHCC participants participated in a ceremony marking the end of one of the camps. As C-C put it,

For the one year when [U-B and U-C] came out at the last day of camp, family camp, and there was gift-sharing... that was meaningful because it was recognition of [five] years (C-C)

One UBC-DHCC participant in particular became aware of this “need to reciprocate” (U-A) and brought a set of blankets to a graduation ceremony, hoping they would be used in some way. While the blankets were not used for the ceremony, they were appreciated and remembered by Xyolhemeylh staff and community members. This is an example of how a UBC-DHCC participant listened carefully, and built upon the information they had available, and looked for significant ways to reciprocate. On another occasion, one of the UBC-DHCC participants recalled a gift that had been given by Stó:lō elders:

The elders who had made those... spoke about how they had said prayers for the continuation of the project as they had... put the beads together with the feathers and I thought that... said something about the value of the project (U-C)

It is important to note that reciprocity did not by any means represent an exchange or payment for services. However, giving a gift was one way of honouring all that had been given and demonstrating that “what I received was important” (C-C). By giving a gift at the end of the camps, for example, Xyolhemeylh staff were showing their appreciation and respect for the contributions of visitors. Reciprocity here manifests as gift-giving, as a part of respectful approach.

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<sup>40</sup> As described further later in this chapter (page 114)

Xyolhemeylh participants mentioned a more reciprocal relationship with UBC in contrast to what they saw in other partnerships:

[A mainstream non-Indigenous organization] was a little different... they came and provided a – a training service for us, so it was a little different, it wasn't like a reciprocal relationship, it was like a service to us (C-B)

The relationship between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC is not based in UBC-DHCC providing a 'service'; this allows room for a reciprocal relationship. As discussed in Chapter 4 (p. 74), for Xyolhemeylh the colonial context of this work made it especially important to find partners willing to engage reciprocally. A Xyolhemeylh participant put this a little more bluntly:

As Aboriginal people we're getting tired of... “you poor dumb Indians we need to come and help you” (C-C)

While this study began with a strong awareness of reciprocity as a potential theme, the data within this study suggest that reciprocity is best positioned within the larger concept of respect within the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC. The literature of community-university engagement favours reciprocity as a core principle for community-university partnership. Reciprocity has been defined and re-defined by numerous Indigenous and Western scholars; it is in many cases associated with what Weerts and Sandmann (2008) call the ‘two-way street’ model of community engagement. However in recent research (Tolar, Gott, & Lee, 2013), community partners used ‘reciprocity’ in the transactional or ‘thin’ sense, rather than the transformational sense described in community engagement literature. This study supports that finding: reciprocity as a concept was ‘thin’, and built primarily upon the foundational concepts of respect and relationship-building.

## **5.2 Respect: One “R” of Decolonizing Community-University Engagement**

Respect, or “working in a good way”, was characterised by Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC as beginning with a focus on listening to the community – UBC-DHCC listening to Xyolhemeylh, and Xyolhemeylh listening to Stó:lō community members. This grounding in community permitted an openness and humility around cultural protocols, which led naturally to an expression of reciprocity through reciprocity and gift-giving.

Respect is core to the ‘Four Rs’ described by Butin (2010) and Kirkness and Barnhardt (1996), and is an underlying element of many frameworks of community-university engagement. The concept of respect, as shared in this study, resonates closely with what Kirkness and Barnhardt’s (1991) found lacking in their study of Indigenous university students. As they put it,

The university represents an impersonal, intimidating and often hostile environment, in which little of what they bring in the way of cultural knowledge, traditions and core values is recognized, much less respected. (p. 5).

These descriptions could apply equally well to Indigenous organizations’ experience of the university. Given the multiple and overlapping ways in which Indigenous peoples and organizations are disrespected in society, through stereotypes, racism, and systemic oppression, respectful relationship-building must be at the core of community-university engaged work.

A foundation of respect, or working in a good way, is the basis from which Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC approached the work of relationship-building.

### **5.3 Relationship-Building: A hidden “R”**

Building a relationship did not ‘just happen’ between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC. Beginning with the idea that health professional students should ‘spend time’ in community, UBC-DHCC made efforts to establish partnerships with Indigenous community groups from Metro Vancouver and beyond<sup>41</sup>.

All participants in this shared an overall perception of growing relationship closeness with time. When given the Clayton et al (2010) series of circles<sup>42</sup>, most participants chose the furthest apart pair to describe the beginning of the relationship and the middle pair to depict the current state of the partnership.

One participant, U-A, drew a diagram (see below Figure 5-2) that depicts levels of partnership from ‘community outreach’, to ‘community involvement’, to ‘shared responsibility’, and ending

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<sup>41</sup> As shared in Chapter 4, page 87.

<sup>42</sup> For more about this diagram, see Chapter 2 page 28.

with 'partnership & shared leadership'. This drawing was strongly influenced by the work of the Centre for Disease Control (Center for Disease Control, 2011):

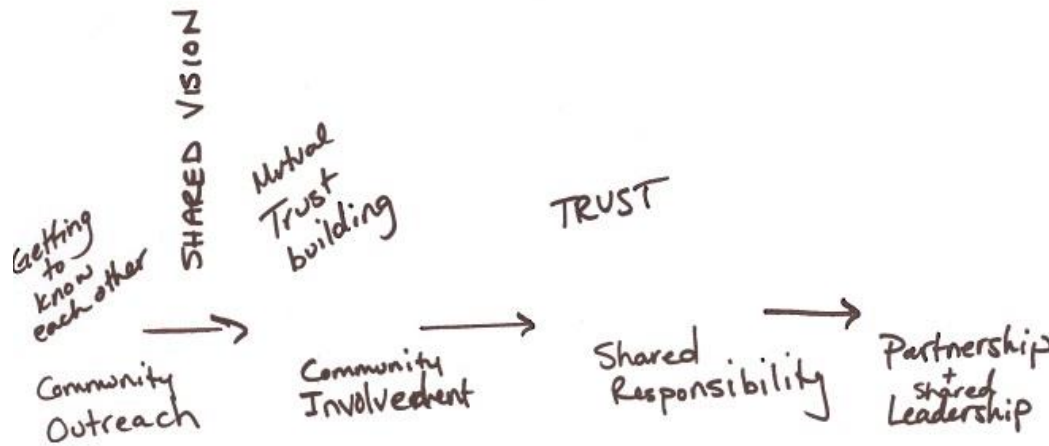


Figure 5-2 Partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC – U-A

The ‘hidden’ element of this diagram, or a thread that binds it together, is relationship-building – beginning with getting to know each other, moving through trust-building, and ending with partnership and shared leadership.

This section explores the process of relationship-building within the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC.

### 5.3.1 Relationship-Building: As Part of Educational Approach

In the Community as Teacher program, the method or approach to education was primarily through building relationships: between settlers and Indigenous people, between elders and youth, and between Indigenous and UBC students. The camps were seen as one opportunity to build these relationships:

We're all taking part in the same activities, we're all sitting around the fire – I mean, there's that equality, and we can just build relationships much easier... Often when you're doing activities you start talking and sharing, it's much easier when you're manipulating things, and that allows the flow of conversations...(C-A)

The circle process enables, as the above participant notes, a form of equality that is foundational to a shared, socially connected learning experience, in contrast to what was perceived as the ‘traditional academic’ way of teaching. As expressed by Xyolhemeylh participants:

The only thing that really helps or works is always that human interaction... looking eyeball to eyeball, is really the only way that you can actually get it. I don't know if it's more than a physical level... a connection level, it's an emotional level, it's a spiritual level. (C-B)

So these chance meetings that would never happen anywhere else – [a community member] would never go into a school of medical students and teach them, but here at camp by chance, it'll change how they service Aboriginal people. (C-D)

Another participant echoed that the cultural camps are a unique learning and relationship-building experience, sharing stories of how men in particular seemed to bond over the shared activity of “poking sticks in the fire” (C-C).

Some participants saw the ways that relationship-building would “break down barriers” (C-B) between people. They spoke to a complete change in world views, a paradigm shift:

Any paradigm shift has to come from an emotional impact, right. Otherwise, it doesn't stick – it doesn't leave an imprint. (C-B)

An often-repeated theme was the idea that the “best way to get to know a group you're not part of is to go and live with them” (C-C). Participants recognized that part of relationship-building involved breaking down barriers presented by stereotypes and biases:

You have stereotypes, but most of the time when you meet them, most of those stereotypes aren't right. That happens on both sides – UBC students have preconceived ideas about 'Indians', and [Indigenous youth] meet doctors, midwives, etc. and see they are normal people (C-C)

Building in-person relationships helps non-Indigenous students ‘get it’, from the perception of one Xyolhemeylh participant:

It's the only thing that really... works is always that human interaction... looking eyeball to eyeball is really the only way that you can actually get it. (C-B)

Relationship-building as an approach to teaching and learning builds upon thousands of years of success in process of learning and education held by the Stó:lō, what Barnhart and Kawagley refer to as Indigenous Knowledges. The Community as Teacher program itself could be seen as the type of program that Barnhart and Kawagley (2005) advocate for – one that has Westerners “understand Native worldviews and ways of knowing” (p. 9). Research is just beginning to explore the potential correspondence between experiential learning and indigenous pedagogies. One author has explored the connection between a service-learning module in Ojibwe culture and Ojibwe pedagogy (McNally, 2004). Books written by Indigenous scholars and leaders such



as Jo-Ann Archibald and Richard Atleo have explored aspects of indigenous epistemology for three nations in Coast Salish territory (Archibald, 2008; Atleo, 2011). This important aspect of the work is best done by an Indigenous researcher and/or from an Indigenizing framework.

### **5.3.2 Relationship-building: “It’s About People”**

Embedding relationship into the Community as Teacher program enables an excellent learning experience for students; for Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC, relationship-building does not stop there but continues in the context of their own partnership.

From the perspective of both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants, the creation of the Community as Teacher program was due in large part to relationships between the specific people collaborating:

The right people, in the right place, with the right activities going on, and it just gelled... I think if it weren't [the UBC-DHCC staff and faculty], and if it weren't [original Xyolhemeylh staff], in particular, it probably wouldn't have happened the way that it did. (C-C)

Having the same people involved over time allowed the partnership and relationship to grow:

There's been a lot of stability - we've had the partnership for 8 or 9 years, that's a long time, considering the kind of entities that are in this partnership and the amount of change that happens in those places. (C-C)

It's been the same people for so long, you get a shorthand way of talking about things. (C-C)

Both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants spoke to the ways that the relationship between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC developed between people rather than just between institutions. Xyolhemeylh participants saw the relationship with UBC-DHCC as being based fundamentally on relationship between individuals in each organization:

We always tend to look at organizations like they have the end discussion – how's the relationship between UBC-DHCC and Xyolhemeylh. Well the relationship between me and [U-B] and [U-A], was great, do you know what I mean? So it's not about UBC or Xyolhemeylh, it's about people. (C-B)

A strong theme from Xyolhemeylh participants was a sense that UBC-DHCC staff and faculty came with respect and a desire to connect personally with Xyolhemeylh:

[UBC-DHCC staff] would talk about her kids and who she was as a person, and... she was the type of person that you could trust... it's the idea of walking the talk that [a Stó:lō elder] always talks about (C-D)

Having the opportunity to connect both personally and professionally allowed Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC to cooperate for a first year, and then for many more years following.

UBC-DHCC participants noted that as the relationship became closer, they relied on one consistent UBC-DHCC participant as the primary contact:

[UBC-DHCC staff] was very much our... front person, with the interface with the community and the interactions and so on, and she clearly was I think personally invested in it, it wasn't just part of the job but she had a particular interest and it felt like her project. (U-C)

It is important to acknowledge the work of key players at Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC, and to think about the people, not just the institutions, involved.

The significance of building personal relationships resonates with the work of Bringle and Hatcher (2002)<sup>43</sup>, who find a parallel between the ways that universities relate to community partners and the way personal relationships function. In a subsequent article, Bringle and Hatcher (2009) expand their relationship metaphor to focus on actual relationships between individuals, stating that “we view interactions between persons as being critical for establishing the character and capacity of the activities in a relationship” (p. 14). The importance of individual people is also shared by Weerts and Sandmann (Weerts & Sandmann, 2010), who identify the key role that university staff can play as 'boundary spanners'. Boundary spanners build relationships within and beyond the institutions; they listen with an open mind.

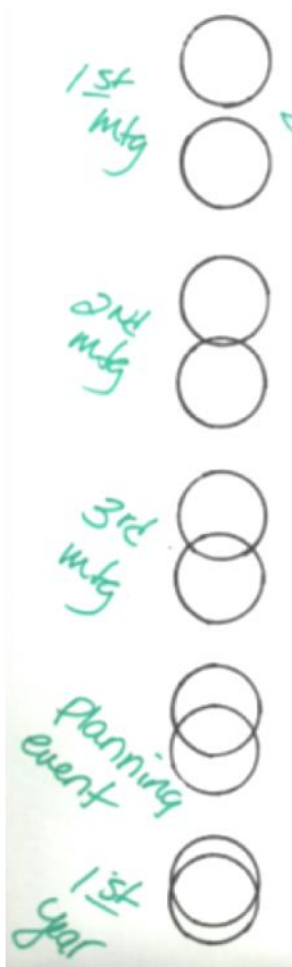
One example of how Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC made the partnership ‘about people’ was prioritizing regular face-to-face meetings, as discussed next. Ongoing meetings and conversations often happened in a restaurant or café, allowing a more personal connection.

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<sup>43</sup> As shared in Chapter 2, page 34.

### 5.3.3 Relationship-building: Face-to-Face Meetings

Both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants stressed the importance of building a relationship by meeting face-to-face, both at the beginning and as part of ongoing development of the relationship. Initial in-person meetings were the first step in exploring a potential relationship. As C-B described it, “They just came out here and met us... we just started talking”. From the first meeting, the community identified a possible fit with the cultural camp program. One participant person drew an image of the first 3 or 4 meetings using the provided (Clayton et al., 2010) relationship closeness diagram:



**Figure 5-2 First Meetings between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC – C-B**

As that person put it:

I think we had probably about three or 4 meetings before we actually started to put it into place. And we let them know that our camps might be the best place for them to get that experience. (C-B)

UBC-DHCC staff and faculty drove out to Chilliwack, a drive of approximately 1.5 – 2 hours each way, for in-person meetings:

A lot of things are done via emails and telephone. But face to face is really important, regardless. (C-A)

As described by one participant, putting in the ongoing effort to set up face to face meetings is an important part of relationship-building especially in a Stó:lō context:

And it's a long drive, but they came in person to us every time, that's huge. I remember... there was an elder in Cheam by Agassiz and I need to talk to her so that she could come and present. I went to her house five times and all five times she wasn't there and she said she'd be there – but she was testing me right. Same thing you have to go to them, it can't be done by phone and email. And for some reason they knew that, right from the get-go, [UBC-DHCC staff and faculty] always came out here. (C-D)

UBC-DHCC participants identify a similar theme of ‘going out to them’ (U-A).

In the context of building relationships between university and Indigenous organizations, participants in this study emphasize the importance of university staff taking the time to meet ‘on site’ and face-to-face. Paying attention to what happens when people come together resonates with Steinman (2011), who suggests that “novel personal interactions and ‘witnessing’ can emerge to transform... the relationship between university and community partners” (p. 5). His discussion relates primarily to the experience of students who spend time in community, a model similar to that of the Community as Teacher program. The integral importance of ‘just being’ is an area for further exploration and research.

#### **5.4 A Fourth “R”: Relationship-building**

In this case study of the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC, an overall valuing of relationship-building as an educational approach was the foundation for effective relationship-building. From there, Xyolhemeylh and UBC made the partnership ‘about people’, building genuine interpersonal relationship. One example of that work was the prioritizing of face-to-face meetings throughout the partnership.

Relationships between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC were characterized by respect and mutual support. As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, most participants in the study indicated that the partnership falls in the ‘middle’ range of the series of Venn diagrams provided. Given

that this diagram is only an approximation of relationship closeness, this indicates that the relationship lies somewhere between what Clayton et al (2010) call a ‘transactional’ relationship, in which each party benefits, and a transformational relationship, in which each partner grows. Given items on their nine-point survey and the data in this study, the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC may have share a common vision around outcomes, common goals, and satisfaction, while aspects of decision-making, conflict management, and significance might indicate areas of potential difference. It is clear that both partners value the partnership, as identified in Chapter 4, and engage in ongoing and deliberate work to maintain the relationships that sustain the partnership.

As noted earlier, relationship-building is a key component of Bringle and Hatcher’s (2002, 2009) work focusing on relationships between individuals as the key component of community-university partnerships. The focus on openness to protocol, as well as meeting face-to-face, resonates with Steinman’s (2011) suggestion that universities work to “meeting Indigenous people on their cultural terms” (p. 11). In the Community as Teacher partnership, however, relationship-building was the basis not just of the partnership, but also of the educational approach of the Community as Teacher program. This suggests the importance of valuing relationship-building both within the content and the process of community-university relationships. In addition, this study adds both through the content of the case study and through the process of research a focus on the importance of face-to-face interactions as a key component of relationship-building.

The ‘Four Rs’ of working with Indigenous students and communities (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1990) and the ‘Four Rs’ as articulated by Butin (2010) for working in service learning were employed in the analysis of this partnership, with themes of relevance and respect, common to both frameworks, being particularly significant in this study. The underlying theme of relationship-building, as well as the additional theme of risk-taking, are highlighted in the findings of this study. While the ‘Four Rs’ have been analyzed somewhat separately for the purposes of analysis, they are interconnected parts of a seamless whole within the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion**

Looking back on the journey I have taken with this research is a bit like reflecting on an international experience. Both begin with great expectations of the changes I might make, witness, facilitate, or hear about combined with a conscious effort to remain humble and grounded. Continued efforts led to a variety of mistakes, errors, or omissions that bring to the forefront my own hidden assumptions, need for reflexivity, and opportunities to learn. Closing the learning journey is about re-assessing initial thoughts, continuing relationships, and beginning to ask new questions.

### **6.1 Summary of Findings**

Beginning with a desire to move from work in Kenya to researching settler-colonialism here on the land I call home, this research explored the case study of a partnership between a university unit, UBC-DHCC, and an Indigenous organization, Xyolhemeylh, on Coast Salish territory.

The first two research questions aimed for a rich, descriptive understanding of the relationship between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC:

1. How did the relationship between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC come into being and how has it changed over time?
2. How do the partners describe this relationship and its purpose and objectives?

In the last two chapters, the relationship between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC has been described numerous times, from a variety of perspectives. Chapter Four focused on the two ‘Rs’ of ‘relevance’ and ‘risk-taking’. The partnership came into being and continued to persist because it was relevant to the mission and vision of both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC, and because the Community as Teacher program in itself continued to generate relevance to a shared vision of student learning. At the same time, the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC operated outside of the ‘mainstream’ of their institutions, bridged the Indigenous-settler divide, and moved beyond ‘traditional academic ways’. Many of the ways in which Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants built their relationship required flexibility to take risks, try out new approaches, and build connections across perceived differences and divides. The partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC has grown closer over time, and has gained more recognition at UBC after receipt of a national award. Perhaps what is most

significant is what has not changed – key staff people, and respectful relationships between them, have been consistent throughout the eight-year partnership.

In the second pair of questions, the focus shifted to consider this partnership in relation to other Indigenous-university and Indigenous-settler relationships:

3. How do partners consider and engage with notions of Indigenous-settler relationships?
4. What are the implications of this program for undertaking respectful community engagement between universities and Indigenous communities?

This study demonstrates that both Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC operated the Community as Teacher program on the margins of their respective organizations. For Xyolhemeylh, building the Indigenous-settler relationship involved taking risks within a colonial context and addressing stereotypes held by settlers. UBC-DHCC participants identified the potential risks inherent in partnership-based work within an academic context. Chapter Five focused on themes of ‘respect’, or working in a good way, and relationship-building. Participants demonstrated respect by listening to community voice and leadership through the entire process, following cultural protocol, and considering reciprocity as a practical demonstration of respect. Within the partnership, Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC built strong interpersonal relationships, and over the years made it a priority to build face-to-face, ‘eyeball-to-eyeball’ relationships.

Overall, this study articulates learnings from the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHC within ‘Four Rs’ of relevance, risk-taking, respect, and relationship-building. These ‘Four R’s’ build upon existing literature in the fields of decolonization and community-university engagement which suggest that ‘relevance’ and ‘respect’ are key concepts for establishing relationships between universities and Indigenous communities (Butin, 2010; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991), and which embed relationship-building throughout their frameworks.

Relevance has been used in previous contexts to describe primarily how a program or partnership is relevant with respect to community needs. This study unpacked ways in which the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC was relevant to both partners’ motivation and goals.

Expanding the notion of ‘respect’ to the idea of ‘working in a good way’ incorporates the importance of recognizing the voices of community members and respecting protocol.

This study adds the concept of risk-taking to the existing literature of decolonizing community-university engagement. Risk-taking happens in an environment of relevance to both partners, as described in Chapter 4. Risk-taking emphasizes the ways in which Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants perceived themselves as going beyond the ‘usual’ to establish a partnership. Building a partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC was more than a matter of defining relevance and demonstrating respect – it involved individuals within each organization taking time and overcoming perceived risks to prioritize and build a partnership.

The findings of this study resonate with previous research into decolonizing community-university engagement. Community-Campus Partnerships for Health defines principles that relate to relevance (articulating the purpose, engaging in continuous feedback), respect (balancing power, building on assets), and relationship-building (building mutual trust, maintaining open communication). While each of these principles is articulated in different ways, the correlation suggests some level of transferability. Bringle and Hatcher’s (2002) key elements also correlate to the proposed ‘Four Rs’. Having a clear mission ensures relevance, while providing a campus support office helps mitigate potential risks. Effective communication and the support of skilled staff provide the basis for relationship-building. This study’s findings also connect with Smith’s (2012a) conditions for decolonization and Regan’s (2010) approaches for re-establishing relationships between Canadian and Indigenous institutions. There are some indications that Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC collectively have begun the process of destabilizing existing power dynamics and re-centering Indigenous protocols (Regan, 2010), through respectful relationships. Building on Smith (2012a) and Regan (2010), future decolonizing community-university engagement work might focus on re-imagining the position of Indigenous peoples, debunking myths of Canadian history, and observing intersections between events and the shared historical moment.

This partnership has potential to the decolonization of community-university engagement. UBC-DHCC participants have demonstrated strong awareness of their own academic positioning and cultural context. The Community as Teacher structure challenges a common approach in which an Indigenous community is assumed to have ‘needs’ or deficits which can be addressed by university resources. In this case, the need of UBC students to develop deeper understanding of



Indigenous culture(s) was in the foreground; the Community as Teacher program and partnership begin to address this need and in so doing, address what Regan (2010) calls the 'settler problem': a recognition of the cognitive imperialistic assumptions that have and continue to shape institutions, structures, and relationships. The language of decolonization, and the work of this thesis, will I hope spark a series of conversations around 'decolonizing community-university engagement' both within this partnership and beyond.

## **6.2 Limitations of this Study**

This study was a qualitative case study of a single Indigenous-university partnership. There are many layers of context important to this study, some of which have been explored: the geopolitical context of unceded Coast Salish Territory; institutional contexts including a research-intensive university and an Indigenous agency; and the funding context, in which funding for "Indigenous issues" is made available to select actors within society. The specificity of these contexts must be taken into consideration when considering the generalizability or transferability of this study. While the focus of this study is on Indigenous-university partnerships, it is possible that the learnings shared here have resonance beyond these specific types of engagements. The next sections suggest possible directions of future activity, while recognizing that the context and conditions of a specific partnership are central to next steps for those programs.

The findings of this study are based on analysis of data from interviews with participants and analysis of documents. I have made every effort to review all relevant materials, but may have missed some that have bearing on this research. Ensuring this study reflects the perspectives of all partners was challenging on several fronts. My UBC location meant that connecting with UBC-DHCC participants was much easier, while the geographic distance and other challenges with respect to time and relevance led to a quite different kind of connection with Xyolhemeylh participants. As I have discussed elsewhere, my social location as a settler and my position as a graduate student at UBC certainly impacted my ability to understand and capture potential nuances and aspects of this study.

This research was conducted as masters' thesis research, as a learning experience, and thus faced a different set of timelines, goals, and processes than might have been the case for independently

conducted or community-based research. I began with an appreciation for and resonance with discussions that offer a critical approach to community-university engagement, and I have brought in a decolonizing perspective. This ‘decolonizing community-university engagement’ framework has shaped the research questions, data generation, analysis, writing, and recommendations of this study.

### **6.3 Implications for Practice**

This study has implications for practice in several layers. Here I will share some brief implications for practice within the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC, within funding structures, and for Indigenous-university partnerships more generally.

There are several implications of this study specific to the partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC. First, given the centrality of ‘relationship’, an in-person, ‘eyeball-to-eyeball’ conversation or conversations is a logical next step for this work. This research is the product of multiple conversations, held separately with Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC study participants. Bringing together the perspectives of Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC participants in a shared conversation would bring new ideas and insights to light. For example, while this thesis shared ways that the partnership was relevant based on individual interviews, continued dialogue between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC would allow partners to share more about the ways that the program fits into the mission of each organization. Continued conversations between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC are being planned as a part of the follow-up to winning the McConnell CSL award.

The partnership between Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC is situated within and affected by a past and continuing settler-colonial context. The program was developed by staff and faculty working at UBC-DHCC which is located on Musqueam territory and involves an Indigenous organization located on Stó:lō territory. This partnership and others might consider the implications of explicitly naming the continuing impact of colonization, not just on Indigenous peoples but also on institutions, partnerships, and individuals in a settler-colonial society. One way that faculty and staff at UBC-DHCC could demonstrate their awareness of their own implication in the Indigenous-settler relationship is to explicitly name and acknowledge their position as settlers,

and their position on Musqueam territory. As UBC-DHCC continues to conduct research, they may also choose to reference and follow principles such as ‘ownership, control, access, and possession’ or OCAP (see p. 52), or to build connections with units such as the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre (SRRMC).

For Indigenous-university partnerships more generally, this study suggests a four-part framework which may assist in decolonizing community-university engagement work. Ensuring a partnership is relevant to both partners and carries a shared vision, ensuring a safe environment for risk-taking, working ‘in a good way’, and recognizing and nurturing relationships are important enabling aspects of building community-university partnerships. For those entering into partnerships, asking questions about the ways in which relevance is both established on both sides, and generated within the relationship, may be one way to ensure that a partnership considers and builds upon the motivation and mandate of each partner. Articulating the ‘risks’ being taken in new partnerships may bring to light assumptions or structures that otherwise may remain hidden.

For Indigenous-university partnerships, finding ways to show deep respect is a process specific to context of each partnership. What may be respectful in one context may be different in another context; what is key is an openness to hearing what respect really means in a particular context. Relationship-building, on the other hand, is in many ways the foundation of good work. If this thesis suggests nothing else, it confirms the importance of regular, face-to-face, informal interactions between individuals who are committed to seeing a partnership succeed.

This study has particular implications for funding of Indigenous-university partnerships. Working ‘in a good way’, defining relevance in collaboration with community organizations, investing in ongoing relationships, and taking risks all require time and a long term commitment. Funding must be structured to allow investment in sometimes ‘risky’ relationship-building activities that might go beyond the usual set of activities required for direct programming. The initial funding provided to the UBC-DHCC partnership was program- rather than project-based; this type of funding, along with the security of tenure, allowed UBC-DHCC faculty and staff to take risks in establishing a partnership with Xyolhemeylh.

Given that current funding tends to be project-based and focused on averting crises rather than long-term preventative strategies, funders and partners must acknowledge that risks are not equally shared and find ways to allow space for university and community risk-taking. This process could begin by acknowledging early risk-taking in currently successful partnerships, sharing lessons learned through ‘failure reports’, and prioritizing long-term rather than short-term outcomes. Rather than basing their decisions only on ‘previous research’, funders might begin asking what kinds of relationships, personal and professional, university staff and faculty hold in the community they plan to partner with. Some federal funding agencies<sup>44</sup> have begun to prioritize knowledge translation and partnership-building within granting structures. At the same time, existing structures within the university tend to devalue relationships held beyond the university<sup>45</sup>. Finding ways to value, highlight, and build upon existing connections and relationships between UBC units and groups beyond UBC within funding structures would provide the space needed for meaningful partnerships to emerge.

#### **6.4 Implications for Further Research**

In the course of this study, many additional questions have come to light. One priority for further research is an Indigenous-led study of the Community as Teacher program and partnership. While significant research has been conducted by UBC-DHCC (Kline et al., 2013; Towle et al., 2006), the direction, structure and oversight of those studies reflect the priorities of a research-intensive university. Research from an Indigenous-constructed understanding of this partnership might look quite different. This research could, for example, work within a Stó:lō tradition of storytelling as described by Jo-ann Archibald (2008), and might also include, as participants or collaborators, Indigenous youth leaders from the camps, participants of the camps, and community elders and teachers.

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<sup>44</sup> Such as the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)

<sup>45</sup> For example, the recently created UBC Research Project Information Sheet requires researchers to list affiliations beyond the university only within the ‘conflict of interest’ section.

Further research could expand the scope of this study to explore the ways in which UBC overall, not just UBC-DHCC, engages in partnerships with Indigenous organizations and communities. This work could begin with a scan of existing known partnerships to explore the diversity of partnership and relationship approaches across the campus. The interaction between UBC's strategic plan, which includes a focus on Aboriginal Engagement, and the practices and realities of Indigenous-university relationships, would be a relevant field of research particularly as UBC enters a new strategic planning cycle.

Another avenue for further research builds upon previously conducted research by Towle et al (2006), which revealed a relationship between history, time, and trust in the relationship between doctors and Indigenous patients. A decolonizing lens on history, time and trust suggests that future research might 'focus the mirror' (Marker, 2006) on settler doctors, seeking to understand ways that their own history and position as settlers contributes to the erosion of trust between doctors and Indigenous patients. Understanding the ways in which settler doctors perceive their own history and their relationship to colonial power dynamics may suggest additional possible educational interventions and potential partnerships.

Finally, one of the overarching lessons of this study has been the significance and complexity of making constructs that are abstract or even foreign – in this case, colonialism – more personal and relational. As I complete this work, I begin to think more closely about communities where I have lifelong relationships, and wonder how I can play a 'boundary-spanning' role. A personal decolonizing historical project, similar to Freeman's (2000) work, would be one way to continue this work. Further research or work might involve bridging connections with Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC, East Vancouver where I currently reside, northern Vancouver Island, and Maai Mahiu in Kenya.

## **6.5 Reflections**

Writing this thesis has been a journey that keeps circling back onto itself, going deeper and deeper with each time round. I began the study with reflections on the ways that colonialism plays out in my relationships in Canada, and moved to explore colonialism on the lands I call home. Marker (2006) suggests that researchers focus a 'mirror' on the settler, rather than a 'lens'

on Indigenous peoples. It seems to me that my mistake was in thinking that I am the one holding the mirror, and that I can explore aspects of myself and things behind me, in my past. Instead, throughout this study I have found mirrors looking back at me in the places I've least expected – in setting up meetings with Xyolhemeylh, in my assumptions of data analysis, in the ordering of words, in the ways and places in which I have or have not acknowledged Indigenous territories. I know I will continue to find these 'mirrors' in my ongoing journey.

One aspect of my evolving journey was reflected in my research questions, which changed through the course of this study. While I began seeing Community as Teacher as a case study in service learning, I soon came to see it as more appropriately an example of community-university engagement. I began thinking that the relationships between Indigenous peoples and settlers in Kenya and Canada might be similar as examples of 'inter-national' service-learning. Over the course of this study I came to understand that the assumption of universality was, in itself, an aspect of my marination in cognitive imperialism.

At other junctures in my research, the comments of my committee members have pointed out my own unconscious assumptions. For example, despite making a commitment to use the term 'community-university' engagement, I found myself continually reverting to 'university-community'. Despite recognizing that colonialism is an ongoing project here on Coast Salish territory, my language sometimes implied otherwise – for example, in using the phrase the 'legacy of colonialism'. I also had to be vigilant about writing of the history of colonialism in Canada in a way that includes the history of Indigenous and settlers, not just Indigenous peoples. The process of unpacking assumptions and changing my habits of speaking requires, it seems, ongoing vigilance.

In many ways the process of completing this research reflects the themes derived in this study. The research itself is relevant to my questions, as shared above, about colonial relations in the context of partnership-building and educational programming. Building from this foundation of relevance, I took the risk of entering conversations around decolonization that are personally, politically, and emotionally loaded. This thesis started with respect for the work of Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC staff; throughout the study, I have learned much from each participant. The

respect they showed me, even as a beginning researcher exploring a topic and field completely new, was a gift to me. The importance of relationship-building, a somewhat ‘hidden’ element of decolonizing community-university engagement, has been for me the biggest lesson of this study. The relationships I have built in the course of this study, and in the course of my masters’ work more broadly, have been and continue to be the source of most of my learning.

I leave with an appreciation for the work of participants at Xyolhemeylh and UBC-DHCC. They worked together to develop a mutually relevant partnership that involved significant risks. Working from a foundation of respect, they found ways to build relationships into the core of their work. I hope that I, and others, find ways to do the same.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A List of Codes

Aboriginal - 'the aboriginal community'	barrier - sending students out was risky	challenge - limited capacity of Xyol camps
Aboriginal - as having 'reserve'	barrier - uncertain of student outcomes	challenge - long-term ubc stu involvement
Aboriginal - as having baggage	benefit - building post-secondary relationships	challenge - overcoming comm'n barriers
Aboriginal - as patients	benefit - extra adult bodies	challenge - perservere through non-response
Aboriginal - complex stories/ histories	benefit - Fair Pro-D n networking	challenge - program consumes resources
Aboriginal - First Nations people	benefit - FVACFSS	challenge - racism
Aboriginal - negative health & status	benefit - impact on UBC students	challenge - role of students
Aboriginal - similar to other marginalized groups	benefit - impact on youth	challenge - scheduling
Aboriginal - unique communication needs	benefit - less fear of post-secondary	challenge - student orientation materials
Aboriginal as similar to other groups and community as holding expertise	budget	challenge - sustain work over long term
advice - be humble	butterfly	challenge - taking a risk
advice - build on strongly held beliefs	camp descriptions and activities	challenge - time
advice - build relationships of trust	camp leaders - age defined by funding	challenges - potential
advice - dangerous to manufacture motivation	challenge - 'how is this going to fly?'	change - becomes smoother, grows
advice - find common ground	challenge - 'trusting that it's going to be okay'	change - better use experiential learning
advice - find ways to reciprocate	challenge - benefits not immediate	change - built trust
advice - focus on students, education	challenge - camp logistics	change - ceremony with eagle feathers
advice - help community see own expertise	challenge - camps contracted out	change - community saw benefits
advice - hold meetings in community	challenge - change in community contact	change - community staff leaves
advice - long-term commitment	challenge - change of people	change - developed relationships
advice - share outcomes	challenge - changing role of students	change - fair as an honour
advice - take time	challenge - communication complicated by cultural differences	change - less effort to organize
advice for community engagement	challenge - community culture	change - McConnell application
advisory board or committee	challenge - creates strength	change - more community involvement
asset not deficit point of view	challenge - distance	change - poster with outcomes
assumption that UBC has many partnerships	challenge - funding	change - staff take over
attitude - not pre-judge student learning	challenge - funding change	change - them contacting us
attitude - uncertainty is ok	challenge - geography	change - ubc stu as camp leader
barrier - hesitancy toward non-traditional learning	challenge - having management understand	collaboration - across UBC units
barrier - red tape	challenge - honoraria for community members	colonization - continuing effects
	challenge - institutional commitment	colonization - reduce paternalism
		colonization - residential school effects

Colonization within community  
 quotes  
 communication - comfortable  
 and culturally sensitive  
 communication - doctor-patient  
 communication - doctors won't  
 admit problems  
 communication problems lead to  
 poor health  
 community - ask them for help  
 community - expanded  
 partnership mandate  
 community - First Nations as  
 teacher  
 community - holding expertise  
 community - made up of  
 families, less stable  
 community - not  
 engaged/involved  
 community - uni different  
 knowledge & expertise  
 community advisory group -  
 future  
 Community and Patient Fair for  
 Health Professional Education  
 community as co-leader  
 community as cultural program  
 manager  
 community as host of camps or  
 implementor  
 community as leader  
 community as learner  
 community as partner  
 community as teacher  
 community as teacher - as UBC  
 idea  
 community as teacher\_1  
 community as volunteer  
 community becoming teacher  
 community develops  
 content/context of learning  
 community experience -  
 placements not well matched  
 community facilitates  
 interprofessional learning  
 community learning - about uni -  
 'the kind of brain surgery'  
 community not uni in control  
 community ownership - as  
 unique idea  
 community perspective  
 community quotes  
 community relationships - new

community relationships -  
 nurture & maintain  
 community relationships - other  
 orgs  
 community resources - limited  
 compensate for history by  
 building trust  
 context - agency experience with  
 students  
 context - Blackstock research  
 context - building partnerships  
 context - community  
 development  
 context - history with large  
 mainstream institutions  
 context - outside the funding  
 box  
 context - people aren't aware of  
 Indig history  
 context - UBC student need  
 context - Xyol as large agency  
 offering cultural programs  
 context - youth intimidated by  
 doctors  
 core funding provided by Xyol  
 cultural competency self-  
 assessment  
 cultural competency training  
 cultural framework - intercultural  
 understanding  
 cultural safety approach  
 culture - 'put aboriginal hat back  
 on'  
 culture - 'smalltown prairie'  
 culture - community  
 culture - different values, culture  
 culture - not an academic  
 culture - spend more time  
 thinking, restrain quick responses  
 culture - traditional Western  
 academic ways  
 culutre - 2-hour meetings  
 curriculum - crowded  
 curriculum - gaps around  
 Aboriginal  
 curriculum - integration of  
 community content  
 df  
 different approach to teaching,  
 learning, knowing  
 downplay relationship  
 funding  
 future - 'continue on in some  
 way'

future - broaden the scope to  
 include other marginalized  
 groups  
 future - broaden to include more  
 students  
 future - broadening our program  
 future - broadening our program  
 - limitations  
 future - knowledge translation  
 strategy - symposium  
 future - maintain relationships  
 with communities  
 future - other types of students  
 future - recognition for student  
 participation  
 future - recognition of  
 community participation  
 future - replicate program  
 goal - 'potential spinoffs'  
 goal - 'shift paradigms'  
 goal - 'spend time with us' in  
 community  
 goal - Ab students from ubc  
 goal - all aspects of medicine  
 wheel  
 goal - awareness of Ab  
 community  
 goal - benefit community  
 goal - break down barriers  
 goal - building a relationship  
 goal - challenge stereotypes  
 goal - community ownership  
 goal - community voice in  
 training future health care  
 providers  
 goal - cultural learning/teaching  
 goal - desire to work in Ab  
 community  
 goal - experiential learning on  
 land  
 goal - improve health care  
 communication  
 goal - informed and shared  
 decision-making  
 goal - learn history  
 goal - mentorship for Ind. youth  
 goal - persuade community to  
 teach our students  
 goal - prep for working in Ab  
 community  
 goal - professional identity  
 connected with community  
 goal - reconnect families with  
 history and culture

goal - role modeling to summer students  
 goal - sense of uni-cmmtty partnership  
 goal - social mission  
 goal - student (health professional) learning  
 goal - ubc students 'ready to chip in'  
 goal - uni outreach to community  
 goal - witness maintenance of tradition  
 goal - workshops offered  
 goal - youth 'see possibilities' of health sciences  
 goal - youth comfort with health care providers  
 goal - youth connection with Ab culture  
 goals - alignment with uni goals  
 history as barrier  
 history connected to health care needs  
 history connected to social status  
 history, time, trust  
 history, time, trust - create difficulties  
 history, time, trust - cultural associations  
 important - building relationship face-to-face  
 important - commitment  
 important - communication  
 important - goals  
 important - humility  
 important - mutual appreciation/recognition  
 important - not imposing  
 important - openness  
 important - personal awareness (of values)  
 important - share student outcomes  
 important - understand history  
 important - work in a good way  
 informed and shared decision-making  
 informed decision-making 'high-level'  
 learning from 'patients in the community'  
 limit - not for medical content/knowledge

limit - number of students  
 limit - voluntary, not for all students  
 limits - geography  
 limits - no student long-term involvement  
 limits - student schedule  
 logo design  
 marginalized groups - develop new relationships  
 marginalized groups - examples  
 marginalized groups - expertise and potential to teach  
 marginalized groups - honour/build on current contacts  
 marginalized groups - literature review  
 marginalized groups - understand other groups  
 marginalized groups - unique needs  
 McConnell award  
 McConnell award - questions answered by UBC  
 meetings - yearly debrief session  
 meetings in Chilliwack  
 meetings through the year  
 model - 'hope this happens all over the place'  
 not just another Indian dollar'  
 ownership - dual accountability  
 partnership 'feels like we're breaking up'  
 partnership - 'quality of the overlap'  
 partnership - 'true and sustainable'  
 partnership - between health professional and patient  
 partnership - more important than service  
 partnership - rely on Cathy to maintain  
 partnership building - as luxury  
 past experience - with aboriginal patient's voice  
 patient-led learning  
 patient and community groups  
 patient as client  
 patient as expert/partner in health care  
 patient autonomy  
 patient participation in learning  
 planning committee

power imbalance - doctor-patient  
 power imbalance - mention of  
 power imbalance - strategies  
 problem - professional identity away from community  
 program - 'it belongs to the community'  
 program - as partnership  
 program - as student opportunity  
 reciprocity - blankets at ceremony  
 reciprocity - did some good  
 reciprocity - exchange for learning  
 reciprocity - facilitate health discussions  
 reciprocity - help with chores  
 reciprocity - in partnership  
 reciprocity - mentoring/role modelling  
 reciprocity - mutually beneficial  
 reciprocity - participate fully in camp life  
 reciprocity - provide food at meetings  
 reciprocity - student desire to learn  
 reciprocity - student role models  
 reciprocity - students learning  
 reciprocity - workshop  
 relationship - 'learning relationship for everybody'  
 relationship - as between people  
 relationship - mutual benefit  
 relationship - no power differential  
 relationship - partnership as a way of working  
 relationship - partnerships with other orgs  
 relationship - public - newsletter, allies fair  
 relationship closeness  
 research - also development  
 research - as focus  
 research - as recognition of faculty work  
 research - community outcomes  
 research - comparison with other programs  
 research - involve community in setting questions

research - methodology for  
 Aboriginal context  
 research - student outcomes  
 role - building partnerships  
 role - community liaison  
 role - first few years  
 role - not in-depth  
 role - spreading word about  
 camps  
 self-determination  
 service learning - assumption  
 that it's good  
 service learning - other as  
 passive recipient  
 service learning - students learn  
 first, then maybe do good  
 shared responsibility  
 sharing outcomes - academic  
 publications  
 sharing outcomes - non-  
 academic publications  
 sharing outcomes - obligation  
 sharing outcomes -  
 presentations  
 sharing outcomes - with  
 community  
 start - 'just an email out into the  
 ether'  
 start - 'spend time in the  
 community'  
 start - 'take it slow'  
 start - 'we are very different  
 people'  
 start - 'we just said ok, we're  
 going to do it'  
 start - a few UBC students  
 start - as thoughts on each side  
 start - attempts to make contact  
 start - back-and-forth, difficult  
 start - based on community need  
 start - brought gifts  
 start - build on relationships with  
 many partners  
 start - camp idea from  
 community  
 start - camps as good fit  
 start - challenges  
 start - community sceptical  
 start - desire to build a  
 relationship  
 start - developed by DHCC with  
 input  
 start - didn't focus on Xyol  
 relationship

start - discuss student  
 contribution  
 start - failures with other groups  
 start - figure out what  
 community could teach  
 start - funding  
 start - in-person meetings  
 start - in the middle  
 start - new idea for community  
 start - prepare self  
 start - relief/joy at finding a  
 community  
 start - research  
 start - several meetings  
 start - shared vision  
 start - timing was right  
 start - UBC looking to connect  
 start - uni sceptical  
 start - unsure of UBC context  
 start - with folks not in camps  
 start - working by trial and error  
 strength - student screening  
 excellent  
 student learning - cultural safety  
 student learning  
 student learning - 'better  
 connection with ordinary folks'  
 student learning - 'human side of  
 medical profession'  
 student learning - as focus  
 student learning - barriers for  
 Aboriginal people  
 student learning - confront  
 racism  
 student learning - culturally  
 appropriate care/relationships  
 student learning - culture  
 student learning - desire to work  
 with aboriginal  
 student learning - foundational  
 skills  
 student learning - from, with,  
 about community  
 student learning - health and  
 wellbeing  
 student learning - history  
 student learning -  
 interprofessional  
 student learning - listen, take  
 time to hear  
 student learning - longterm  
 student learning - own culture  
 and prejudices

student learning - reinforce  
 negative stereotypes  
 student learning - residential  
 school  
 student learning - see people as  
 having strength & expertise  
 student learning - specific to  
 Sto:lo  
 student learning - strengths of  
 community  
 student learning - supported by  
 geographic distance  
 student learning - understand  
 contexts  
 student orientation - keep your  
 eyes open  
 student orientation - needed  
 student orientation - none  
 student quotes  
 student role - depends on  
 personality  
 student role - not as 'free labour'  
 students as educators  
 students as facilitators of  
 discussion  
 students as foreigners/outside  
 students as future health care  
 providers  
 students as learners  
 students as non-learners  
 students as part of the  
 camp/community  
 students as role models or  
 mentors  
 students as self-starters, etc  
 students as supervisors of kids  
 students as volunteers  
 students support camp  
 goals/curriculum  
 support - 'taking a risk,  
 dreaming'  
 support - can continue with  
 small bits of funding  
 support - extra meals for ubc  
 stus  
 support - from community  
 support - institutional  
 support - internal funding  
 support - kept meeting  
 support - low cost or savings  
 support - ongoing funding  
 support - positive UBC student  
 experience  
 support - same people

support - student interest  
 surprise - continued and  
 successful relationship  
 surprise - continued relationship  
 surprise - level of conversations  
 surprised by - student learning  
 Talk to your Doctor workshops  
 Talk to your Doctor workshops -  
 modified  
 teaching 'in a good way'  
 teaching 'it's like teaching  
 children'  
 teaching as honour  
 tool - online resource 'meeting  
 of experts'  
 type - aboriginal camp program  
 type - camp as focus, 'something  
 concrete to latch onto'  
 type - camps  
 type - community-based  
 learning or setting  
 type - community influencing  
 university  
 type - cultural immersion  
 type - educational intervention

type - educational  
 program/activity  
 type - employer of elders  
 type - experiential learning  
 type - experiential learning\_1  
 type - informed and shared  
 decision making  
 type - interprofessional learning  
 type - means to an end  
 type - not lectures or classroom-  
 based  
 type - patient's voice  
 type - program as model  
 type - same activities -  
 relationship building  
 type - service-learning  
 type - short-term/efficient  
 UBC-B  
 UBC-C  
 ubc - support and dedication  
 UBC appreciating partnership  
 ubc students 'honoured'  
 uni - more stable than  
 community  
 uni as 'broker' of community  
 connections

uni as experienced teacher  
 uni as having 'weird' ideas, new  
 knowledge  
 uni as initiator/leader  
 uni as partner/team member  
 uni facilitating community to  
 lead  
 uni learning - awareness of  
 aboriginal culture  
 uni learning - awareness of  
 bigger picture  
 uni learning - from ceremony  
 uni learning - from research  
 uni learning - reserve comment,  
 keep mouth shut  
 uni learning - talking to superiors  
 uni not speaking for community  
 uni speaking for community  
 uni staff as elder  
 video documentary  
 work with community - as  
 interdisciplinary  
 workshops - as concrete stu  
 project  
 Xyolhemeylh as thoughtful

## Appendix B Flyer Distributed by DHCC

*The Division of Health Care Communication at the University of British Columbia asks,*

### **Will you help us improve health care in the Aboriginal Community?** Help develop educational programs for medical students



*Artwork by: Gwa'gwa'da'ka (Sonny Assu)  
Laich-kwil-tach, Wei Wai kai (Cape Mudge) band*

Aboriginal people have told us that talking with their doctor can be frustrating. We asked people in the Aboriginal community what steps need to be taken to improve communication between Aboriginal patients and their doctors.

#### **A Traditional Healer said:**

*"I think it [educational intervention] needs to be hands-on. I think they need to actually either go into a community or have people in that community go and talk one-on-one because to learn something out of a book doesn't take you to a place of understanding and compassion, it keeps you in your head."*

To bridge this gap, some members of the Aboriginal community invited medical students to spend some time with them. They taught the students about Aboriginal culture and heritage. In return the students provided first aid and other volunteer services. The students learned important lessons including:

- First Nations history and values
- Traditional medicine
- Practical advice the students could use in their future practices with Aboriginal patients

#### ***How can you help?***

We know medical students who would like to learn more about Aboriginal history and culture, but we need your help. We are looking for **partners** who will offer learning opportunities for students.

If you're interested in helping to teach medical students or want more information, please contact me at **604-822-8002** or **Christinesorial@hotmail.com**.

**For more information, contact:**

#### ***Division of Health Care Communication***

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## Appendix C Outcomes Poster - 2007

### GETTING INVOLVED in the COMMUNITY

University of British Columbia Health Professional Students come to the Sto:lo Nation summer camps to be taught about the culture, history and traditions so that they can become better Health Professionals.

In their own words, here is what they learned...

"I learned a lot about their sense of community and family and how strong it is and I think a lot of people don't understand, or at least I didn't, how strong it is within their community and I think from camps like this I think it's strengthening and it's really positive to see that. Some of these kids they were foster kids but they felt like part of the family ... and you could just see some of them opening up during that time."

"Coming to the community, you're a part of it, there's no separation and they don't create a separation or a distinction.... It's no longer now that you're learning from just watching, you're learning from your own experience of being a part of their community, not just from an external viewpoint. You're not judging it but you're actually a part of it and experiencing it in its fullness."

"I knew a bit about the history... But it was a real big eye opener... when we were just interacting with some of the girls and some of the Elders. I got the impression everyone was trying very hard to get ahold of the culture and trying to retain that culture and trying to spread that culture. I thought that was a great idea, but I also felt this immense sadness because I realized just how great the harm and the hurt had been and is going on right now..."

"Such an amazing depth of culture and feeling and a way of looking at the world that has almost been completely destroyed and lost, now they're bringing it back together and it was a privilege to be part of that."

"I never worked with a group of kids like that or a community like that. I was just so impressed with the reality of it all, the whole camp, the whole environment, how real and how lively everything that was being said and being practiced was ... I was struck with how gentle the kids were and how playful they were and how inquisitive they were and how open to sitting there and listening for long periods of time and how respectful they were."

"It was a genuineness you find in the staff. You could see the love that they have for everyone and how much they want the kids to succeed and to learn about their heritage... Not every child here has the greatest childhood or situation, but they really want everyone to succeed and that helping hand that they were willing to put out that was very touching and I think every person there felt that. So, I think a lot of the hard work in addition to running the camp and preparing the camp was also that willingness to share."

"For me it renewed interest in working with [First Nations] people in the future in certain capacities as a doctor just because you are reminded of the need out there for the aboriginal people across the province and the country and how they are marginalized.... So I guess seeing that need and seeing how I might be able to fill it in the future got some new thoughts going in my head."

"I felt there was a really big emphasis on not only family but also on stories and sharing, telling stories. While it's always emphasized when dealing with patients, to have them communicate with you and tell where they're coming from, I think it's even more so for Aboriginal people to let them tell their, communicate their full story."

"I'll be working with First Nations, I know I will. I thought this was just a golden opportunity to get in there and be willing to learn. Hopefully I'll be able to provide a real culturally sensitive kind of health care and really understand where they're coming from and hopefully know enough to ask them what they need in the right way."

A Partnership of the Division of Health Care Communication and the Xyolhemeylh Child and Family Services



Division of Health Care Communication  
informed and shared decision making

College of Health Disciplines, UBC - June 2009

website: [www.chd.ubc.ca/dhcc](http://www.chd.ubc.ca/dhcc)  
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Background logo designed by Sonny Assu

