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hiil kʷiiʔiš siłʔ (bringing something good from way back): A Journey to Humanize Post-Secondary Education

submitted by Dawn Marie Smith in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership and Policy

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Abstract

This dissertation explores my personal journey of becoming a human being, particularly by drawing on Nuu-chah-nulth principles ofʔuuʔuuqʷaaʔci (self-independence). Relevant literature, resources and personal stories help identify the underpinning aspects of epistemological dominance, blindness, and collisions, which occur in the classrooms of post-secondary institutions. Although Indigenous-led education and policy contributes to Indigenous student success, more has to be done to understand current processes of Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation. Educational practitioners, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, who engage in these processes help lead the way, but will likely encounter feelings of being unsettled or uncomfortable. At times, feelings of fear, shame and guilt arise leaving people feeling unsure or unwilling to try.

Nuu-chah-nulth teachings of yaʔakmis (love and pain) represents the possibilities and limitations of integrating Indigenous ways of knowing and being within post-secondary. Indigenization, reconciliation, and decolonization are all processes that require courage and action; they also require leaders who are ready for these processes. They also require an understanding of one’s self in relation to values, beliefs, and prejudices; it is a critical component of these processes. Leaders must be genuine while recognizing the value of Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation.

The research questions are designed to bring a holistic approach and provide guidance that will help to improve my practice, as an educator. The research questions are,

- What do the principles of Indigenous self-determination mean in the context of indigenizing initiatives within post-secondary education?
• What are the possibilities and limitations (the love and pain)?

• What needs to change in order for these principles to be realized in these initiatives?

Throughout this journey, my personal life experiences, as Nuu-chah-nulth-aht (person of Nuu-chah-nulth ancestry), inform and help me unmask favorable and unfavorable practices, specifically of Indigenization. The findings reveal the uncomfortable nature many feel when confronted with the history of Canada and the daunting task of Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation. Unpacking colonial policies and practices of education while examining more closely aspects of who we are (values, beliefs and prejudices), particularly as people who share this land, is a critical component of doing the work of Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation.
Lay Summary

hiil kʷiiʔil sił (bringing something good from way back) is a self-reflective journey that captures aspects of ?uuʔuuqʷaacii (self-independence) and personal experiences of post-secondary education. It is a journey filled with yaʔakmis (love and pain). As post-secondary institutions begin Indigenizing, that is, integrating Indigenous knowledges into curricula, the need to understand these ways of knowing and being become even more pressing.

Indigenous peoples and worldviews are largely absent from education leaving Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples vulnerable to misunderstandings particularly about the meaning of self-determination. Drawing on personal experiences, family’s stories, and research into the hidden history of the unjust treatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada, this study reveals the tensions that can arise between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, leaving many unsettled. As policies and initiatives, like Indigenization, continue to grow, so does the courage to change Western practices. Integrating Indigenous ways of knowing and being that respects Indigenous rights to self-determination is the kind of education that everyone can benefit from.
Preface

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Dawn Marie Smith.

No BREB review was completed. The student followed Indigenous ethical protocols and consulted the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS2), the overarching Canadian framework for research ethics. The student also consulted with the UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB) administration about this research. The TCPS2 does not require the institutional review for the analysis of publically available documents. Furthermore, the TCPS2 does not require review for retrospective reflections on one’s own life when there are no research intended interactions, such as interviews, between the researcher and individuals portrayed in the past reflection.
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List of Abbreviations

FCT – Family Cultural Teachings
FN – First Nations
IRS – Indian Residential Schools
IWKB – Indigenous ways of knowing and being
NCN – Nuu-chah-nulth
PSE – Post-Secondary Education
TRC – Truth and Reconciliation Commission
List of Definitions

*Indigenization* is a process that exists within post-secondary education that seeks to integrate Indigenous ways of knowing and being within spaces, curriculum, practice, and policy.

*Decolonization* acknowledges colonialism, as an act of taking over other territories using violence while recognizing the need to stop further entrenching colonialism; it is about unlearning what you have learned.

*Reconciliation* is a formal process initiated by the state following the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s final report. It is a process that seeks to engage Canadians in the past, the truth about Indigenous peoples and residential schools, particularly through present day conversations that have the future in mind.
Glossary

*Nuu-chah-nulth Words*

1) hił kʷiiʔíł sìƛ (bringing something good from way back)

2)ʔuuʔuuqʷaačii (self-independence)

3) hišukʔišcawak (everything is one, and connected)

4) činixint (Chinekhint)

5)ʔiiḥatisath (Ehlettesaht)

6) hišqʷiʔatl (Hesquiaht)

7) muwačath (Mowachaht)

8) ḥaʔuqʷiʔatl (Tla-o-qui-aht)

9) tiławis tacumł (House of Grey Whales)

10)ʔuusimč (prayer bath)

11) muulmuumc (roots)

12) maḥišas (Queen’s Cove)

13) taayii ḥawil (number one hereditary chief)

14) hra-wee-yaa-cloom (to greet people with joy)

15) sii-yaa-ilth supt (Dawn’s family name given by Tim Paul)
16) taayiisumqa (Dawn’s family name given by Earl Smith)

17) ma-il-pa-tu (how we revere the family)

18) tiičmisukqin (our lives)

19) ?iiḥsaaḥtak (life stages)

20) qaän’um (precious child)

21) quuʔas-sa (Nuu-chah-nulth humans)

22) nisма (Nuu-chah-nulth land)

23) haḥuuli (Nuu-chah-nulth territory)

24) tluuma, our domain

25) ṇaas (Creator or light)

26) yaʔakmis (love and pain)

27) čuu (ok, we are done, we are finished)

28) mamalḥl (non-Nuu-chah-nulth humans)

29) ?iḥatisaqsup (woman of Ehattesaht)

30) ḥeekoo (thank you)
Acknowledgements

It is with love and respect that I acknowledge the following human beings, both those you have gone and those here with us today.

Ancestors

I acknowledge with respect, those who have gone on to the spirit world and greatly influence my understanding of who I am as quuʔas-sa (Nuu-chah-nulth human). First to my great, great grandparents John and Cecil Smith who I never met but heard many family stories. I would like to acknowledge my great grandparents Joseph and Esther Smith, as well as Grandpa Moses Smith, who loved and cared for me growing up in ?iiḥatisatḥ. I also acknowledge my beautiful and loving parents, Clyde and Norma Claxton, who passed away too young, but gave me the encouragement to get an education.

Elders and Knowledge Keepers

I would like to acknowledge that I could not do this work without my maternal family, especially my grandmothers Josephine George and Fidelia Haiyupis; these two beautiful women represent everything I aspire to be, as I grow to be old. This work is not possible without knowledgeable family members Tim Paul, Earl Smith, and Victoria Wells. I am particularly humbled and grateful for the FCT and language, but also for bestowing the beautiful and ancient name for my dissertation. It is with much love and respect that I also acknowledge the loving elders Skip and Linda Dick (Songhees), Victor Underwood (Tsawout), Skip and May Sam (Tsartlip). Sadly, during my EdD journey, our community lost 2 very special women, but who have since passed away, Joyce Underwood (Tsawout) and Marie Cooper (Tsartlip).
Committee

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Post-Secondary Leadership

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my incredibly loving, kind, generous and smart grandson ſiniʔk (big rolling waves) or Quentin. I love you for who you are today, and who you are becoming, as quuʔas-sa.
Chapter 1: Introduction

“Everybody is on a path. What you think about the most tells you which path you are on. The best path is the spiritual one. It’s the only one that helps you become a human being,”

Chief Leon Shenandoah (Wall, 2001, p. 71)

Chief Leon Shenandoah’s words resonate echoing similar philosophies of the Nuu-chah-nulth (NCN), particularly the need to recognize the spiritual nature of the human journey called life. For the NCN life is precious and filled with hope and despair, with love/pain and purpose and responsibilities, particularly as it relates to the transmission of family cultural teachings and knowledge. It is a journey that helps us not only to become human, but good human(s). As an Indigenous post-secondary instructor teaching courses with Indigenous content, I struggle with the challenges of intercultural classroom dynamics (i.e., ignorance, racism, intolerance), and this is what I think about the most. Fortunately, I was introduced to Chief Shenandoah’s perspectives on becoming a human being, as a way to sort through feelings of defeat or anger I was feeling in the classroom. I immediately ran out and bought it; I read it front to back in a couple of hours. I felt inspired to not only be a better person, but a more sensitive and compassionate instructor, but I was also left wondering what that really meant. What I did know is that I wanted to be a better human being and to improve upon my teaching practice. NCN family cultural teachings (FCT) guide and shape who I am; however, recognizing the need to broaden this understanding of who I am, particularly within the context of post-secondary education (PSE), I would have to return to PSE to pursue a doctorate and so the journey begins here.

1 Family cultural teachings (Smith, 2007) embody specific family knowledge(s) and pedagogies, which have been passed down from one generation to the next for decades.
hiil kʷiiʔil sił (bringing something good from way back) is a family phrase that has been gifted to me by grandmothers, Josephine and Fidelia, as well as Uncle Tim, for the purpose of bringing the ancient knowledge of FCT forward; something good from way back in time. These teachings become even more important to me in my role as a grandmother. I am taught that life is a gift full of love and pain, but also a life of responsibilities. I have been afforded the opportunity to attend PSE where I have obtained a Western education. My journey to become a good human being and ancestor is one filled with the desire to contribute toʔuuʔuuqʷačii (self-independence and/or determination), and PSE. This particular aspect is a life long journey, as such I am taught to understand who I am and what my responsibilities are in relation to hišukʔišcawak (everything is one and connected). In this respect, part of who I am means understanding NCN family experiences of colonialism, particularly within the context of education, more broadly speaking.

My life’s passions are with me wherever I go, including my doctoral studies, which are intrinsically linked to who I am as NCN, as an educational practitioner, and desire to become a good ancestor. Confronting colonialism while tending to one’s life purpose without deviating from one’s responsibilities to hišukʔišcawak is my path and the thing I think about the most. The purpose of this dissertation is to explore wise practices for integrating Indigenous ways of knowing and being (IWKB) within PSE while uncovering the unsettling nature of IWKB, decolonization and reconciliation. This chapter has 5 sections,

1) Initial Research Questions

2) Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being

3) Epistemological dominance, blindness and collisions

4) Possibilities of Indigenization
5) Research Methodologies

Together these sections help support not only my research endeavors, but assist in my life’s purpose of becoming a good human being while allowing me to contribute to Indigenous self-determination and post-secondary education.

1.1 Initial Research Questions

Given these experiences, I begin to explore relevant literature with the following questions in mind:

- What do the principles of Indigenous self-determination mean in the context of indigenizing initiatives within post-secondary education?
- What are the possibilities and limitations (the love and pain)?
- What needs to change in order for these principles to be realized in these initiatives?

I regard this emerging field of inquiry that is, integrating IWKB within the academy, as an important aspect of Indigenous self-determination. Integrating IWKB further serves to empower Indigenous peoples, and the ability to engage academia in learning exercises that shed light on oppressive policies and practices is an act of Indigenous self-determination. Although the interest in Indigenous peoples is moving towards epistemological and pedagogical inclusion and diversity, these initiatives must be underpinned by an understanding of Indigenous self-determination. This particular journey has helped me to make connections between Indigenous peoples and State policies and practices. The task ahead of me is to provide a framework for understanding issues of colonialism and Indigenous self-determination, before turning to relevant literature regarding indigenizing PSE.
1.2 Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being

Indigenous ways of knowing and being in academic terms are often referred to as epistemologies, ontologies, pedagogies or worldviews, but nonetheless they are all expressions of Indigenous people, ways of knowing and being, but more importantly expressions of self-determination. Unfortunately, they are terms widely misunderstood amongst the public; they are complex in nature and carry multiple political, social, economic, and cultural meanings. Difficulties in translation arise, particularly as it is translated from NCN into English, the language of the dominant society. Often I hear NCN language speakers say it is difficult to translate from NCN to English simply because the English words are limiting and do not capture the essence of NCN language. Although the dominant language will be used in this dissertation, it will be done with great attention to details, words, and intentions.

My ancestry derives from NCN and as such I embody a diverse, but established epistemological understanding of who I am, where I come from and what my responsibilities are in relation to hišukʔišcawak—the NCN phrase to describe the interdependent relationships between physical and spiritual realms. Indigenous ways of knowing and being determine pedagogies centered on the manifestation of ancient Indigenous knowledge(s) rooted in spiritual ceremonies and practices that are transmitted from one generation to the next (Absolon, 2011; Battiste & Henderson, 2009). These pedagogies bind Indigenous peoples to specific worldviews invoking a responsibility encompassing the wellbeing of hišukʔišcawak, which includes family, territory, culture and ancestors.

As I have been taught by family, particularly grandpa Moses Smith (great granduncle) or as I like to call him grandpa Moe and Umeek or Dr. Richard Atleo, is that life is about stages, learning and lessons; NCN pedagogies are generally concerned with these life’s stages. In
conversations with grandpa Moe I would sit and listen to him tell stories of his life, as a leader and elder. He shared that throughout these stages in life family members are responsible for preparing children to become a good human being who lives with purpose. He adds that children are the most precious and valued members of the family because they represent the future. For me, understanding the NCN life stages helps me define my evolving purpose in life, particularly within the context of my family and academia. In Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview: (Atleo, 2004), Umeek discusses the stages of life noting that the transitions are marked by a cultural and spiritual ceremony (p. 3). This pedagogical framework is accompanied by FCT that provide guidance and support from birth to adulthood to becoming an old one.

Umeek sheds light on one’s evolving role and responsibility within family and hišukʔičcawak, which includes but is not limited to family, territories, and ancestors. Implicit to this pedagogical framework are holistic pedagogies that embody both physical and spiritual elements informing one’s evolving life purpose. As grandpa Moe shared his knowledge about the various stages of life, he stressed that as infants the role of family was to love and nurture the children. As we grow, we are taught the important NCN values of respect, kindness, courage, and love. As adolescents we are taught to care for family members, such as the old ones and siblings. Umeek adds that as young adults we are encouraged to take on expanded roles and more responsibilities in preparation for the next phases of life, marriage and parenthood (p. 41). This incredibly transformative stage in life emphasizes selflessness, humility, and generosity.

Grandpa Moe spoke of his life experiences stating it was his responsibility to share and reflect on how he came to see himself, as he grew older, particularly through the experiences of parenthood. He saw his life in relation to family, ?uuʔuuqʷaačii and hišukʔičcawak. He would say that he had followed his path and was well on his way to becoming a good ancestor, a family
pedagogical teaching echoed at family and cultural gatherings. Grandpa Moe notes that elders are responsible for passing on FCT and knowledge found in stories, songs, dances and ceremonies, as it would ensure NCN survival now and into the future.

This Indigenous pedagogy also surfaces in literature by Indigenous scholars like Kathleen Absolon (2011) in *Kaandowssiwin: How We Come to Know*. Absolon writes, “Contributing to the collective good of Indigenous well-being and humanity seems to be a shared good of Indigenous searchers” (p. 36). She shares Anishinaabe ways of coming to know oneself in relation to everything that is one and connected. The Anishinaabe worldviews, as well, include the philosophy of seeing one’s self in relation to family, territory, ancestors, and self-determination. Becoming a mother and now a grandmother has brought me new joys and responsibilities, particularly in relation to passing on FCT and ensuring a bright future for my children and grandchildren, as NCN, as humans.

My purpose in life is to respect and share understandings of hišukʔičawak while ensuring a self-determining, healthy, and prosperous future for generations to come. Admittedly living reflectively and consciously comes with its challenges simply because it is difficult to be a good, thoughtful human being all the time. Chief Shenandoah of the Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy reminds us that the Creator wants us to be good so that when we die we will return to the Creator (Wall, 2001, p. 39). He adds that we (as human beings) were sent here with instructions on returning to the Creator, but adds that we will always be confronted with evil (p. 39). These similar beliefs speak to how I know myself, as a NCN woman and growing academic. It is a lifelong learning journey filled with yaʔakmis or love and pain (Atleo, 2004), a NCN

2 A term Absolon (2011) uses to describe Indigenous academic researchers.
belief that you cannot have one without the other. I am reminded to pray, give thanks and to ask for guidance in life’s journey so that I may too become a good ancestor achieved by balancing yaʔakmis in relation to hišukʔišcawak.

Indigenous ways of knowing and being are inherently connected to Indigenous worldviews, but more importantly self-determination or ?uuʔuuqʷaačii. Indigenous self-determination, as a discourse within PSE, is growing rapidly and includes diverse and multiple perspectives. For the purpose of this section Indigenous self-determination within PSE is rooted less in policy, and more in IWKB. This is not to negate the significance of educational policies, as policy will be more fully addressed in chapter two, rather, the emphasis here is on Indigenous perspectives of Indigenous self-determination within education. From a NCN perspective ?uuʔuuqʷaačii is dependent on hišukʔišcawak (Atleo, 2004, p. 21).

The late Native American scholar Vine Deloria Jr. (2001) also makes notes of relatedness adding,

the world, and all its possible experiences, constituted a social reality, a fabric of life in which everything had the possibility of intimate knowing relationships because ultimately everything was related. (p. 2)

The shared philosophy that everything is related is synonymous with IWKB and self-determination. Deloria Jr. adds that Indigenous self-determination is the embodiment of ancient place-based knowledge(s) that regards the natural world in which power (spirit) reside (p. 2). As such, relatedness is specific to regions, but share similar responsibilities to carrying forward ancient knowledge of self-determination for benefit of future generations. The struggle for Indigenous self-determination has and continues to be central for Indigenous peoples, particularly as there are multiple articulations and meaning across the globe (Deloria Jr., 2001, p. 124). Although Deloria Jr. (2001) makes the case for different expressions of self-
determination, he also argues that Indigenous self-determination means, “breaking free from the oppressor and taking control over our lives” (p. 124).

Indigenous self-determination is a personal and spiritual journey in need of time and space, as well as the opportunities for further articulation. Battiste and Henderson (2009) note that self-determination requires intellectual determination (p. 5) and critical reflection on who we are, where we come from, and what our life’s purpose is as Indigenous peoples. Indigenous ways of knowing and being describe principles of self-determination that are at the heart of FCT, which help determine one’s role and responsibility within the family. These NCN teachings inform who I am. As NCN, a self-determining people, my role is to ensure a healthy, prosperous future for our children, grandchildren, and future generations. Like the ancestors who have come before me, I respectively honour the principle, and this requires that I question and explore my role, both personally and academically, as a catalyst for Indigenous self-determination. This requires that I confront colonialism and the mechanisms (discussed in the next section) by which it is perpetuated, particularly within post-secondary institutions as an impeding factor that continues to plague Indigenous self-determination in Canada today.

1.3 Epistemological Dominance, Blindness and Collision

Colonialism operates in a number of ways within PSE, particularly through epistemological dominance (Andreotti, Ahenakew, & Cooper, 2011), epistemic blindness (or ignorance), and epistemological collisions (Marker, 2006). Scholars Andreotti, Ahenakew, and Cooper (2011) draw on Marie Battiste to describe how epistemological dominance, a

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3 I am aware and sensitive to the prevalent ableist metaphor. For example Baynton (2001) shows how “the concept how disability has been used to justify discrimination again other groups by attributing disability to them” (p33), such as women, minorities, immigrants, etc.
manifestation of colonialism, assumes that Western or Eurocentric knowledge is a “global and universal norm from which Indigenous, local knowledges and cultures deviate” (p. 41). Furthermore, it could be argued that in a sense, the question should be directed inward. That is, the problem lies not with Indigenous knowledge about education and ways of understanding the world, and leadership, but with the way dominant forms of conceptualizing and doing research shape – and limit – the prospects for action of those located outside a Euro-centric epistemic and ontological field.

Indigenous peoples did not write history, instead European settlers wrote of a barren territory where only backwards, uncivilized [Indigenous] savages roamed the landscape. Ahluwalia (2012) points to the ‘national myths’ Canadians tell themselves about Indigenous peoples, particularly founding stories of honorable and civilized men who followed the law and treated Indigenous peoples fairly (p. 47). These myths remain embedded in Canada’s formal history and are also cemented in notions of racial superiority, privilege and entitlement, fueling the epistemological dominance, which remain a part of PSE today.

Together history and epistemological dominance create what Andreotti, Ahenakew, and Cooper (2011) call epistemic blindness or ignorance (p. 41) or the inability of the dominant society to see value in non-Eurocentric knowledge(s). Epistemic ignorance is one of the most relevant aspects of my research, as I try to determine best practices for integrating IWKB in the classroom. Colonialism has a long history with origins in epistemological dominance leading to the systematic exclusion of IWKB from history and modern day education institutions where epistemological collisions transpire (Battiste & Henderson, 2009, p. 6). Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples experience epistemological collisions, knowingly or unknowingly, through the regular interactions found in the academy. A good example is the 1999 Makah whale hunt in
Washington State where both epistemological collision and epistemic blindness occurred simultaneously when various cultures, values and beliefs collided in the classroom (Marker, 2006, p. 483). As the Makah brought cultural knowledge about the whale hunt into the classrooms parents were outraged noting that the school is not the place for this kind of activity.

Marker (2006) notes “the mainstream culture of classroom silences both native voice and cultural reflection” (p. 483). This absence of Indigenous ways of knowing and being, within education leaves little room to learn about the rich and diverse cultures of Indigenous peoples. Instead when Indigenous peoples assert customary rights, such as the right to hunt whales, epistemological collision occurs creating more tensions and less understanding. It is a collision familiar to Indigenous peoples, both inside and outside the classroom. The way in which education has been constructed in Canada continues to leave Indigenous peoples vulnerable to these sorts of collisions, which at times can be hostile. Epistemological collisions are indicative of colonialism manifesting itself through epistemological dominance that continues to be a contending factor Indigenous people face.

Coming to understand how colonialism has shaped the interconnectedness of the social, economic, and political aspects of education is a relatively new and disturbing journey for me and is the focus of this inquiry. Navigating these multiple roles and responsibilities, as an Indigenous academic, in relation to hišuk?išcawak while making positive contributions to future generations, appears to be my biggest challenge. Colonialism is a shared experience of Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island (or North America). Respected Mi’kmaw scholar Marie Battiste (2013) describes, “colonialism as a theory of relationships is embedded in power, voice and legitimacy. In Canada, it has racialized Aboriginal peoples’ identity, marginalized and de-legitimized their knowledge and languages, and exploited their powerlessness in taking their
lands” (p. 106). Indigenous peoples know all too well the forms of colonialism, which have destroyed a way of life that sustained self-determination while honouring the future generations.

Shelia Cote-Meek (2014) adds, “colonization is conceptualized as violent, ongoing and traumatic” (p. 10), leaving Indigenous peoples picking up the pieces in order to survive. Cote-Meek further notes that the “ongoing colonial violence is understood as the acts perpetrated upon a people, and trauma is the result of colonial violence” (p. 10). There is no denying that colonialism is an experience of Indigenous peoples in Canada. However, a key question is what does colonialism look like in Canadian education from an Indigenous perspective? It has a long and ugly history dating back to the arrival of Europeans and followed by the Indian Act. Indigenous peoples across Canada became and remain wards of the State. One of the primary purposes of the Indian Act is to control the lives of ‘Indians’ and lands reserved for ‘Indians.’ The Indian Act is also responsible for Indian Residential Schools (IRS) from 1870 to 1996 making attendance mandatory. Indian Agents, clergy, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police forcibly removed Indigenous children from families and communities destroying the foundation of family.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) or RCAP notes in its final report that the primary purpose of residential schools was one of an assimilative nature (Volume 1, Part 2, Chapter 10, p. 309). The schools would assist in the evolution of the ‘savage’ to ‘self-rent’ civilized Canadian (p. 309). The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) or TRC emphasis that residential schools were designed to “kill the Indian in the child” in an effort to integrate Indigenous peoples into the dominant society (www.trc.ca). The TRC reports that an estimated 150,000 Indigenous children attended residential schools between 1870 and 1996. Reportedly, thousands of children were abused sexually, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually...
while simultaneously being neglected. My grandmother has only recently begun to share intimate stories of her residential school experiences where she recalls either going hungry or being fed moldy bread (personal communication, March 15, 2014).

My parents were also survivors of residential school, however, they did not live long enough to see the TRC or tell their stories. For the most part, they suffered in silence and pain. The story they shared often were stories of being beaten for speaking their own Indigenous language. More often than not, it was when they were intoxicated they were retelling stories of residential school. I was about 9 years old when my mother told me about the time she was beaten with a yardstick because she did not understand English; she was in kindergarten. These family stories of residential school abuses and violence are amongst thousands of stories told by residential school survivors in Canada. The dehumanizing experiences of residential school have brought with them the intergenerational traumas that persist amidst survivors, their children and grandchildren today.

The consequences of colonialism continue to be felt by Indigenous peoples today who make up 4.3% of the population\(^4\) and are the fastest growing population in Canada with half the population under the age of 25 (Helin, 2008, p. 47). Unfortunately, general reporting of statistics does not tend to include Indigenous peoples who are likely to experience dire social issues of poverty and violence regardless of where they reside (on or off reserve). According to a recent CBC article\(^5\) the number of murdered Indigenous women is 1,017 and the number of missing women is 164. Additionally, almost 50% of children in care in the province of British Columbia


are in Indigenous. This illustrates the ongoing practice of colonialism; the numbers are startling and disturbing. Colonialism persists in Canada with deep roots in the socio-economic and political fabric, and the formal education system has been an accessory to this project.

The recent federally tabled First Nations Education Act is one example of the paternalistic relationship between Indigenous peoples and the State. Through quality assurance and accountability this controversial Act sought to establish legislation directed at improving the quality of education for Indigenous children living on reserve. The development of this Act was swift and went without consultation with First Nations, making it an unwelcomed piece of legislation. Across Canada, First Nations and others rejected the bill, threatening to take political action. Shortly following its release, First Nations in British Columbia released a statement regarding the Act stating, “Bill C-33 will effectively displace our BC First Nations Education System that First Nations have spent the past two decades building” (First Nations Education Steering Committee, 2014).

In 1972, the term ‘Indian control over Indian education’ was introduced by the National Indian Brotherhood and continues to be echoed by the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) in Ottawa. Fortunately, the bill was tabled following the resignation of AFN National Chief Shawn Atleo (Nuu-chah-nulth) in May 2014. The AFN published an analysis of the First Nations Education Act in April 2014 criticizing the federal government for the ongoing control over First Nations’ education. The analysis notes that in the Act, “First Nation children have no right

6 [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/reports-publications/special-reports/2_1_population.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/reports-publications/special-reports/2_1_population.pdf)
to education or access to fairness and opportunity in Canadian law. This status quo is absolutely and fundamentally contrary to Treaty, inherent and human rights and must change” (p. 1).

Indigenous self-determination, as I understand it, is the have the right to determine your own life in accordance to family/tribal customs, protocols, and traditions. However, over time it’s has changed leaving Indigenous peoples to continue to assert rights to self-determination, which include Indigenous control over Indigenous education. The path to self-determination has been fraught with injustices, giving way to the resistance Canadians have come to know through confrontations, like the Oka Crisis of 1990. Drawing from memory, I remember that self-determination was at the heart of the crisis where Mohawks stood their ground to protect the sacred pines located near the township of Oka. It was a crisis that caught the world’s attention, particularly, the lengths in which the State would go to deny Indigenous people’s rights to self-determination. Colonial policies and practices continue to be a contending factor in the struggle for Indigenous self-determination, an aspect largely misunderstood by many.

1.4 Possibilities of Indigenization

The perils of possibilities of integrating IWKB within PSE is rapidly growing, particularly ways to adequately support such initiatives. The language used to describe this recent movement is Indigenization, a term still being defined, although Ottmann (2013) describes Indigenization as “decolonizing methodologies or methods that do not further entrench colonialism whilst supporting the theorization of Indigenous self-determination and knowledge production” (p. 13). Indigenization is therefore more than an initiative; it is a process that requires an understanding of colonialism. Unfortunately, Indigenous experiences of colonialism, and ways of knowing and being have been largely absent from PSE, giving way to epistemological collisions and blindness. In teaching or facilitating courses or workshops with
Indigenous content, I have come to a deeper appreciation of the complexity involved with Indigenization of PSE. For example, processes must be grounded in principles of self-determination as articulated by local Indigenous peoples in the area where the PSE institution is situated. It must be a process informed by understandings of the ongoing mechanisms of colonialism, including epistemological dominance, blindness and collision: this area of practice is the focus on my research.

Together these experiences have taught me that students or participants lack an understanding of Indigenous peoples and rights to self-determination. Teaching these courses and workshops has brought me where I am today. Coming from a political science and Indigenous governance background, I did not expect to find myself taking an interest in education. Learning to teach pre-service teachers, youth and child care practitioners, and to facilitate peer-based workshop with Indigenous-based content has been challenging and difficult to say the least, but nonetheless filled with experiences of yaʔakmis.

The two institutions I have experiences teaching and facilitating courses with Indigenous content are Camosun College\(^{10}\) and the University of Victoria (UVic)\(^{11}\). My teaching career began at UVic when I was teaching required courses focusing on Indigenous peoples and colonialism, specifically for the Faculty of Education’s Indigenous Education Department and the School of Child and Youth Care (CYC). These departments did their best to secure Indigenous instructors (either tenured or sessional) to teach the course(s). The courses arose out

\(^{10}\) http://web.camosun.ca/cetl/curriculum-design/learning-about-indigenization

\(^{11}\) Numerous schools within the Faculty of Human and Social Development, such as the School of Nursing, School of Social Work, School of Child and Youth Care, require undergraduate students to course on Indigenous peoples, colonialism and specific course materials as a part of their degree. The Faculty of Education also requires undergraduate students to take a course on the same topics, but with a focus on kindergarten to grade 12. The University of Victoria now has in place the Indigenous Cultural Acumen Training (ICAT) program for faculty and staff. I was involved in the initial development of the program, but left before it officially launched.
of the need to address learning gaps in courses offered to pre-service teachers and CYC practitioners. When UVic began offering these courses is unclear to me. UVic’s School of Social Work, though, has been leading the way in Indigenous content courses long before other schools/departments started to follow.

One of the courses I taught was TEL TELNIWT (to make good) and Indigenous Education, which was a mandatory course for pre-service teachers and undergraduate students in education\textsuperscript{12}. Over the course of a semester, students critically examined the history of Indigenous peoples, specifically in relation to Indigenous worldviews and colonialism while exploring pedagogical approaches to such material. The first two weeks were spent exploring the various worldviews of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples while developing appropriate terminology (i.e., Indigenous, Aboriginal, Native, Indian) to employ in the classroom. Students engage in emotionally difficult and challenging topics, such as Indian Residential Schools (IRS) and Child Welfare. Later the course focused on strategies to implement Indigenous ways of knowing and being whereby all can benefit. The emphasis in TEL TELNIWT is for students to find the pedagogical approach that works for them while demonstrating respect for the diverse nature of IWKB.

The second course I taught was for the School of Child and Youth Care entitled “Child and Youth Care: Introduction to CYC Practice in Aboriginal Contexts”\textsuperscript{13}. This course is similar

\textsuperscript{12} The course description notes that the course is “an explanation of ways to address the learning and teaching needs of Indigenous children, youth, and adults through understanding Indigenous peoples’ relationship with land, language, and community. Topics include: study of who Indigenous peoples are, diversity amongst Indigenous peoples, ways to Indigenize the learning and educational environment, and of the systems that impact service of teachers and learners” (IED Course Outline, 2011).

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to the Indigenous Education course, but emphasizes student self-location while developing competency for working with Indigenous peoples and communities. The seating capacity for each course varies from 25 to 30 undergraduate students most of whom are non-Indigenous. Classes are usually held in UVic’s First Peoples House either in the classroom or ceremonial hall, a complimentary environment. Sitting in a circle facing one another creates a space where students can express themselves freely without fear or interruption. Sitting in a circle is an Indigenous pedagogy meant to create an atmosphere where students are present and accountable for their participation.

For many students it was the first time they sat in a circle, some were uncomfortable while others liked it. Initially, students are reserved or shy preventing them from engaging in course materials or speaking in the circle. Instead most engaged by listening, particularly with respect to course materials regarding Indigenous culture. It becomes apparent that topics of Indigenous peoples, self-determination, and colonialism were almost completely unfamiliar to students. Each course began with an introduction where students were expected to locate themselves within the context of Canada. For example, a student might say I am from Vancouver with Scottish ancestry. Students appeared to enjoy locating themselves while sharing family stories of coming to Canada. Following this exercise is an overview of local First Nations, which includes an examination of Indigenous worldviews, language groups, and much more. Students tend to enjoy this aspect of the course before having to move to the more traumatic transitions towards topics of colonial policies and practices, such as IRS and Child Welfare. As students learn about policies like the Indian Act and residential schools, many withdraw, feeling silenced,

learning and educational environment, and of the systems that impact service of teachers and learners.” (IED Course Outline, 2011).
guilt and/or shame. This period of time feels like the longest 6 weeks of the course where students grapple with course materials trying to find ways to integrate it into their teaching practice.

The courses conclude by focusing on specific topics related to education or child and youth care. For example in education, students are tasked with developing a lesson plan with Indigenous content while the child and youth care students work through case studies that test their newly acquired knowledge. At times students openly shared feelings of shock and dismay at the treatment of Indigenous peoples, while others students seem to shut down completely. Students in both courses were required to write reflective journals and an essay on a First Nation in the area of their practice. Many students reflected deeply, sharing intimate feelings of fear over the difficulties of engaging with the course materials and class discussions. From my observation it became apparent that learning about Indigenous peoples was not only a new concept, but also one that caused a great deal of anxiety and/or hostility. At times, these classes were heated with debates on the past, present, and future of Indigenous peoples and rights to self-determination. Students struggled to come to terms with Canada’s history, policies, and practices in relation to Indigenous peoples.

Unfortunately, as Indigenous peoples in these courses, we tended to encounter experiences of trauma (Cote-Meek, 2014), particularly to topics of residential school, racism or child welfare. These students were impacted and traumatized by having to take the course and do assignments, which in some cases are directly related to their lived realities (living on the reserve, poverty, and child welfare issues, etc.). In some cases, Indigenous students simply shut down or disengaged, or the opposite occurred where students become vocal trying desperately to create understandings of Indigenous peoples, worldviews and colonialism. Often Indigenous
students become the teachers facilitating classroom discussions or leading group presentation. My abilities to teach were challenged at times, but the rewards were found in witnessing student growth and the genuine interest of students towards the end of the course.

Indigenous academics and scholars continue to pave the way for the assertion and/or validation of IWKB within the academy-giving rise to hopeful change. The integrating of IWKB within PSE is the inclusion of decolonizing methodologies or methods that do not further entrench colonialism (Ottmann, 2013, p. 13). Ottmann introduces the term indigenizing education, which supports the theorization of Indigenous sovereignty and knowledge production (p. 13). Educational initiatives orientated towards bringing Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies into mainstream education systems include, but are not limited to, naturalizing Indigenous knowledges (Battiste & Henderson, 2009), epistemological pluralism (Andreotti, Ahenakew & Cooper, 2011), and bringing to the academy the four R’s - respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991).

Coming to life in the academy are Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies rich in diversity and complex in nature seeking to decolonize education (Battiste & Henderson, 2009, p. 6). Indigenous scholars Marie Battiste and James Henderson Youngblood (2009) propose the naturalizing of Indigenous knowledges within post-secondary institutions whereby both Indigenous and non-Indigenous (or Eurocentric) knowledges can co-exist. Realizing the naturalization of Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies within the academy has proven to be challenging, but not impossible. Through earnest efforts to include relevant Indigenous perspectives and experience within initiatives by the academy, demonstrates a level of respect for the cultural integrity of Indigenous peoples (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991, pp. 4-5).
Epistemological pluralism is a concept linked to efforts to build on existing initiatives to share epistemologies and pedagogies. Indigenous scholars/academics argue that Indigenous knowledges have much to offer, in particular, to knowledge of the environment, sustainable development, and social justice (Battiste & Henderson, 2009, p. 9). Andreotti, Ahenakew, and Cooper (2011) note the use of the term “inter-knowledges” (p. 42) adding that learning of other knowledges does not negate your own (p. 41). By finding innovative ways to penetrate the academy, Indigenous scholars and academics make possible the opportunity to pursue meaningful initiatives that benefit not only Indigenous peoples, but all students, faculty, and staff.

Respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991) are core foundational values Indigenous peoples intuitively hold onto as they enter the academy. Kirkness and Barnhardt discuss the lack of respect for Indigenous peoples, epistemologies and pedagogies within the academy arguing that change must occur if the academy is to become “user friendly for First Nation students” (p. 5). There are initiatives within universities and colleges, such as the University of British Columbia’s First Nations House of Learning, which are already implementing Indigenous initiatives, such as publicized territorial welcomes\(^{14}\) on their websites indigenizing the academy one step at a time. Notably, the video welcome would not have happened without the leadership of the University of British Columbia (UBC). Battiste and Henderson (1991) suggest that by including Indigenous knowledges it makes educational learning more relevant for Indigenous students (p. 5). Nella Nelson once told me that when

\(^{14}\) [http://aboriginal.ubc.ca/](http://aboriginal.ubc.ca/)
Indigenous peoples see themselves reflected in the curriculum, literature and institutional strategic plan they are more likely to succeed (personal communication, November 9, 2018).

Indigenous initiatives that include Indigenous pedagogies and epistemologies signify positive change while moving towards building respectful relationships with local Indigenous peoples (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991, p. 6). Responsibility is a value taken seriously by many Indigenous peoples like myself, as mentioned earlier. Responsibility is highly valued amongst Indigenous peoples recognizing the holistic nature of Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies. Responsibility within the context of the academy according to Battiste and Henderson (1991) is geared towards recognition of Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies (p. 7). The authors argue that recognizing, respecting and taking responsibility helps reaffirm Indigenous self-determination (p. 7). Taken together, respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility for Indigenous peoples, epistemologies and pedagogies provide for Indigenous initiatives that benefit the academy and Indigenous peoples.

The work of Indigenous academics, scholars and others is remarkable and has not gone without its hardships. The establishment of Indigenous initiatives (programs, services, scholarship) that support Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies has not been an easy feat. They are often met with misunderstandings and/or resistance to Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies. Indigenous scholars/academics are forced to push past misunderstandings and/or resistance in an effort to see initiatives through to practice. Battiste and Henderson (2009) describe this kind of practice as intellectual self-determination (p. 11). It is a practice whereby Indigenous scholars/academics and others bring Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies into the academy creating new ways of theorizing and decolonizing research methodologies (Battiste & Henderson, 2009, p. 5).
Although not necessarily labeled as an Indigenous initiative, Indigenous intellectual self-determination signifies the growth in relevant literature and the opening up of institutional spaces (i.e., UBC’s First Nations House of Learning, UVic’s First Peoples House). Wildcat (2001) has called this process one of indigenizing the academy: “the act of making our educational philosophy, pedagogy and system our own, making the effort to explicitly explore ways of knowing and systems of knowledge that have been actively repressed for five centuries” (p. vii).

Having spent the last 20 years in post-secondary education, the idea of Indigenizing the academy is a relatively new concept to me, and this process is something with which I have become involved in since 2010. This recent undertaking by academic institutions, such as Camosun College and the University of Victoria, is in an effort to broaden the institutional awareness of Indigenous peoples, epistemologies, pedagogies, and the impacts of colonialisms, particularly within the parameters of the academy.

Indigenizing the academy generally revolves around providing Indigenous programs and services aimed at increasing Indigenous enrolment and retention while providing opportunities to non-Indigenous students to take part in courses or programs regarding Indigenous peoples and colonialism. Indigenizing the academy is about confronting colonialism and the “contentious ground” (Ottmann, 2013, p. 8), which Indigenous peoples must contend with daily. As such, Indigenous peoples are more likely to encounter obstacles, such as hostility and racism, during their time in post-secondary education. Recognizing these debilitating factors, Indigenous scholars, academics and others work hard to bring about meaningful change, which not only benefits Indigenous peoples, but all peoples.

Ottmann (2013) makes note of a number of goals for Indigenizing the academy, the first recommends that post-secondary institutions make education relevant, responsive, respectful and
respective to Indigenous communities and students (p. 10). In order to do that Ottmann argues that it involves hard work and being able to envision a future that moves from the decolonization of education towards the Indigenization of the academy. Ottmann strongly encourages us (those willing to engage in Indigenization) to ask ourselves if the task of Indigenization is “worth the challenge,” as it is an “arduous journey” (p. 12). It is a task that involves confronting colonialism within education in a good way or respectfully; the denial of colonialism continues to exist, particularly because it calls into question the power dynamic within the academy (p. 12).

In part causing some criticism of Indigenization, particularly, as it remains an institutional and colonial initiative. Michelle Pidgeon (2016) notes that “criticism, or cautions, from Indigenous scholars regarding Indigenization are framed with an awareness that this movement is occurring within a deeply seated colonial structure with a long histories in the colonization of Aboriginal peoples and still influencing the ongoing colonial project (p. 80); this must be acknowledged. It is also the yaʔakmis (love and pain) of Indigenization; you simply cannot have one without the other. This is not to say decolonization is not a part of the Indigenization process, but to recognize that it is within a colonial context. There is nothing we can change about that, however, what we can change is our educational practice, which includes learning about Indigenous peoples, ways of knowing and being along side decolonization or reconciliation.

To see the value of Indigenization you need only turn to the increases in PSE Indigenous students, programs and services. There are more Indigenous peoples enrolling and succeeding in PSE than when I began in 1994. However, this increase did not occur without processes of decolonization, inclusion of Indigenous knowledges, and leadership. Indigenization of the
academy not only improves conditions for Indigenous peoples, but it is also a benefit to the entire institution.

Ottmann argues that institutional indigenization requires leadership on the part of the institution (college or university) and Indigenous peoples/communities (both on reserve and off). Further, colleges, universities need to build and maintain respectful relationships with Indigenous peoples in order for Indigenization to be successful. Institutions openly taking on Indigenization process will undoubtedly experience yaʔakmis that will bring long-term benefits to education and Indigenous self-determination. Processes like Indigenization are critical in terms of changing the colonial landscape of education, which benefits the entire institution.

1.5 Methodological Approach and Dissertation Structure

Research is all about unanswered questions, but it also reveals our unquestioned answers

Shawn Wilson (2008, p. 6)

As I embarked upon my doctoral research journey, I openly acknowledged the influences of Indigenous scholars, such as Shawn Wilson (2008), Margaret Kovach (2009), and others, who help me understand the linkages between what I want to do (research) and what I need to do (choose a methodology). Research is about the unanswered questions (Wilson, 2008, p. 6) that simmer below the surface waiting for a methodology to transpire. Wilson articulates his position noting that his intention is to build a relationship between himself, the reader and issue(s) at hand (p. 6). He adds that starting from scratch (in terms of who he is as an Indigenous researcher and the research question) provides for common ground. He also acknowledges the struggle of “cross-cultural communication” (p. 6), whereby the reader has some context for what they are about to read and perhaps develop a relationship or connection with Wilson and his research.
Wilson emphasizes the need to give meaning to terms, such as, methodology, strategic inquiry, and methods, which provide a framework for research. He notes that “methodology is a part of the paradigm that guides the research,” adding that “methodology can be seen as providing the final destination in the research journey” (p. 39). Further, Wilson adds that the strategy aspect is “like a roadmap that helps you to get to where you want to go” (p. 39), while methods are the tools and/or techniques employed to gather data (p. 39). In this respect this particular research perspective supports the Indigenous research paradigm Wilson is describing. Wilson argues that as Indigenous peoples we have our own research methodologies, standards and beliefs to uphold (p. 127), however, we must also recognize the value in non-Indigenous research paradigms (p. 39). Therefore, I have adopted an Indigenous or more specifically, a NCN, paradigm (one rooted in relationship building and relational accountability) to draw upon strategies of inquiry to guide how I will arrive at my destination while my method has assisted in gathering the essential and necessary data.

My methodology of choice is an autoethnography rooted in Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies, which has examined aspects of Indigenous self-determination, PSE, along with aspects of Indigenization and decolonization. More discussion about this methodological approach is provided in chapter two. The strategy of inquiry begins with myself, as an Indigenous woman and academic, but also includes cultural aspects and relevant literature. I look forward to revealing the unquestioned answers Wilson (2008) so eloquently articulated earlier, in an effort to leave something of value behind for future family generations and academics alike.

My hope is that my grandchildren and others will be spared the experiences that colonialism imparts in education and in other aspects of their lives. Confronting colonialism in
education is a difficult daily task that must be met with persistence. However, encouraging PSE institutions to integrate IWKB must be undertaken with full understanding that such curricula and pedagogic endeavors are about love and pain. As such, this journey to look at myself, particularly within the context of my practice as an educator, naturally leads me to consider the other parts of the journey.

The structure of this dissertation includes six chapters; this first chapter has introduced the purpose and research inquiry. Chapter two observes more closely cultural protocols, such as prayer and outlines intentions and my methodological approach. Chapter three examines Indigenous education and policy, while the fourth chapter invites the reader to know me a little more intimately. Chapter five gets to the heart of the matter at hand (epistemological dominance, ignorance, collisions) within post-secondary, which can be unsettling to those who choose to engage in Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation. Chapter six brings it all together in a time of reflection to offer personal observations of past and future educational practices of integrating IWKB within PSE institutions. Together, these chapters offer insight and perspective into processes of Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation.
Chapter 2: A Humble and Respectful Petition

Nuu-chah-nulth Prayer
Offered by Levi Martin, Ḵaʔuqʷiʔatḥ
February 2013

wai kaš nas haa ɬapi hawaał
(why kash nafs haa thla-pi  hawaylth)
*praise the light of day, the creator*

wai kaš nas haa ɬapi hawaał
(why kash nafs haa thla-pi  hawaylth)
*praise the light of day, the creator*

łaak Ḵaakʷas suu ɬil hawaał
(thalk thlakwas soo  tilmh hawaylth)
*I am pleading with you creator*

qaa ciʔis limʔaq sti
(kaa chii is thelee-muks stee)
*give me strength*

haaʔaakʷapʔs hawaał
(haa akwa piss  hawaylth)
*keep me strong*

čaa maa pil ʔa ʔis
(chaa akwa piss  hawaylth)
*help me to stand with honour, dignity and respect*

Given with permission to use in this dissertation.
2.1 Prayer

A prayer by a family elder is fitting and the appropriate protocol to mark the beginning of something big and important. The prayer acknowledges the connection between us/humans, the creator/ancestors, while asking for strength and guidance in the journey to become a good human being and ancestor. The nature of Nuu-chah-nulth (NCN) knowledge acquisition begins with a physical (land/water) and spiritual (prayers, ancestors) petition requesting the help of the creator as well as family; NCN recognize that knowledge acquisition does not occur in isolation.

*Thlawk-thlawk-qwa* (a humble petition), Umeek (2004) explains, is a NCN approach to knowledge acquisition that is rooted in the physical and spiritual worlds (p. 13). He draws on NCN stories, particularly the story of how son of Raven captures the light of day (p. 6), to articulate protocols associated with such knowledge acquisition (p. 13). This particular NCN story is an origin story about a chief’s son who is determined to bring light to the NCN world. Raven moves between the physical and spiritual worlds learning lessons that help him acquire the necessary knowledge to capture the light of day (p. 6).

2.2 Petition and Knowledge Acquisition

As I embarked upon this journey, I recognized that it is a journey informed by deeply held values and beliefs rooted in cultural teachings while recognizing the disruption of colonialism. As an educational practitioner and student, I recognize that confronting colonialism (epistemological dominance, racism, etc.) within PSE is not an easy task, in fact it is a journey filled with yaʔakmis. This kind of work, teaching and/or facilitating topics of Indigenous peoples, self-determination, and colonialism, is hard and demanding work that goes largely unrecognized by the institutions. Processes of Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation
can require Indigenous faculty, staff and students to retell or relive traumatic experiences of colonialism as a way to educate others; this goes to the heart of the yaʔakmis.

Prayers are offered (by a family elder) as an essential part of this EdD journey, especially the acknowledgement and respect between family, the physical and spiritual worlds. As I move forward in this work I will continue to appeal to a higher source of being, the creator, and ancestors, inciting prayers of gratitude and respect while asking for strength and guidance. Umeek stresses the importance of the NCN pedagogy that requires the physical and spiritual being to come together to ?uusimč (prayer bath), to observe, theorize and then test theories, as way to obtain knowledge (p. 13). This is an integral aspect in this quest for knowledge that I recognize and take seriously having gone for a number of baths since 2012. ?uusimč is sacred, and therefore I will not get into the details of my ceremonial baths, but to say it was indeed a part of my journey; this journey also includes a spiritual aspect.

I needed to go out and offer a prayer of gratitude and respect while asking for strength, particularly as I continued to encounter experiences of racism and ignorance within PSE, which left me with more questions than answers. As I continue to purse my own sense of self and self-determination, I turn to the knowledge keepers in the family along with Western Eurocentric post-secondary experiences to help guide me in the search for answers to the many questions I seek.

Asking what the principles of Indigenous self-determination mean within the context of Indigenizing educational initiatives in PSE has encouraged me to seek out the potential answers. As a result, I was strongly encouraged to engage in the broader picture of Indigenous self-determination/self-governance in ways that I had not thought about before; it proved to be a fruitful exercise. By exposing various perspectives of Indigenous self-determination, I can better
see where attention must be paid. The second research question considers the possibilities and limitations (the yaʔakmis) and what needs to change in order for this particular principle to be realized. These questions and others are challenging to say the least and at times difficult to tackle, particularly given the colonial environment in which this kind of work takes place.

Indigenous academics, leaders, students and others willingly engage in colonial processes as a way to advance self-determination and self-government while being met with resistance, hostility and/or racism. In chapter one I suggest that the limitations outweigh the possibilities; thus more has to be done for this principle of self-determination to be realized. In order for such a principle to be realized, institutional leaders, educational practitioners, staff and students will need to go beyond the current colonial framework to confront colonialism. On the surface, Indigenizing of post-secondary institutions appears to be a viable option for a number of good reasons -- finances, capacity, needs and willingness, particularly of government, post-secondary institutions and Indigenous academics. Initially my research questions were geared less towards Indigenization and more towards protecting self-determination while learning how to best support Indigenous students.

The University of Victoria’s Staff and Faculty Aboriginal Training Program (now the Indigenous Cultural Acumen Training program) influenced me to think about a mandatory Indigenous course for all new students entering PSE. After much reflection, I realize that this is a big vision needing small incremental steps, which brought me back for a closer examination of Indigenization, a practical example of change. I went in asking questions, such as “is Indigenization everything it’s chalked up to be? What does indigenization mean beyond the colonial parameters set forth by the institution?” Indigenization is a growing discourse within a number of post-secondary intuitions, such as Camosun College, but is Indigenization the only
option? I remain leery of Indigenization programs and services, particularly as a ways to advance Indigenous self-determination while improving upon Indigenous student retention and success.

In part, I want to learn about the love and pain of Indigenization, particularly the practice. How do I improve upon my practice while encouraging critical thinking with respect to Indigenous peoples, self-determination and colonialism? This study recognizes the need for a respectful and humble petition for knowledge that resides in both the spiritual and physical worlds. If I have learned anything, I have learned that the search for new knowledge does not occur in isolation of hišukʔiścawak. The search for new knowledge, from my perspective, includes spiritual (prayers) and mental/physical (research) efforts that require the aid of ʔnaas, ancestors, family, friends, UBC faculty, and other wonderful resources. Together these elements help provide a framework for finding ways to improve upon my practice, as an educator, while giving me courage to confront colonialism within PSE.

Part of confronting colonialism in PSE is to try and understand the political nature of Indigenous self-determination, education, and policy. Chapter three offers insights into the complexities associated with Indigenous peoples, the Canadian State, and educational policy. This chapter is dense and void of story covering a vast amount of political and educational policy information, which is meant to help the reader appreciate the broader struggle for Indigenous self-determination.

2.2.1 Autoethnographic Methodology and Indigenous Knowledge

As noted in chapter one, my methodology of choice for this journey is autoethnographic; it is a specific approach “to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno)” (Ellis, as cited in Adams & Bochner, 2011; Adams & Homan Jones, 2005). Further Ellis, Adams and
Bochner (2011) add that an autoethnography “is both process and product” (p. 1) that accommodates and acknowledges the nature of emotionality and subjectivity. More importantly, this particular kind of approach acknowledges “the researcher’s influence on the research” (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011, p. 2) and validates the importance of personal experiences, which plays out in the broader research paradigms. Autoethnography, Ellis, Adams, and Bochner argue, “expands and opens up a wider lens on the world” that has constructed a very “rigid definition of what constitutes meaningful and useful research” (p. 2). To me, this methodological approach is refreshing, particularly given it is a method I have not been introduced to before now.

As the authors note, scholars began to recognize difference and different ways in which people understand themselves (place, language, etc.), particularly the scholars who recognized their own assumptions about the world (p. 2). These scholars determined “that conventional ways of doing and thinking about research were narrow, limiting and parochial” (p. 2). The authors also shed light on the scholarly nature of autoethnographies suggesting that although the academy may resist this form of research and writing, autoethnographies should be taken seriously as a form of scholarship. As such, autoethnography can be seen as a useful way to integrate the personal and academic endeavors of an individual who chooses to embark upon such a journey.

Autoethnographies are personal narratives that are generally thought to be sparked by a sort of “epiphany” (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, p. 2). The authors describes as a moment in time that is recalled and seen as important impacting “the trajectory of a person’s life times of existential crises that forced a person to attend to and analyze live experience and events after which life does not seem quite the same” (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p. 2). An epiphany is certainly a concept I can relate to in terms of that moment in time when I realized the role
education (K-12 and post-secondary) plays in socialization, and the perpetuation of colonialism.

I was drawn to the idea of undertaking an autoethnography, particularly due to the evocative (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011, p. 3) nature.

An autoethnography, if written well, will draw the reader into the text ‘showing’ and effectively bringing the reader into the ‘scene’ in terms of “thoughts, emotions and actions,” which allows the reader to “experience an experience” (p. 3). However, an autoethnography must also produce “aesthetic and evocative thick descriptions of personal and interpersonal experience,” (p. 3) in order to draw the reader into the text; in this respect, as a researcher/writer of an autoethnography I must be prepared to creatively engage the reader to the end. Ellis, Adams, and Bochner introduce forms of and approaches to autoethnography, which include Indigenous ethnography. The authors note that “from colonized or economically subordinate people” (p. 4) Indigenous autoethnographies are generally “used to address and disrupt power in research, particularly a (outside) researcher’s right and authority to study (exotic) others” (p. 3). In this respect autoethnography can also be seen as an act of decolonization further lending to process of Indigenization.

In his article “Indigenous autoethnography: Exploring, engaging, and experiencing ‘self’ as a native method of inquiry” Māori scholar Paul Whitinui (2013) calls for the repositioning of autoethnography from a Western to an indigenous perspective (p. 1). He argues that this repositioning is a “culturally informed research practice” that is a legitimate and effective method of inquiry (p. 1). Whitinui adds that an Indigenous autoethnography provides opportunities for Indigenous researchers to rediscover their own “voices as culturally liberating human-beings” (p. 1) embracing a distinct “Native” method of inquiry (p. 3). Kovach (2009) also adds that an Indigenous autoethnography is an approach that is self-reflective and “moves
beyond field notes to having a more integral positioning within the research process and the
construction of knowledge itself” (p. 33).

Kovach herself embarks upon a similar research journey embracing Indigenous research
methodologies that advocate for the further articulation of Indigenous research and
methodological scholarship. Indigenous autoethnography is an emerging field, Whitinui argues,
that builds on the idea of “coming out, ‘being relevant’ and ‘creating alternative’ perspectives to
specific complex social problems” (p. 4). Self-reflective and culturally relevant Indigenous
autoethnographies requires an introduction of self, who I am, and where I come from (Whitinui,
2013, p. 3). Whitinui adds that it is important to ask yourself the following questions:

• What does it mean to be Indigenous?
• How can Indigenous people interpret ‘self’ as a culturally accepted research practice to
  create new knowledge?
• What are the guiding principles or ethics related to speaking about self?
• Who am I accountable to as an Indigenous person when I choose to write about self?
• What ways can an Indigenous autoethnography be considered useful?
• What is so ‘Native’ about Indigenous autoethnography that deserves to be told?

I found myself asking the some of the same questions: will what I have done create new
knowledge? What are NCN principles related to speaking about myself? Who am I accountable
to? Will it be useful and most importantly, why does my story deserves to be told? Indeed
important questions that will require some attention and further reflection, but also persistence in
the articulation of how I see myself in the world as a Nuu-chah-nulth-aht and academic. Whitinui
also raised further questions, such as, ‘how well do I know myself?’ ‘What do I believe in?’ He
does this as a way to bring light to Indigenous values we adhere to in our daily interactions (p.
11). Indigenous values, such as integrity, respect, etc. are values shared by the Nuu-chah-nulth.
These are values I attempt to adhere to myself, as a Nuu-chah-nulth-aht, academic and researcher in terms of my daily interactions both personally and professionally.

It is important to recognize the challenges associated with such research methodology. As Whitinui (2013) notes, “exploring or expressing ‘self’ has been described by some as ‘narcissistic and an overindulgence in personifying everything as opposed to unpacking how knowledge about self is structured and produced (post-structural discourse)” (p. 9). In this respect, I must make clear a Nuu-chah-nulth perspective that permits the discussion of self in relation to everything and everyone else (a Nuu-chah-nulth pedagogy reinforced by my family). Bullough and Pinnegar (2001) note that self-study methodologies are gaining ground and moving “away from modernism and its assumptions about legitimate knowledge and knowledge production toward broadening what counts as research” (p. 13). This is an important aspect for me, particularly as FCT and IWKB have been not been recognized within PSE, as legitimate forms of knowledge until more recently.

In and out of the classroom I have had to think about ways to convey and integrate FCT and IWKB within PSE. However, I am always brought back to Wilson’s (2008) approach to building a relationship with the reader(s), which draws them into the issue(s) in a way that creates common ground, and I would add, understanding. As such, it is imperative to also examine more closely the aspects of Indigenous peoples’ rights to self-determination, along with Indigenous education and policy. These aspects of Indigenous education help provide further context to Indigenous education and the challenges to Indigenous self-determination.

My own story is told in chapters four and five. In the next chapter, I provide some context to these stories by mapping out in some detail, relevant literature, and studies on the
topic of Indigenous rights, Indigenous self-determination, Indigenous Education, and the key concept that underpins this entire exploration—yaʔakmis or love and pain.
Chapter 3: Rights to Self-Determination, Education and Policy

Indigenous scholar Marie Battiste (2013) offers these encouraging words about Indigenous peoples’ right to self-determination when she notes,

It is hoped that Eurocentric scholars and institutions will recognize the urgent need to respect and promote the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples as affirmed in constitutional reconciliation and the 2007 UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which derive from their Indigenous institutions, Indigenous concept of belonging, and from their knowledge, heritage, culture, spiritual traditions, histories and philosophies. (p. 187)

Battiste’s sentiments capture the essence of IWKB and education drawing on the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples, which includes self-determination. Questions posed in Chapter 1 provide a framework to expand upon the multiple meanings of Indigenous self-determination while exploring the parameters of integrating IWKB within PSE institutions. The purpose of this chapter is to explore Indigenous peoples’ right to self-determination, Indigenous education and policy, along with the yaʔakmis of Indigenous self-determination, education and policy.

The question “what needs to change in order for principles of Indigenous self-determination to be realized in education?” is the yaʔakmis aspect of the work. Indigenous self-determination, education and policy are layered and complex, offering multiple and unique perspectives worth exploring.

3.1 Indigenous Rights to Self-Determination

Passed down from one generation to the next, oral stories imply systems of governance that require adherence to FCT and protocols while securing agreements founded in spiritual petition. Although not explicitly stated, these acts form policies that ensure specific outcomes that respect FCT. However, the diverse nature of Indigenous peoples means that conceptions of self-determination vary considerably from one nation to another. Altered by colonialism
epistemological understandings of Indigenous self-determination take on new meaning while negating FCT. For example, self-determination is seen as a government process and program, as opposed to the kind of self-determination our ancestors fought for, and that was the right to determine our own lives. Indigenous peoples maintain the right to self-determination and governance based on inherent laws and responsibilities that are passed down from one generation to the next. Like any other governing laws, protocols or responsibilities, they too are subject to change or evolve over time.

Today, stories continue to play an important role in the transmission of Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies centered on principles of Indigenous self-determination. In this respect laws, policies, protocols and responsibilities can be viewed as expressions of Indigenous self-determination. However, what does this mean within the context of Indigenous education and the integration of IWKB within PSE? Over time Indigenous self-determination and governance have come to embody colonial characteristics and definitions. Today, Indigenous self-determination requires the same kind of attention and care as it did in the past while recognizing the need to deconstruct colonial laws, policies, etc. imposed by oppressive government regimes. This kind of intervention is necessary given Canada’s track record regarding Indigenous people’s rights to self-determination.

Deloria Jr. (2001) describes Indigenous self-determination as a recent uprising within PSE, which continues to be articulated. He notes that Indigenous self-determination means, “breaking free from the oppressor and taking control over our lives” (p. 124). However, what does this look like, and why is it important to understand within the context of Indigenous self-determination and the integration of IWKB within PSE? To further appreciate the question the next section examines the various perspectives on Indigenous education and policy. Education is
a loaded term with multiple interpretations; however, from an Indigenous perspective, education begins in the womb with love, respect and compassion, which lasts until one passes to the spirit world.

Grandpa Moe would say that self-determination starts with self, a good heart and good mind in both the physical and spiritual realms. Although negative experiences with Western education and schooling have left Indigenous peoples weary, today it is also highly valued and seen as a means of survival. Stonechild (2006) adds, “Today, elders say that education, rather than bison, needs to be relied upon for survival” (p. 2). This is reminiscent of my great grandmother’s words instructing me to “get an education” as she believed it would aid in our survival in an ever-changing world. In this sense, Western education is seen as an opportunity to move beyond the confines of colonialism in an effort to restore elements of Indigenous self-determination. Therefore, education or more specifically PSE is generally thought to be an asset to Indigenous self-determination, particularly in terms of what Indigenous peoples already know epistemologically and pedagogically. Through PSE, I have come to know the intrinsic nature of colonialism in ways I did not before know.

In this way, my great grandmother’s vision for her grandchildren to become educated in the ways of the Whiteman was founded on yaʔakmis or in this case the love of self-determination amidst the need to survive the harsh realities of colonialism. Indigenous peoples continue to pursue the right to self-determination, which take on alternative forms found in colonial state structures. As such Indigenous peoples, First Nations, treaty or otherwise, maintain that education is an Indigenous and/or treaty right (Battiste, 2013; Stonechild, 2006). This particular articulation is therefore expressed through political and Indigenous advocacy organizations, such as First Nation elected chief and councils (as defined in the Indian Act), the Assembly of First
Nations along with British Columbia’s (BC) First Nation Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and BC’s Indigenous Adult Higher Learning Association (IAHLA).

3.1.1 Exploring the Discourse of Self-Determination

As Indigenous peoples continue to assert the right to self-determination while becoming educated in non-Indigenous ways (across disciplines), they also contribute to the growing discourse and scholarship on Indigenous self-determination, education and more. Recognizing the multiple perspectives includes acknowledging the work of non-Indigenous allies and practitioners whose perspectives provide further insights into colonialism, education and policy. In particular, Paquette and Fallon (2010) closely examine the comprehensive and critical nature of FN education policy in their book entitled *First Nations Education Policy in Canada: Progress or Gridlock?* In chapter two, *Framing First Nation Education within Self-Governance and Self-Determination*, Paquette and Fallon support Indigenous self-determination, as a way of advancing First Nation education.

The authors identify what is not working with respect to FN education policy and boldly offer a conceptual framework that, they write, is “unlikely” to be received with open arms (p. xiv). The conceptual educational framework Paquette and Fallon propose is founded on the sociocultural paradigm, pluralism, and the liberal conundrum. Although challenging to comprehend at times, I find the authors’ framework has some relevancy to FN educational policy, as it encompasses some of the aspirations of Indigenous self-determination. Paquette and Fallon take the position that Indigenous self-determination and self-government ought to be central in discussions of Indigenous or FN educational policies, a core principle of FNCFNE. A discussion of FN education policy must unfold with the authors noting that it must do so “within
the larger self-governance discourses,” adding that this approach places self-governance and self-determination at the forefront of Indigenous education policy (p. 20).

Moving forward the authors offer a complex yet unique pedagogical approach to policy using a schematic to frame FN education policy and self-governance. Given the complexities of their framework, I can only provide a brief overview, which highlights the general concepts of FN education, policy and self-governance. Paquette and Fallon’s comprehensive examination of FN policy outlines a particular governance model for FN educational policy, which they argue will lead to self-governance. Unfortunately, the authors do not provide a specific definition of Indigenous self-determination, instead using the term synonymously with self-government (or the right to determine governing structures). Their schematic situates FN governance within the context of a new democratic society or what they term as a “symbiosynergetic sociocultural paradigm,” which recognizes “the different non-contradictory levels of perception and explanation of physical, biological and spiritual reality” (p. 31).

Fallon and Paquette also draw on Bertrand and Valois (1980) to provide context of socioculture describing it as,

the action exercised by a society, as result of its activity, on its social and cultural practices, by the combination of five elements: a concept of knowledge, a concept of relations among persons, society and nature, a set of values, a way of doing things, and an overarching sense of significance. (p. 24).

The sociocultural paradigm is something that not only applies to Indigenous peoples, but also all humans. The educational paradigms that form the conceptual framework include the following paradigms: industrial society, societies centered on the person (existential), and the new democratic society’s paradigm (p. 26). The latter paradigm, a new democratic society, develops the capacity for what is termed a “new social institution,” or rather “new democratic societies”
In this sense modern day treaties and/or agreements, which are generally ratified by FN membership, can be seen as new social institutions or democratic societies agreed upon by FN themselves. Further, the authors contend that this paradigm ought to promote a form of “universal” yet “diversified” contribution to “the symbiosynergy of the world as a whole” (p. 33). Therefore, the paradigms offered by Paquette and Fallon can be seen as evolving and meeting the needs of FN educational policy and also that of government and society in general.

The social theory base they use includes the three dimensions of pluralism, cultural/structural, and relational (p. 39). The authors are quick to highlight that, until recently, pluralism was seen in two dimensions; the first is cultural and the second is structural (p. 39). Cultural pluralism, the authors note, signifies cultural diversity within a particular geographical area. Structural pluralism, however, “designates different political institutions coupled potentially with different legal frameworks or even legal statutes for identifiable groups within a nation-state” (p. 39). Both cultural and structural pluralism differ, but offer alternatives that are useful in discussions of educational paradigms and FN governance.

Paquette and Fallon make note of the connections between the sociocultural and educational aspects, particularly “the dilemma of reconciling liberal democratic principles with Canada’s Aboriginal peoples’ claims to un-extinguished inherent rights to sovereignty and self-determination” (p. 41). It is the liberal democratic conundrum that brings attention to relational pluralism, which these authors argue is the belief that what counts is “not cultural difference per se but the sorts of relations that establish identity and more pertinently who actually wields power in defining those relations” (p. 45). They add that although individuals form “groups” of communities and rights, it is the collective group itself that does not “trump” individual rights, thus making way for individual freedom and the opportunity for “self-renewal, adaption and
The schematic and paradigms offer an articulation of FN governance within the context of colonial structures, which notably FN willingly engages with, an effort to become self-governing.

Further, Paquette and Fallon advocate for an inventive paradigm describing it as “the principles, values and beliefs of the symbiosynergetic sociocultural paradigm,” where the “general function” is to develop the capacity for a new social institution or new democratic societies (p. 33). This approach, the authors suggest, provides the opportunity to FN to “invent new democratic societies” based on mutual understandings of self-government. In this respect, this approach can be seen as contributing to the “symbiosynergy of heterogeneity and to the universal recognition of the ‘complementarity of differences’ within fundamental and vital union of persons with each other and with the entire universe” (p. 34). Admittedly the authors note the difficulties liberal societies encounter in attempting to provide space for diversity (p. 43).

Recognizing the difficulties in such a schematic, the authors remain hopeful, thus bringing our attention to relational pluralism or the idea of respecting human subjectivity and the rights of individuals within a group (p. 46). Paquette and Fallon contend that in order to “avoid injustices, inequalities, conflicts of interest,” FN self-governance must relegate its laws and policies within the context of the state sharing “a framework of principles and rules, ethical as well as legal, to which they can appeal in cases of a conflict” (p. 49). The role of relational pluralism in FN education policy is to bring together a new democratic society where individuals or human (and groups) rights are respected and where FN self-governance can be realized.

The last layer of the conceptual framework of FN education policy is political rights theory. Paquette and Fallon include relational liberal social theory, which seeks to “balance the rights of individual and Aboriginal rights based on deep mutual understanding, respect,
friendship, honour, and ongoing joint renewal of relationships” while drawing on Kymlickan minority rights liberalism (p. 53). It is with this in mind that the authors suggest that individuals should decide, “What is best for the good life and to be free to act on these choices” while having the opportunity to access culture (p. 59). In this respect, the authors encourage a form of individualism, which respects Aboriginal rights while attempting to renew relationships between Canadians and the State. Given the legal and political parameters that FN must work within it should come as no surprise that Indigenous peoples are left with no other choice than the federal and provincial policy frameworks for education. If FN’s want to move forward in self-government agreements, they must continue to engage the dominant society and culture in a “dialogical process” (Turner, 2006, p. 108), in “meaningful evolutionary, developmental relationship with settler governments and the people they represent” (p. 61). Further, the authors add that if Indigenous peoples want change, they must engage in the state’s political and legal frameworks in “effective ways” (p. 61). They argue for legal and political relationships founded on respect and mutual understandings lending to FN self-governance and educational policies while building a responsive FN intellectual community.

Paquette and Fallon highlight that the “university remains a hostile environment for most Aboriginal students,” making it difficult to build such a community, which is desperately needed (p. 62). They suggest that Indigenous intellectuals will need to critically write and discuss the legal and political implications of FN self-government in ways that move beyond the normative state definitions. The authors continue to draw on Turner suggesting that Indigenous intellects “must engage colonialism in its physical and intellectual contexts and in the process overcome the colonial mindset in both indigenous and non-indigenous communities” (p. 63). Paquette and Fallon acknowledge that although “the classic individualist liberal theory” may be “insufficient,”
it does, however, provide “a starting point in terms of political reasoning situated within the liberal approach to justice” (p. 65). In this way, engaging in colonialism thus serves to advance Indigenous self-governance while offering a liberalist framework that addresses the injustices faced by Indigenous peoples.

The authors advocate for self-governance agreements, but perhaps within the context of a “case by case” basis offering opportunity of a renewed relationship amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples (p. 65). Paquette and Fallon contend that the foundation for renewal of relationships must be based on mutual respect that acknowledges the “power imbalance” between FN and the state (p. 66). Noted are additional values, such as friendship, mutual understanding and more importantly, a commitment to the renewal of relationships that respect the past. The authors contend that FN cannot be indifferent to results and outcomes, particularly in relation to “the ‘bottom line’ and accountability in education, as in any public policy arena” (p. 69). Therefore, as FN move towards modern day self-government agreements, they too will have to be prepared to engage in colonial government, policy and public opinions driven by the bottom line, outcomes and results.

Another perspective on Indigenous self-determination comes from Blair Stonechild (2006) in his book entitled The New Buffalo: The Struggle of Aboriginal Post Secondary Education in Canada. Stonechild echoes similar sentiments and concerns to Paquette and Fallon regarding Indigenous self-determination and governance, specifically within the context of post-secondary education and policy. Stonechild suggests that education for FN has become a survival mechanism noting that although education is assimilative in nature, it is also “an instrument of empowerment” (p. 2), therefore FN should have opportunities to establish and control First Nation universities. As such, post-secondary education for FN can be seen as
contributing to Indigenous self-government and self-determination. Stonechild argues that FN governance, in areas related to education and policy, is the jurisdiction of FN while noting that these jurisdictional lines between governments remain blurry (p. 3) and problematic. Because FN education is a federal responsibility, he notes the provinces have been slow to act on FN post-secondary policy leaving it to the institutions to develop FN policies (p. 3) excluding FN at their expense.

He argues for the need to address ongoing concerns regarding FN education, student success and policies while turning to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Report (RCAP) to validate his points. From RCAP Stonechild highlights the assimilative nature of PSE where Indigenous students are still expected to fit in. Unfortunately, as RCAP notes, Indigenous students continue to be confronted by racism causing the student to feel isolated in this hostile environment. Although Stonechild’s emphasis is on FN controlled higher educational institutions, he provides additional insights into the barriers (funding) FN students face while attending post-secondary. FN’s assert the right to control education, but continue to come up against federal and provincial policies that offer little by way of control. The next section closely examines Indigenous education and policy in an effort to unpack the obstacles to Indigenous people face with respect to control over education.

3.2 Indigenous Education and Policy

The Assembly of First Nations or AFN, formerly known as the National Indian Brotherhood, is a national First Nations (FN) political organization advocating for over 900,000 First Nations\textsuperscript{16} in Canada. AFN’s mandate is to “facilitate and coordinate national and regional

\textsuperscript{16} Status Indians as identified under the Indian Act.
discussions and dialogue, advocacy efforts and campaigns, legal and policy analysis, communicating with governments, including facilitating relationship building between First Nations and the Crown as well as public and private sectors and general public (AFN Annual Report 2013, p. 75). This relationship-building is done under the auspice of the “inherent rights and title, Treaty rights and First Nation Control of First Nations Education” (p. 2). From a treaty perspective, First Nations assert not only the right to self-determination, but to self-government where education is included, as implied in the numbered and signed treaties (Stonechild, 2006, p. 138). Stonechild carefully maps outs early policy regarding FN education noting there are disagreements between Treaty FN and the federal government “over whether higher education is a treaty and Aboriginal right obtained in return for the sharing of lands” (p. 1). This long-term disagreement continues to plague Indigenous rights to self-determination, governance and Indigenous control over Indigenous education today.

Battiste (2013) adds, “Aboriginal and treaty rights are unique to First Nations, made distinctive by signed treaties or specific agreements between Inuit, First Nations or Metis, with the federal government of Canada, and affirmed in the Constitution of Canada” (p. 24). Before and after the 1984 amendment to the Constitution, Indigenous peoples continue to pursue education as an inherent right founded on self-determination, governance, treaties and/or modern day agreements. Battiste emphasizes, “First Nations education is both an Aboriginal and a treaty right and affirmed and recognized in the new constitution order of Canada” (p. 24). Based on this premise, Battiste offers a model inclusive of three important points: 1) FN’s to retain the right to engage in modern treaties, as an Aboriginal right”; 2) the right of treaty FN to choose an appropriate education system for their children “as a prerogative and as an obligation” (p. 24);
and 3) the implementation of an “appropriate education” for Treaty First Nations, as other treaties allow within federal discretion” (p. 24).

Battiste’s model is carefully thought out, offering a practical approach while serving to demonstrate the active role Indigenous peoples play in self-determination through the assertion of Aboriginal and treaty rights, particular to education. From this collective perspective arises the history of Indigenous peoples asserting rights to self-determination, particularly in areas related to land, resources and education. This history dates back to experiences with federally imposed policies like the IRS, an assimilative policy that sought the removal of Indigenous children from families and communities while simultaneously destroying FN cultures and languages.

The AFN’s Annual Report 2013, includes a chapter entitled “Achieving Change for Families and Children: Education, Jurisdiction and Governance”, which emphasizes education and policy as a priority for FN’s. In advancing this priority, AFN has set out a broad policy reflecting “Aboriginal and Treaty rights, responsibilities, and an Indigenous world view of lifelong learning”. 17 This commitment to FN children and education through the acknowledgement of Aboriginal and treaty rights represents the visions of Indigenous self-determination, self-governance and jurisdiction.

The AFN has recently released an education policy document entitled First Nations Control of First Nation Education18 (FNCFNE), which describes a framework to achieve success in First Nation education (August 7, 2014). The document also provides an overview of FN education since 1972. As the AFN moves forward in education, an emphasis is placed on the importance of Crown-First Nations relationships; this is founded on the “recognition and

implementation of inherent treaty rights” through “meaningful dialogue” that supports First Nations education outcomes (p. 1). A core value of the framework lies in the belief that education will enhance the lives of FN preparing them to participate “in our own social, economic, political and education advancement” (p. 1). In this regard, Indigenous peoples can advance a form of self-determination, which may bring benefits to the collective. The framework concludes: “First Nations advance the centrality of our jurisdiction and responsibility to shape our children as First Nation citizens through education based on our history, culture, values, spirituality, language and traditional knowledge” (p. 1).

There are five key elements in the framework to achieve success in First Nations Education: 1) jurisdiction, 2) funding, 3) language/culture, 4) reciprocal accountability/transparency, and 5) meaningful dialogue. In a statement released on September 2, 2014, Ghislain Picard, who at the time was the regional AFN Chief for Quebec and Labrador. He called for Canadians to join FN “in committing to action on education for First Nations children based on the principles of First Nation control of First Nations education”. The release further noted the 40 FN communities left without schools, suggesting that these outstanding issues impact FN students’ abilities to succeed and graduate. The opposition to the First Nations Education Act reflects the federal government’s need to maintain control over FN education (p. 1). Picard has since sent the Prime Minister a letter requesting a meeting to “reinvigorate” the discussions of FNCFNE. In this respect, FN asserts their rights to govern themselves, particularly in relation to self-determination.

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Unfortunately, these types of engagements have led to little change within FN governance, education and policy. As such, FN seeks to engage with the State to reinforce Indigenous and treaty rights and/or negotiated agreements. The AFN represents “status Indians”, therefore educational policies are geared towards FN living on reserve serving K-12. Inclusive of control over FN education is AFN’s commitment to existing and future agreements with government(s), particularly as opportunities arise to advance FN education through implementation of negotiated agreements. First Nations continue to express concerns regarding the lack of educational funding; reasserting FN education is a fiduciary obligation of the state.

The AFN has argued that FN education is underfunded and must include stable funding, while being responsive and predictable (p. 2), if FN students are expected to succeed and go onto higher education. Bureaucratic processes and funding are the two biggest barriers facing FNCFNE, along with the challenge to address the assimilative educational policies imposed by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (p. 2). The AFN’s position is that this is not acceptable in terms of self-determination and governance. AFN advocates for the inclusion of language and culture, which is an integral aspect of FN education in terms of supporting FN student growth and success. The AFN framework calls for reciprocal accountability and transparency that “develops mechanisms to oversee, evaluate and for reciprocal accountability and ensure there must not be unilateral federal oversight and authority” (p. 3). Simply put, FN education “must be controlled and supported by First Nations” (p. 3) emphasizing the need for reciprocal accountability and transparency on the part of the federal government.

AFN encourages meaningful dialogue amongst governments, particularly the federal government, and emphasizes the need for “good faith” negotiations while building respectful
relationships. The AFN raises concern with respect to the current direction of post-secondary education policy, which is evaluated against government priorities and the labour market. The primary concern that AFN highlights centers on the Indian Studies Support Program or ISSP funds, which essentially supports the delivery of accredited post-secondary programs for First Nations. The AFN notes the opportunities for higher learner and capacity building is a priority; however, and more importantly, the process has been removed from FN control raising major concerns amongst FN’s. Forging ahead in educational policies, the AFN continues to participate in the “multi-year project led by the Canadian Career Development Foundation on the State of Essential Skills Practice among First Nations, Inuit and Métis” (p. 4). A literature review and inventory of essential skill programs for FN was conducted with considerations given to a “community of practice” (p. 4). As such, AFN continues to find ways to support not only FN K-12 education on reserve, but growing interests in post-secondary initiatives as well. At the national level, AFN’s current policy direction reflects the desires of many FN to be at the policy table with the federal government.

3.2.1 Provincial Negotiations

First Nations in provinces such as BC, continue to assert rights to education forging ahead with FN educational policy initiatives that support student success. In British Columbia (BC) the First Nation Education Steering Committee or FNESC, is the “independent society led by a strong and diverse board of about 100 First Nations community representatives. FNESC is committed to improving education for all First Nations students in BC.”\(^\text{20}\) FNESC was first established in 1992 with the commitment of communicating the educational aspirations of FN in

\(^\text{20}\) http://www.fnesc.ca/who-we-are
BC. FNESC provides up-to-date information on resources and best practices that support FN learners. FNESC also offers workshops, conferences and input into the First Nations Education Act. The Ministry of Advanced Education's Aboriginal Policy Framework along with the recent changes to federal post-secondary programs, such as the ISSP and the Post-Secondary Student Support Program/University College Entrance Preparation Program (PSSSP/UCEP), are administered by FNESC. Although much of FNESC resources are dedicated to K-12, there is a post-secondary department and a sub-committee, which addresses FN post-secondary policies and concerns. The role of the committee is to participate in and contribute to discussions about FN post-secondary education while identifying areas that require attention. FNESC advocates for post-secondary initiatives and services while seeking community input to identify and prioritize post-secondary concerns in order to develop a response to federal and provincial post-secondary matters.

In order to best serve FN communities, FNESC offers a post-secondary support resource hotline that allows FN education coordinators to call and ask specific questions in relations to FN and post-secondary. The resource line can help determine eligibility of funding or simply assist in the completion of post-secondary forms. FNESC receives core funding from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) through a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This MOU commits to working together to advance educational outcomes of Aboriginal learners in post-secondary. Members of the MOU include First Nations (i.e., AFN, First Nations Summit of BC), federal (i.e., AANDC, Service Canada) and provincial (i.e., BC Colleges, Ministry of Education) government agencies.

The BC First Nations organization set up to deal specially with Indigenous post-secondary education is the Indigenous Adult Higher Learning Association (IAHHLA) which
supports Indigenous adult learners and post-secondary institutes. IAHLA also conducts in depth research while offering professional development to those employed in Indigenous post-secondary education and provides networking opportunities. The IAHLA website states that they are “committed to building strategic partnerships to enhance the quality of education available for Aboriginal adult and post-secondary learners.” IAHLA supports post-secondary institutions that “leverage Indigenous language, culture and knowledge to create adaptable, competent, skilled citizens who are able to contribute to local, provincial, and national advancement (www.iahla.ca). Unfortunately. IAHLA has had their funding cut back drastically, impacting Indigenous adult education.

A primary function of IAHLA is to solicit funds to undertake research and host conferences. In an effort to work together IAHLA endeavors to highlight post-secondary education approaches to community-based and culturally relevant learning with the desire of becoming a third sector of adult and post-secondary education. Further IAHLA is committed to supporting Indigenous language and cultural revitalization while coordinating courses and programs that aid Indigenous adult learning and higher education. IAHLA is keen to share its research findings and success stories in an effort to support Indigenous students while lobbying for sustainable and core funding for Indigenous institutions and/or organizations. These collective or political education efforts represent a number of FN aspirations, particularly in relation to K-12 with growing support for post-secondary. The approaches of AFN, FNSEC and IAHLA with respect to Indigenous education and policy are predominately focused on rights, jurisdiction, and control and funding. However, these perspectives and frameworks remain fundamentally colonial, negating principles of Indigenous self-determination (pain) because Indigenous peoples continue to be positioned as the problem.
3.3 yaʔakmis (love and pain)

What are the possibilities and limitations or more specifically the yaʔakmis within the context of Indigenous self-determination and the integration of Indigenous ways of knowing and being? Although the principle Indigenous self-determination varies from one nation to the next, there are common values and beliefs about relationships to one another, the land, animals or everything that is connected and one. Individually, people like myself attend post-secondary to learn about colonialism in ways that contribute to the collective well-being and self-determination of our nation, while encountering yaʔakmis. In this way, Indigenous peoples engage in self-determination, particularly FCT that are passed down from one generation to the next, which aids to our survival as a distinct people. This also occurs within the context of colonialism.

The possibilities of integrating IWKB within post-secondary initiatives within the current federal, provincial and FN educational framework are actually limiting due to jurisdiction and funding. This is not to say that the possibilities of integrating Indigenous initiatives cannot occur; it is to say that federal and Indigenous programs and funding are targeted to FN K-12 students living on reserve. Given education is a priority for Indigenous peoples the possibilities lie in the assertion of self-determination (love), which will actualize FN jurisdiction over educational policies for FN children and adult learners. Although I do not necessarily agree with Paquette and Fallon’s (2010) schematic or analysis, it a perspective worth considering, particularly because it provide insights into ways in which FN and government can work together to advance forms of Indigenous governance. The limiting aspect of indigenizing educational initiatives within these frameworks arises in the nature and scope of FN educational policy and priorities.
In search of a practical approach to Indigenous self-determination and integrating IWKB within education, I turn my attention to fellow EdD graduate Todd Orminston of the Northern Tutchone/Tlingit nation. Orminston’s dissertation (2012) *YAN GAA DUUNEKK: An Examination of Indigenous Transformational Leadership Pedagogies in BC Higher Education* and Camosun College’s *Indigenization Plan 2013-2014* examine Indigenous perspectives of leadership within education focusing on how mentorship can foster Indigenous student success in PSE. Orminston is specific in his focus and includes a number of interviews with individuals, faculty, students and elders at the University of Victoria (UVic). Orminston is interested in challenging the status quo while attempting to change the “academic landscape,” to respond more effectively to the needs of Indigenous students (p. 11). Much like Paquette and Fallon (2010), Orminston examines past Indigenous educational policies, such as the 1989 Green Report.

Orminston highlights the Report’s recommendations to improve conditions for Indigenous students by instituting support services, such as establishing an Indigenous Advisory Committee, and employing Indigenous Coordinators while creating policies that enable access to post-secondary and initiated Indigenous programs. What the Report fails to mention is that the current policy framework allows institutions to re-allocate Indigenous-targeted funding to fit their goals as an institution. Further, Orminston argues that educational institutions discredit Indigenous knowledge(s) and pedagogies while devaluing cultural teachings, which disempowers Indigenous peoples. Adding that although there has been significant change in

21 In 1989, the BC provincial government created a Provincial Advisory Committee on Post-Secondary Education for Native Learners. Their findings, entitled *Report of the Provincial Advisory on Post-Secondary Education for Native Learners*, came to be known as “the Green Report”.

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Indigenous education and policy, Indigenous peoples must continue to contend with ongoing and prevailing colonial policies, practices and processes (p. 31) within post-secondary.

Orminston contends that if these concerns go unaddressed, any vision of Indigenous enrolment and retention will not be achieved, as more must be done to connect academics with Indigenous peoples and communities in an effort to advance effective Indigenous education policy. Further, he adds Indigenous academics must work diligently to improve these conditions, recognizing that they do it with fewer people and less funding. Orminston suggests that the challenge for Indigenous academic leaders is to engage in Western educational frameworks while resisting them at the same time. Spaces must be created for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge systems to co-exist in PSE; something he believes will benefit not only Indigenous students, but also all students (p. 115). Having said that, Orminston highlights the challenges of creating spaces where racism is discussed as a predominant aspect of Indigenous students’ experiences. He adds that although racism is a difficult topic with which to engage, if we are to move beyond the status quo, it must be a part of the larger institutional policy discussions.

Like Orminston, I have taught an undergraduate level-Indigenous Studies course at Camosun College where I have been influenced by Camosun’s Indigenization Plan. Camosun’s definition of Indigenization “is the process by which Indigenous ways of knowing, being, doing, and relating are incorporated into the educational, organizational, cultural, and social structures of Camosun College” (p. 7). In the last three years Camosun received $400,000 per year to implement the Indigenization Plan where employees and students along with First Nations are

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encouraged to participate in the actualization of the Plan. Funding for the Plan is short term and provided by the Ministry of Advanced Education’s Aboriginal Service Plan (ASP); Camosun is expected meet to the Ministry goals within the context of the Plan. The three goals are:

- to increase access, retention, completion and transition opportunities for Aboriginal learners
- increase the receptivity and relevance of post-secondary institutions and programs for Aboriginal learners
- strengthen partnerships and collaboration in Aboriginal post secondary education.

There are four important aspects of the Plan: 1) curriculum development and delivery; 2) services for Indigenous students; 3) policy and strategic planning; and 4) employee education. Each aspect is equally important, having distinct objectives that support the Plan. The goal for curriculum development and delivery is “to ensure that Aboriginal students see themselves reflected in course materials and to integrate Indigenous ways of teaching and learning into classroom processes” (p. 8). Camosun’s objective is to “work with curriculum writers to create indigenized composition course” (p. 8). In terms of Service for Students, the goal is “to create a learning and service environment where Aboriginal students feel a sense of welcome and belonging” (p. 8). Often Indigenous students feel isolated living away from home; however, with the Elders Voices program, which is incredibly successful; Camosun has been able to support students in ways that create a sense of belonging. The Policy and Strategic Planning aspect is critical, particularly because it helps “ensure that college policy and planning teams establish a process for consultation with Elders, leaders, and knowledge keepers from Aboriginal communities, Nations and organizations to ensure an Indigenous perspective is incorporated into these important areas” (p. 8). Camosun has developed an Interculturalization Development
Committee “to formulate a college-wide strategy and framework of interculturalization that includes Indigenization, internationalization and an exploration of Canadian culture” (p. 9).

The last corner post addresses employee education where the objective is “to provide opportunities for employee education and training from an Indigenous worldview (TELŦIN TŦE W ILNEW) that will enhance services and education for all students” (p. 9). This is voluntary, but as Camosun has stated, in order “to accomplish this goal we must learn together, from one another” (p. 3). An evaluative aspect is highlighted in the strengths and challenges associated with Indigenizing Camosun. Camosun notes that, in part, the strength of the Plan is the strong internal support, particularly given the 1.2 million dollar investment Camosun made to Indigenization prior to ASP as well as the building of relationships with local FN. One of the challenges of indigenizing is the “lack of resources to support on-going presence and/or delivery of some critical ASP initiatives” (p. 18). In addition, Camosun faces challenges with respect to capacity while noting the biggest differences are in the needs and interests of the parties involved (FN, Camosun and the Ministry).

These two practical examples of integrating IWKB within post-secondary initiatives highlight the possibilities and limitations. The possibilities, as reflected in Orminston’s dissertation, lie in pushing for a form of epistemological pluralism where knowledge(s) can coexist side by side. While Orminston recognizes the Green Report’s recommendations as ways to improve Indigenous post-secondary programs and services, which ultimately lend to Indigenous student success, his model is limiting because the scope is only about meeting the needs of Indigenous students, as opposed to changing the landscape to meet the needs of all students. Orminston’s model also places the burden on Indigenous faculty, staff and students to
confront colonial policies and practices while attempting to integrate IWKB within PSE. This is an unfair burden given the hostile environment in which Indigenous students must contend daily.

Camosun College’s ASP also includes a number of possibilities supporting Indigenous self-determination and Indigenous initiative in PSE. It is encouraging to see the Indigenization Plan, which includes the goals, objectives and targets for meeting the Ministry of Advanced Education’s mandate. The Plan encourages faculty, staff and students to learn about Indigenous peoples through various non-threatening approaches (i.e., voluntary, curriculum development, staff education) to Indigenous initiatives. Camosun’s effort to create welcoming spaces— involving community, elders, advisors and staff--illustrates its commitment to relationship building. One might ask, however, if non-Indigenous peoples/students are even aware that Indigenous peoples/students do not feel comfortable or welcomed in post-secondary spaces. This Plan is limited, much like the perspectives of Indigenous self-determination when government is providing the funding to meet specific Ministry targets; FN and Camosun’s needs are rendered secondary.

As Paquette and Fallon (2010) argue, FN willingly participate and engages in self-government agreements. I argue that these frameworks are not viable in terms of furthering the kind of Indigenous self-determination and governance described by Umeek. Stating the obvious, Indigenous peoples and others involved in integrating Indigenous initiatives in PSE must do so within the context of colonialism. Therefore, it seems that Indigenous initiatives are actually dependent upon colonial structures (i.e., colleges, government) for supporting Indigenous student success while educating the larger college community.

That being said, the possibilities of indigenizing educational initiatives in PSE are encouraging, particularly as more institutions begin engaging with processes of Indigenization.
The challenge becomes to find ways to honour principles of Indigenous self-determination, which include confronting history and colonialism from an Indigenous perspective. As Orminston (2012) and Paquette and Fallon (2010) note, Indigenous students must contend regularly with hostile and racist post-secondary learning environments. The primary focus of Indigenous initiatives is on Indigenous peoples, programs and services, with little attention paid our non-Indigenous counterpart. Finally, it is limiting because the initiatives for integrating Indigenous ways of knowing and being completely negate principles of NCN ʔuuʔaqʷaačii.

Recognizing the various possibilities and limitations of integration of Indigenous initiatives within PSE, as an educational practitioner I am left wondering how to go forward without further entrenching colonialism. As I move forward I return to the last part of my question “what needs to change in order for this principle to be realized in these initiatives?” A question not easily answered, particularly when examining what needs to change in relation to the perpetuation of colonialism. Thus far, Indigenous initiatives are dependent on the willingness of FN to engage with colonial forms of governance along with efforts of post-secondary institutions and government handouts. However, in order for this principle to be realized in these initiatives, educational practitioners need to go beyond the current colonial frameworks to confront the ugly history of Canada in an attempt to decolonize.

Integrating Indigenous ways of knowing and being within educational initiatives requires time, patience, commitment, and a vision for a brighter, better future for all generations to come. Indigenous initiatives rely upon governments’ and institutions’ buy-in and cooperation; however, perhaps we need to move from that approach to embrace personal and/or professional responsibilities that contribute to the long-term well-being of all peoples (students, faculty, staff, etc.). In part, I want to better understand the processes of integrating Indigenous initiatives and
how PSE currently reflect such processes within their respective policies and practices. Is indigenization everything it's chalked up to be? What am I missing? What does integrating mean if we are to move beyond the colonial parameters as set forth here?

Through further examination of decolonizing practices (Battiste, 2013; Cote-Meek, 2013; Regan 2010) and learning how to indigenize my own practice, the hope is to contribute to Indigenous self-determination and learning environments whereby Indigenous experiences of hostility and racism are reduced, if not eliminated. With this discussion and analysis of policies and reports, their possibilities and limitations, I now turn to my own personal story with the hope this can serve as a way to directly address colonization and racism. In the next few chapters, I employ an autobiographical methodology that allows me to share personal and family stories of genealogy, understanding of ʔuuʔuqʷaačii and what it takes to walk in 2 worlds, as quuʔas-sa.
Chapter 4: Who am I?

“Who are you? Where you come from, your family tree, in this you knew the person....”
Roy Haiyupis, 1995, p. 21

In the NCN book The Saying of Our First People (1995), Ahousaht and family elder Roy Haiyupis describes a NCN pedagogical approach to genealogy. Although a NCN teaching, the articulation of who I am, is not as straightforward as one might think. Only in my forties have I been able to answer the question of ‘who I am’ with some certainty. With deep family roots in ?iḥatisath, I understand the importance and complexities of identity, ‘who I am,” particularly within the context of family cultural teachings (FCT). Umeek (2004) emphasizes the strength found in “the practice and observance of teaching” (p. 28). These teachings are an integral aspect of our lives and often dictate discipline that ensure FCT are consciously adhered to, both in private and public settings.

These NCN pedagogies emphasize relational accountability, provide context and build relationship(s), particularly between the reader and author (Kovach 2009; Wilson, 2008). Shawn Wilson (2008) suggests by starting from “scratch,” we can begin to identify who we are through the applied use of “cross cultural communication” in an effort to create “common ground” (p 6). Senator Murray Sinclair, a Commissioner for Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) also encourages Canadians to engage and ask the question “who am I?” As he speaks to a crowd of young students, he states that we [Canadians] should all know our ancestry and where we come from, an opportunity lost to Aboriginal children in residential schools. Senator Murray

23 Family cultural teachings’ is a phrase coined by uncle Tim during my time as a grad student (2004); this phrase became an integral aspect of my Master of Arts thesis. Family cultural teachings, from this perspective, are teachings enacted by specific families that make up the Nuu-chah-nulth (Smith, 2007).
24 Murray Sinclair: Education is Key to Reconciliation. Rabble, June 9, 2016.
Sinclair is asking us to rethink what we know about ourselves as Canadians. Who I am and how I understand myself within the context of the Canadian state is a starting point in terms of developing a relationship with you the reader. The question of who I am is a life-long journey filled with yaʔakmis, purpose, and good intentions of becoming an ancestor; this is who I am right now.

This chapter includes three sections that lend to answering the question of who I am: 1) genealogy, 2) a NCN ?uuʔuuqʷaačii (self-independence/determination), and 3) walking in two worlds. The sections draw on personal stories, family knowledge, and literature in an effort to articulate aspects of who I am. Genealogy is an introduction to who I am from an ethical perspectives; this is cultural accountability to family involved in this work. The second section discusses NCN principles of ?uuʔuuqʷaačii; they include and are not limited to, previous and future definitions and sections of this dissertation. The last section, walking in two worlds, draws on my lived experiences, specifically as an Indigenous woman within post-secondary education. Weaved together, these particular sections offer insights into who I am, as quuʔas-sa (us as NCN, human)

4.1 Genealogy

*If it is true, as this origin story suggests, that family and community are a natural state of existence, it is also true that one purpose of life is to live in family and community,*

(Atleo, 2004, p. 28)

In his book *Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview* respected Nuu-chah-nulth hereditary chief and scholar Umeek, or Richard Atleo (2004), captures the very essence of who we are as NCN. Profound emphasis is placed on love, respect and relationships, particularly within the context of hišukʔišcawak or everything that is one (p 38). Rooted in these sentiments grows a
deep affinity for family, extended family, and loved ones. Umeek stresses recognition and acknowledgement of “blood relatives” particularly “because your relationship to them is sacred and utterly valuable” (p. 38). Who I am, as an unfolding story, recognizes the importance of family and the time it takes to articulate such genealogy. As such, it is out of great love and respect for family relationships and hišukʔišcawak that I embark upon this journey. My muułmuume (roots) are deep within ʔiiḥatisatḥ, particularly činixint belonging to tiławis tacumł (House of Grey Whales).

ʔiiḥatisatḥ means the “big log coming down the river,” and is geographically located in the northern part of Nuu-chah-nulth territories near the Village of Zeballos, British Columbia. maḥtišas or better known as Queen’s Cove is a reserve located within činixint. maḥtišas means, “small village with houses,” a place where I spent a great deal of time growing up, as a child (a photo of maḥtišas is included below).

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Permission granted by the ʔiiḥatisatḥ administration on December 1, 2016. Retrieved December 2, 2016
http://www.ehattlesaht.com/photos.html
ʔiḥ̓atsat̓ is located on the northern west coast of what is now known as Vancouver Island. ʔiḥ̓atsat̓ is one of 16 First Nations that make up the Nuu-chah-nulth. ʔiḥ̓atsat̓ ̓ confederacy comprised of 20 villages that covers 66,000 hectares of territorial rights and responsibilities. The *First Voices* website[^26], a FN’s language website, contains aspects of ʔiḥ̓atsat̓ language and also includes a map which helps identify ʔiḥ̓atsat̓ ̓ geographical location. What makes me Nuu-chah-nulth from ʔiḥ̓atsat̓? The answer is quite simple. I am ʔiḥ̓atsat̓ ̓ because my mother, Norma was ʔiḥ̓atsat̓ (see photo below of me and my mother when I was born), as was her mother Josephine George (nee Smith); her parents were Joseph and Esther Smith. Who I am has not always been an easy question for me to answer I am able to go back seven generations, please see matrilineal family tree in the Appendices.

![Image](image.jpg)

**Figure 2: Late mother Norma and me**

Born in WSÁNEĆ, dad lived his life on the land and sea until the day he passed away. Mom was born in NCN territory, but lived her adult life in WSÁNEĆ. Together they helped raise me; they were survivors of residential and day schools, but did not live long enough to share their stories. Admittedly, it was not always this easy to recite my family lineage, as cultural genocide and colonialism have had the upper hand in interrupting the transmission of FCT.

Fortunately, family history and cultural teachings remain intact with the responsibility to bring it forward in a good way. My identity, as an Indigenous woman, has been formed and informed by FCT of the NCN, specifically ?iiḥatisatḥ. Having said that, I also acknowledge the wonderful influences of the WSÁNEĆ teachings. I grew up in Tsawout with my parents and sister. My dad or step dad (he was the man who raised me) and other family members ensured I had a good grounding in the cultural teachings of the WSÁNEĆ. The Department of Indigenous Development and Northern Affairs identifies me as a member of the ‘ʔiiḥatisatḥ (ʔiiḥatisatḥ) Indian Band.’ I am heavily influenced by maternal FCT.

Figure 3: Joseph Smith with his mother Cecelia
This is not to say that WSÁNEĆ teachings are irrelevant, particularly in relationship to my lineage and this dissertation, but to respectfully acknowledge the connections. How I come to know and understand myself is informed and influenced by my immediate and extended maternal family. This process of becoming a human being begins with a name, which is generally given by an immediate family member who has learned family names. A child will receive a name after the first year of life and changes as the child turns into an adolescent. Names are passed down from one generation to the next and it is the family’s responsibility to provide names to family members, particularly at a naming ceremony. A naming ceremony would be held after a child’s first birthday, and continues throughout their life, meaning names will change with life circumstances. Names change over the course of time and in relation to significant change (i.e., marriage). Names were passed down starting with children’s names, before the change associated with puberty, coming of age or a rite of passage ceremony.
I feel fortunate to have been given my first family name when I was a young child growing up in ?iiḥatisath. In 1973 my great grandparents held a potlatch with the primary objective to seat our head hereditary chief or taayii ḥawīł with the secondary objective of naming the children and other family members as well. The child’s name I received at the time was hra-wee-yaa-cloom or “to greet people with joy.” Later, at a cleansing ceremony (2003) I was given the name taayisumqa by uncle Earl (grandma Joe’s younger brother). The name belonged to my great, great grandmother Cecelia and loosely translates to “anchored in spirituality, principles and beliefs.”

The second NCN name I have been given is sii-yaa-ilth-supt; I received this name from uncle Tim Paul of hišqʷiʔatḥ (my mother’s younger brother) in 2012; it means, “to have a vision for the people guided by the ancestor.” Inherently implied, these names carry with them a role and responsibility that ensures the transmission of family cultural teachings from one generation to the next. One of the biggest teachings is the importance of family and remembrance, which is why I have chosen to include images or photos of who I am in relation to my family and where I come from. My hope is to create common ground that gives you, the reader, a sense of who I am as ?iiḥatisath, an Indigenous woman, while building a respectful and genuine relationship with you.

4.2 Nuu-chah-nulth ?uuʔuuqʷaačii (Self-independence/determination)

*The interdependence and interrelationships of the natural world reflect the interdependence and interrelationships of all life forms* (Atleo, 2004, p. 15)

Foundational to a NCN worldview are linkages between the natural world, all life forms, and their interdependence and interrelationships. Umeek describes the unity of the physical and spiritual noting that the NCN did not differentiate between the physical and spiritual. He adds,
“unlike the contemporary division between the two, the NCN saw the physical world as a manifestation of the spiritual world” (p. 10). Due to colonialism and cultural genocide, our worldview, as NCN, has been interrupted, but never brought to extinction. Over the years and with the help of loved ones and PSE, I have been able to piece together an understanding of a NCN worldview and ʔuuʔuuqʷaačii. I specifically draw on aspects of my 2007 Master’s community governance project (herein “project”), entitled *Ma-il-pa-tu (How We Revere the Family): Family Cultural Teachings, Leadership and the Meaning of Haa-wilth (hereditary chief)* and Umeek’s (2004) *Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview*.

My MA project examined who I am, as ʔiḥātisəth and a NCN woman, particularly through family lineage and FCT. Additionally, Umeek’s work and the NCN book *The Sayings of Our First Peoples* (1995) are essential to understanding a NCN self-independence/determination. *The Sayings of Our First Peoples* is a NCN book written by the NCN Tribal Council’s Community and Human Services department and NCN elders. It was written to capture NCN teachings, particularly in relation to family, especially the children. Guided by elders, the book emphasizes what it means to be quuʔas-sa or proud of who you are as NCN, to have self-respect and respect for others (p. 20). Umeek (2004) stresses the importance of respect, but in relation to love, which he states is at “the core and heart of the Nuu-chah-nulth way” (p. 15).

There are three predominate aspects that lend to understanding a NCN ʔuuʔuuqʷaačii. The first aspect looks at what it means to be quuʔas-sa (a NCN human being); the second looks at the natural world; and the third speaks to inherent responsibilities. The inclusion of a NCN ʔuuʔuuqʷaačii is for the benefit of you, the reader. Colonialism continues to exist and be the determining factor in the ongoing destruction of ʔuuʔuuqʷaačii and understandings of who we are, as quuʔas-sa.
Therefore, it is imperative to provide context to those who seek some understanding of who we are as quuʔas-sa. I want to help answer some of those questions while, generating some understanding of who we are as NCN—what ʔuuʔuqʷaadícii is. Having said that, I spent time, as a toddler, growing up in mah̓ťiʔas or Queen’s Cove, a small ʔiiḥatisat̓h village where I innately knew I was quuʔas-sa. My early years were spent living between my great grandparents, Joe and Esther Smith and my grandmother Josephine before being placed in the hands of my parents, Clyde and Norma. After I left mah̓ťiʔas, I slowly began to forget what it meant to be quuʔas-sa or ʔiiḥatisat̓h, but only for a moment. Fortunately, after I married I had in-laws, the Johnson’s of muwučat̓h and Amos’ of hišqʷiʔat̓h, who, along with my family, supported my journey to become a good human being. Although, it was not until Grandpa Moe came to live with my small family and me in 1996 through to 1999, when I became curious about who I was, my family lineage and history.

I was in my late twenties and at the time, I was unsure of who I was and felt I had some purpose to help our (ʔiiḥatisat̓h) people improve the quality of life, particularly through advancing self-determination. Grandpa Moe felt I had the aptitude to learn and bring family cultural teachings forward in way that would respect the integrity of our family cultural teachings. Grandpa Moe taught me the importance of being quuʔas-sa, which he said translates to mean “us, the real people [Nuu-Chah-Nulth].”

Grandpa Moe implied that being quuʔas-sa also meant being a good human being. How I come to understand myself as quuʔas-sa is aided by family cultural teachings, which derives from činixint, ʔiiḥatisat̓h and NCN while being influenced by ʔ̱SÁNEĆ teachings. To see one’s self within the context of family and being quuʔas-sa, is to see one’s self over the course of a lifetime (or stages). The NCN book The Sayings of Our First Peoples (1995) is critical to include
because the book itself captures the voices of my great grandfathers Joseph Smith and his brother Moses Smith. This book is instrumental in helping me articulate the NCN life stages. In the NCN book, our lives, or tiičmisukqin and life stages, or ṣiiḥsaḥáltak begins in the womb (p. 33). The child, or qaan’um (precious child) is highly valued member of the family with importance placed on their well-being while growing (p. 33). Loved ones care for the expecting mother in a way that ensures a strong and healthy start for the child; there are strict rules an expecting woman would have to follow as well.

For example, she would not be allowed to eat spicy foods (could lead to a hyper child), as Grandpa Moe reminded me when I was expecting my second child. Nearing the ninth month, the family and midwife would help the expecting mother and father by preparing for the arrival of their precious child. Once the child is born, the parents begin to help shape the child’s life by influencing their understanding of who they are, as good human being, particularly with the guidance of FCT. Throughout the child’s life, there were consistent teachings to assist in their learning(s), which were repeated throughout their young lives and into adolescence.

Grandparents play a major role in the upbringing of children, teaching children to especially be good and kind quuʔas-sa (p. 53). Children are precious, treated with great love and respect, particularly when sharing a meal together. The late Roy Haiyupis reminds us at mealtime to serve the children first, and yes before the elders; the children are that important and precious, so we treat them as such (p. 57) and then they grow into good human beings too.

There are teachings for girls and boys; girls are taught how precious they are, spoken to with love and respect. They are watched closely, and when puberty comes a potlatch is held in her honour marking her transition into womanhood; later, if she has children she will be responsible for raising them in a good way as well (p. 63). For boys, teachings are centered on
providing and protecting family and territory (p. 77). Boys too were taught to respect themselves, to be honourable, to wake up early and take a bath; to cleanse their bodies and to keep themselves clean. Grandpa Moe adds, “That’s the only way you gonna grow up to be an honourable, respected man” (p. 80). Once the young people have experienced the rite of passage, marriage generally follows and at one time parents were responsible for arranging the marriage (p. 97).

Interrelationships formed as a result of the families coming together to honour the institution of marriage; there was very little divorce or separation because people valued the importance of marriage. Thus, by becoming parents, they are perpetuating the cycle of life and as such, a responsibility is bestowed upon the parents to raise their child in a manner consistent with teaching of being quuʔas-sa. One of our biggest teachings, as NCN, is knowing who we are related to (or our genealogy) because it is our relatives who will be there to help us when we need it the most (p. 114). Discipline was important and children were raised to listen, as standards of behavior were made explicit and children were expected to live up to these standards. Once your children are grown and go on to marry, you remain strongly connected, but the roles do change once parents becomes grandparents. They are the knowledge keepers of our families and “their role in our society is to pass this knowledge on” (p. 151).

Grandpa Moe also adds, “grandparents had the biggest role in talking and advising the younger people and children” (p. 153). Often you hear grandpa Moe speak about finding our purpose in life, an important NCN value. In this respect The Sayings of Our First Peoples (1995) has captured the voices of our elders, such as grandpa Joe and his younger brother grandpa Moe, who have now long since passed. The loving elders interviewed for that book spoke our language and knew our teachings; this book is a valuable resource for those who would like to learn more
about the life stages and cultural teachings of the NCN. Our teachings as NCN vary, but our understanding of one’s self within the context of family, community and becoming a human being are similar in nature.

Being quuʔas-sa requires the embodiment of FCT over one’s lifetime, as grandpa Moe would say “we never stop learning even when we are an elder” (personal communication). How I know myself is inherently connected to my family and place, as I strive daily to embody FCT that informs who I am as NCN, as ?iʔḥatisatḥ, as Indigenous. The process to understand myself does not occur in isolation, but rather with the help of family, cultural teachings and other influencing factors (nature, education, etc.). Tainted by colonialism, the process to understand myself within the context of education has been bumpy, but certainly worthwhile. It was not until I became an undergrad (political science) at the University of Victoria (UVic) that I began to make the correlations between colonialism, politics, and education. Needing the help of family mentors, such as grandpa Moe, uncle Tim and others, I reached out and they did not let me down.

Quickly, I became immersed in our FCT; I had so many questions about who I was, as ?iʔḥatisatḥ and grandpa Moe was there to help me put the pieces together. My family knew that FCT reside within me, but maybe I had forgotten them. Although I quickly learned that FCT are there, deep inside my consciousness; the ancestors have planted the seeds of love and respect. Grandpa Moe passed away in 1999, but not before sharing his dream of one day having a publication of ?iʔḥatisatḥ governance, specifically regarding hereditary chiefs. Thus the focus of my Master’s in Indigenous Governance respected grandpa’s wish to share FCT, ma-iil-pa-tu (how we revere the family) and hereditary chief system. This project included spending much
time with my family, particularly Uncle Tim who would guide my understanding of FCT, ma-il-pa-tu and hereditary chiefs.

Uncle Tim Paul is from Homiss, a part of hišqʷiʔatḥ and a part of the NCN. He is one of my late mom’s younger brothers and my cultural mentor; he has been by my side during my Master’s, and remains so with my doctoral dissertation. As a knowledge keeper, uncle Tim’s role is important, particularly to ensure epistemological and pedagogical accuracy while lending moral and cultural support. Uncle Tim and grandpa Moe coined the phrase ma-il-pa-tu, a term used to describe how we revere family. In order to write about it, I first had to understand it, particularly, from the perspectives of Uncle Tim and grandpa Moe; then I could articulate ma-il-pa-tu for myself. Grandpa Moe passed 8 years before I started my Master’s; however, the teachings he left continue to influence the way in which I understand myself, as ?iiʔatisatḥ.

The love and respect uncle Tim has for family is reflected in this sculpture seen below, which he dedicates to grandpa Moe.

Figure 5: ma-il-pa-tu by Tim Paul, 1999
The sculpture is entitled ma-il-pa-tu or how we revere the family (cedar & stone, 1999) and was made specifically for the Royal BC Museum’s NCN exhibit “Out of the Mist” in 1999. Accompanying the exhibit was a book by Martha Black entitled *Huupukwwanum and Tupaat: Out of the Mist: Treasure of the Nuu-chah-nulth Chiefs* (1999), where she highlights Uncle Tim’s sculpture.

Uncle Tim was provided the opportunity (unedited) to share meaningful sentiments of ma-il-pa-tu (the physical sculpture), he says,

All the elements depicted here are contained in nism’a, our land. The chief’s hahuułi is in nism’a. The geese herring, salmon, whales are very special because they all come back. Their return is what we do our ?uusimch for; we ask for a bountiful harvest. These migrating species are under the control of the chief and he has the first rights to them. But all of the people share in the resources that are always in nism’a. Our year is governed by four seasonal moons. The elder sibling moon, the moon of the winter solstice which brings a new seasonal round of resource gathering and ceremonies, is shown. Below are the mountains that our people use to navigate when out at sea. A canoe is on the sea and below are the tail and the fin of the whale. The centre face is the Thunderbird that comes from Mowachaht territory. There is a killer-whale fin on one side. From behind it emerges one of the legendary people that gave us knowledge. The star above symbolizes where these people came from. The side post represents tlúuma, our domain, which is metaphorically a house – all of the related people. Everything rises up from the foundations and no one can act alone. Moses Smith, my uncle, died just as this carving was finished. We all benefit from his cultural teachings (p. 3).27

Family members, like myself and uncle Tim, spent a great deal of time listening and learning from our grandparents, nan Esther, grandpa Joe, grandpa Moe and others in māhtí̕as or Queen’s Cove, ʔii혁isat̓, Nuchahlaht, and other NCN territories; these important FCT are reflected in uncle Tim’s stunning art. This beautiful and endearing sculpture, ma-il-pa-tu,

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27 Also quoted in my Master’s in Indigenous Governance community governance project entitled: *Ma-il-pa-tu (how we revere the family): Family Cultural Teachings, Leadership and the Meaning of Haa-wilth,* (2007), University of Victoria.
imparts FCT regarding important relationships with everything that is connected and one – the creator, land, migratory species, human beings, families, the moon, sun, stars, prayers, ceremonies, ancestors, knowledge, and cultural teachings. Uncle Tim stresses the importance of acknowledging the interrelationship between creation, being quuʔas-sa, and the natural world. Just recently Uncle Tim emphasized that our understanding of who we are is informed by FCT and family history.

A NCN worldview, from my perspective, includes creation stories, which include, but are not limited to the first man and first woman, how raven brought light to the world, and so much more. However, for a more comprehensive and theoretical examination I would encourage you to read Umeek’s *Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview* (2004) where he explains the complexities and nature of a NCN worldview. How we come to understand ourselves as NCN is tied directly to nature, and as such, we acknowledge our relatives, the sun, moon, stars, sky, mountain, waters (lake, ocean, river, and stream), lands, wind, and earthquake. The sun provides light and connects us to ńaas, sometimes called the creator, while the growing *moon* helps us prepare for what we seek, such as knowledge. The *stars* are our navigational tools, while the sky connects us to our ancestor (also considered the great beyond), and the mountains provide life (water, trees, animals, plants). The ocean is connected to the moon giving us tides, but it also a time to prepare (i.e., whale hunt), while the land provides order connecting us to the mountains and waters. With rain comes wind, and together rainbows appear reminding us of the rainbow people. The last and most notable relative is the earthquake, which reminds us to be mindful and respectful of all our precious relatives; we must not become distracted by the evils of greed, hate, and so on.
Along with the four seasons (fall, winter, spring, and summer), the NCN acknowledge the four directions, north (white), east (yellow), west (black), and south (red). The winter moon is when temperature drops and snow begins to fall; the spring moon is when the greenery begins to sprout and grow. The summer moon brings the return of the mighty salmon, while the fall signifies the harvest completion and marks the beginning of the eagle feast of salmon (dog).

From the NCN first man and woman came the 16 nations of Nuu-chah-nulth: ʔiḥətisəth, Kyuquot/Cheklesaht, muwačəth/Muchalaht, Nuchatlaht, Ahousaht, hišqʷiʔatḥ, ḵaʔuqʷiʔatḥ, Toquaht, Yuu-cluth-aht, Ditidaht, Huu-ay-aht, Hupacasath, Tse-shaht, Uchucklesaht, Pacheedaht and the Makah (near Neah Bay, WA). Together with the four directions, four seasons, naas (light), the 13 moons and four seasonal moons are significant to NCN. The moons help prepare us for the arrival of our food sources, such as herring, salmonberries, geese and more. The moons also reveal changes in environment (i.e., ocean tides), weather conditions (i.e., winter storms) and other aspects that are important to preparation and planning.

The moons start in the New Year, as follows:

1. ts’umaasamlh (January moon) is time when the moon washes itself.
2. wiy’asamlh (February) moon is when a human being is only half way out.
3. ḥaayakamlh (March) moon is when the herring spawn.
4. huyaakamlh (April) moon is the time the geese fly in a flock.
5. yashakamlh (May) moon is the time of the fur-seal hunt.
6. kawashamlh (June) moon is the time when salmonberries arrive.
7. his7itkamlh (July) moon is time when huckleberries are harvested.
8. ʔiʔchaassammlh (August) moon signifies the end of the berry season.
9. ʔumakamlh (September) moon reveals the green moss in the river.
10. ch’iʔyaakamlh (October) moon is when fish is cut.
11. ʔaakwʔatuʔisamlh (November) moon signifies the end of dog salmon fishing and also when white foam appears.
12. ṭ’iʔasamlh (December) moon is when the moon sits on the surface of the water for 4 days.
13. The thirteenth moon is the eldest sibling moon who brings in a new harvest season after the arrival of the New Year.\(^\text{28}\)

A NCN worldview is very much alive in hearts and minds of those who continue to revere family, embody FCT, as quuʔas-sa and fiercely guard the sacred.

As NCN, we come to know and understand the roles (chief, speaker, knowledge keeper, fisherman, etc.) we inherit, but we also come to know and understand the responsibilities associated with our children, family, ancestors, 11 relatives, 13 moons, and more. Just as our lives evolve (life stages), so do our responsibilities, and as such, I recognize that I have a responsibility to teach my children and grandchildren; teach them who they are, where they come from and who they are related to. In the book *The Sayings of Our First People*, Wilfred Andrews (1995) adds that the more he teaches his grandchildren the more they know, but also the more success they will have in the “modern world” (p. 3). As NCN, we recognize the importance of ḥaahuupa (the act of teaching), from the elders to the children and family members in between. *The Sayings of Our First People* (1995) supports this pedagogy stating that,

Traditionally, our people developed their powers of memory systematically and passed down knowledge orally. They developed the discipline of listening in order to learn and pass on teachings. They also taught children to teach – children were made to understand that they had to listen and learn so that they could pass on the teachings to their own family. (p. 11)

As quuʔas-sa, I recognize the ancient knowledge of my ancestors and the importance of observation, listening/learning and ḥaahuupa. I hear and heed the knowledgeable words of my late great grandparents, Joseph and Esther Smith, and grandpa Joe’s younger brother Moses

\(^{28}\) Uncle Tim produced (n.d.) and provided permission.
Smith of činixint. Being quu?as-sa I have the responsibility of being a good, kind, generous, and loving human being in relation to my family and relatives, particularly the children and ancestors. Grandpa Moe reminds us that “we come from the same soil” (n.d.); therefore, we must be good relatives wherever we go and in everything we do. As NCN families, we highly value the importance of the collective interest versus the interests of the individual. We do so because we recognize that as a collective, as families and communities, we can do more good together than we could on our own and we do so within the context of family, culture and teachings.

Umeek (2004) adds that this collective strength is only possible through the practice and observance of such teachings (p. 28). As NCN, we also have a big responsibility to ensure ceremonies (prayers, spiritual bath, and potlatches) are observed regularly. As Umeek tells us, a NCN life, “is founded by creating and maintaining relationships” (p. 27) giving us our purpose in life. Umeek stresses that it is important “to create, maintain and uphold relationships” (p. 30), otherwise there will be consequences. Uncle Tim often reminds us (family) that we are one with nature and in relation to it, but most importantly, we should not ignore our relationships or FCT. There is one relative in particular, the earthquake that will periodically remind us that we have ignored our teachings. As Umeek (2004) has taught us, yaʔakmis and the unity of love and pain (p. 30), exists in a state of constant tension (good and evil), both in the physical and spiritual realms. He emphasizes that the NCN worldview, “therefore, perceives that family and community must be maintained in the context of the ever present reality of evil and the threats of its destruction force….” (Atleo, 2004, p. 27). He reminds us, as NCN, that we must always be mindful of these forces and to be aware that one does not exist without the other.

In the face of evil, we (as quu?as-sa) are taught to be good, kind and loving human beings who observe and maintain respectful relationships with everything that is connected and one.
Interconnected, these particular epistemological and pedagogical understandings inform ʔuuʔuuqʷaačii, our respective roles and responsibilities within the context of relationships. The challenge, always, is to try and convey a sense of ʔuuʔuuqʷaačii that goes beyond the typical colonial and preconceived notions of who we are as indigenous peoples. Part of my responsibility is to maintain my relationships to family, go visit and be prepared for ḥaاحتアップa; as such I spend a great deal of time traveling to visit, sit and listen to uncle Tim, my grandmothers (Josephine and Fidelia), and other family members. They remind me that what I am doing (academic graduate research) is unique to our family and history; later uncle Tim adds, “we have never really done this before [write down FCT & history]” (January 21, 2017). I can see uncle is leery of this academic process, and so he should be. As an artist and educator, uncle has encountered mainstream resistance to a NCN worldview, FCT and history making him suspicious.

Uncle is clear and honest, as he directs me to proceed with caution, be careful because Western education has placed very little value on our [NCN] ways of knowing and being, as quuʔas-sa. Without a doubt, colonialism continues to play a central role in the interruption of FCT and our understanding of ʔuuʔuuqʷaačii. Colonial forces, such as the Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada and those responsible for education and policy continue to dictate the parameters of Indigenous self-determination (i.e., self-government agreements). However, confronted with such forces, we (Indigenous peoples) have and will continue to resist and push up against colonial legislation, policies, and practices asserting the right to self-determination; the art of becoming a human being is not lost to all. Although not an “academic” piece of literature, the book The Sayings of Our First Peoples (1995) capture the voices of my great grandfathers, Joe and Moses Smith and others elders, who echoed the teachings of our
ancestors. These wonderful elders, who survived cultural genocide, emulated for us values of love, respect, humility, and so on, leaving teachings of ?uuʔuuqʷaačii behind for us, their grandchildren.

For me being quuʔas-sa means governing myself in relation to my family, community, cultural teachings and the strict laws of nature. Family cultural teachings, as uncle states again (January 21, 2017), is a life-long learning journey filled with yaʔakmis. NCN stress ḥaaʔuupa and learning is a never-ending process that applies to everyone, including elders (NTC-CHS, 1995, p. 9). Uncle stresses, always, the real embodiment of ?uuʔuuqʷaačii is the ability to love and respect oneself first. Uncle says then naturally there will be respect for the relationships, and everything that is connected and one. I take my roles, as a mother and grandmother, seriously with the help of my loving family, grandmothers (Josephine & Fidelia), uncle Tim, and other knowledgeable family. I do as I am told, I get up early in the morning to pray, express my gratitude for the gifts of life and ask for good things for all (people, land, water, relationships). I do, as I know I should and follow the teachings of becoming a human being, so in turn I can become a good ancestor. The objective here was to try and capture (as accurately as possible) a NCN worldview that sheds light and build understanding of ?uuʔuuqʷaačii and Indigenous self-determination, in general.

4.3 Walking in Two Worlds

You must get an education to survive in the Whiteman’s world, Nan Esther (n.d)

Memories bring me to times of my early childhood and precious time spent with grandpa Joe and nan Esther in maḥtiʔas and Ehatis (near Zeballos, BC). Built by grandpa Joe, our family lived in a small house (in maḥtiʔas) by the ocean where our family relied on the resources of the ocean (fish, whale, seal) and land (cedar trees, deer, berries, fresh water) to sustain our way of
living. Speaking the ?iiḥatisət dialect my great grandparents beautifully embodied FCT modeling respect, humility, kindness, and love for family, and everything that is connected and one. Grandpa Joe was a fisherman while Nan Esther watched over the children, grandchildren, and home.

Together they planted seeds of love, kindness, and respect deep inside the hearts and minds of those who were lucky enough to call them parents, grandparents. I have taken Nan’s words to heart and gone off to “get an education” as a means to not only survive, but thrive in the white man’s world. I recognize I have a responsibility to give back to family and community, to share what I have learned from experiences of walking in two worlds.

The purpose of this section is to provide insights into experiences of walking in two worlds, particularly from an Indigenous woman and academic perspective. Further, this section will include intimate family stories of residential school and the dehumanizing acts encountered.
by my parents and family members. Finally, this section will provide a perspective on the current status of Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations in an attempt to shine light on issues of Indigenous self-determination. The idea of walking in or between two worlds is not an uncommon idea amongst Indigenous peoples within PSE (Fitzgerald, 2006; Styres, Zinga, Bennett, & Bomberry, 2010).

Fitzgerald’s (2006) article, *Walking between Two Worlds: Indigenous Women and Education Leadership*, examines three countries (Canada, Australia, New Zealand) and the experiences of Indigenous women who are educational leaders. Fitzgerald’s research reveals “the triple bind Indigenous woman face due to exigencies of race and the two worlds they occupy; the Indigenous and non-Indigenous” (p. 201). This can be true for Indigenous students who also face the race factor, and who also have to navigate or walk between two worlds. Implied within Fitzgerald’s article is a theory that Indigenous women walk between the two worlds, Indigenous and non-Indigenous. The author arrives at this conclusion based on Indigenous women (educational leaders specifically) performing their administrative duties and also being evaluated within by the standards of the “white man’s world” (p. 207). The idea of walking in two worlds is not a new idea, in fact it was ancestors like nan Esther who prepared their children and grandchildren to survive in this “new white man’s world.” She recognized that white people, who held opposing values, views and beliefs, operated the government, specifically the Department of Indian Affairs. By the time I came into this world (late sixties), Nan Esther and grandpa Joe had already experienced a great deal of dehumanizing violence and trauma, as a result of colonialism. At a very young age both were forced to attend residential school, later they experienced the dispossession of family lands and resources while being confined to the
reserve with no running water or electricity. They lived during a time when the potlatch was banned and “Indians” were not considered humans nor were they allowed to own property.

Walking in Two Worlds: Engaging in the Space Between Indigenous Community and Academia (2010) by Sandra Styres, Dawn Zinga, Shelia Bennet, and Michelle Bombery is a project between the Six Nations of Grand River Territory and Brock University. This project is unique because it examines the experiences of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous to explore the space(s) in which genuine engagement and relationship building occurs in academia. Together the authors walk in two worlds acknowledging the differences while recognizing the opportunities to work together to create understanding and meaningful change. The authors work through the challenges, particularly the “Eurocentric orientation” (p. 618) of the academy in relation to knowledge and research, while displaying a level of ignorance towards IWKB (p. 619). Both Fitzgerald (2006) and Styres (2010) speak to the tensions that arise as a result of having to walk in or between two worlds. Fitzgerald (2006) notes, “that ‘walking between two worlds’ is complicated, contested and difficult terrain” (p. 210), while Styres (2010) discuss the tensions that arise from past research practices that make “collaborative endeavors” challenging, but worth pursuing (p. 618); I will re-visit these concepts in Chapter Six.

Embedded in the notion of walking in two worlds is an Indigenous perspective influenced by FCT while informed by Western ideologies, pedagogies, and epistemologies. Walking in two worlds, as an Indigenous woman, means being able to walk in a world that is your own, while navigating the often hostile and violent terrain of the non-Indigenous world. The authors of both articles note the dominant or Western epistemological and pedagogical nature of the academy, where knowing how to walk, as an Indigenous woman, certainly lends to Indigenous student success, or failure. In this respect Nan Esther knew exactly what she was doing when she
encouraged her children and grandchildren “to get an education.” She knew the impacts of colonialism; she knew that her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren had to become educated in the white man’s ways in order to survive. Nan Esther had already lived through residential schools, dispossession, oppression, violence, and dehumanization; she knew exactly what she was doing and her family is living proof.

For about 100 years, ending in 1983, the Canadian government imposed Residential Schooling as part of an attempt to eliminate traditional teachings. In this time approximately 5,000 Nuu-chah-nulth children were taken from their homes and isolated in the eight schools… (Indian Residential Schools: The Nuu-chah-nulth Experience, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, 1996, p. xi)

Like my great grandparents, Joe and Esther Smith, my grandmother Josephine, and later my mother Norma, were survivors of Indian Residential schools. They were part of the 5,000 NCN children removed from their loving family homes and forced to attend residential school. My parents shared intimate and personal stories of their IRS experiences. They are the untold stories and the memories I carry filled with yaʔakmis; these stories are stories waiting to be told, but more importantly heard. Weaved together these stories represent the richness of family cultural teachings, acts of resistance, and intergenerational effects of residential school. Although my parents survived residential schools, they did not often speak of their experiences, but when they did they were usually under the influence of alcohol; Mom spoke more about her experiences while Dad did not. Dad attended Indian Day School in Tsartlip (Brentwood Bay, BC) before quitting to go to work.

Strangely, residential schools employed a number of family members, on the Smith side, like Grandpa Joe and Nan Esther who briefly spent time at Christie School serving as helping aids, while Gran went on to become a cook in the kitchen at both Christie and Mission’s Saint
Mary’s Indian Residential Schools. As a child, I spent a great deal of time running in the halls of St Mary’s while playing in the fields oblivious to the atrocities encountered by family members. One of my first memories, as a toddler, was during the long, hot, summer spent in the small village of maḥīt̓as with Nan Esther, Grandpa Joe and many cousins. In the spring, I turned five and my grandparents decided to send me to the city to live with Mom in effort to avoid having to send me to residential school. As a result, the way in which I understood myself in the world changed from speaking the language and living in ʔiiḥatisat̓, to living with Mom in Vancouver where the struggle to maintain a sense of who I was became a challenge.

This is not to say that my mother, Norma, did not help shape me, but to say her life experiences inform who I am today. I love Mom, she honestly did the best she could with what she was given and that is where this story begins. Norma was a beautiful, strong, and resilient Indigenous woman who not only attended, but also survived residential school, but tuberculosis (TB), violence, and racism. Sadly, she suddenly passed away at the young age of 54 before the traumatic experiences of residential schools were acknowledged by the state and church. Her life stories are now my stories, they are the stories she told when she was unable to hold them in any longer. Although many of these stories were told under the influence of alcohol, there were times when she told a story to make a point (an aspect I will return to later). In retrospect I did not make the correlation between the drinking, residential schools, and painful memories until later in life.

This is what I know about my mother’s life, her experiences with residential school and walking two worlds. ʔiiḥatisat̓ territory (Cee Pee Cee, BC) is where my mother was born to her young 16-year-old mother, Josephine (nee Smith). Raised by Nan and grandpa my mother spoke her language and knew her culture before having been removed and forced to attend residential
school. In her formative years, she attended Christie Residential School (in ƛ̓a?uq̓iʔatḥ territories near Tofino, BC) where she contracted TB, spending three years in the Nanaimo Indian Hospital. She recalled her long stay before returning to complete her grade 12 at Saint Mary’s Mission Residential School. There were a number of stories Mom told me about her residential school experiences that have stayed with me until today. Perhaps it was the shock or the unbelievable nature of her stories that remain embedded in my memory. From what I could gather, Mom’s time at residential school was filled with both good and bad memories, but mostly they were memories of a time she certainly could not forgot, even if she tried. Mom told stories of separation from her grandparents, parents, siblings, friends, and community, she spoke of the violence inflicted by the clergy for not following the school rules. Undoubtedly these experiences informed her way of being in the world following residential school, which sadly was distorted by stereotypes of Indigenous peoples (savages, drunks, unfit parents, poor, criminals, etc.).

Mom’s experiences, her way of knowing and being, influenced who I was, who I am and who I am going to be (a good ancestor). As I grow old I find myself wishing I had more time with Mom, she passed away far too young and before I could know her as a human being. I am left with her stories and memories and perhaps for a good reason, perhaps to teach and prepare the younger generation to confront the truth about residential school. Although mom had a number of stories, I will focus on two particular stories because each story continues to haunt me today. The first story is one Mom would tell about the reason she had no teeth; this is a difficult story and even more challenging to articulate; however, it is a story waiting to be told. As a 13-year-old student at residential school, mom experiences with the dentist were like many, not good; in fact she feared dentists, particularly after they pulled all her teeth out and replaced them
with dentures. Mom recalled numerous dental visits when the dentist determined that she could not care for her teeth properly; therefore it would be in her best interest to extract all her teeth.

The second residential school story is one of friendship and loss. Due to the three years mom spent in the TB hospital, it naturally made her older than her friends by a few years; nonetheless they were memorable friendships. One such friend became mom’s best friend where they later promised each other a forever and lasting friendship. I remember this particular story, mostly because it implicates me, and as such it is a story that has stayed with me over the years. As best friends do, they loved each other immensely with Mom asking her best friend to become godmother to any of her children, and of course her best friend happily accepted. However, before graduation, before having children, Mom’s dearest and closest friend died in residential school after complaining to the clergy that her stomach hurt. Mom recalled her best friend complaining of stomach pains to the clergy, specifically the nuns where her cries of pain went unheard and she later died.

I can only imagine the kind of suffering and pain she endured, and how difficult it must have been for her family, but also how that must have impacted my mother. She would tell me, usually when she drank, that my current godmother was not to be, and that my godmother died in residential school long before I came along.

I believe she told these two stories, unknowingly, because they were stories that were the most traumatizing for her. On the other hand, Dad’s stories were limited, as he did not speak of his residential school experiences often if at all. I think that was because he dropped out at an early age (do not know the exact age). In retrospect, I realize that the stories Dad shared were profoundly impactful, dehumanizing and important as well. The most profound story of residential school came out when I confronted dad about his abusive nature towards me; it was at
that time he told me that was all he knew, and he thought that was what he was supposed to do. It was a humbling moment for both of us, particularly as we began to recognize principles of forgiveness (i.e., open heart, love unconditionally). Mom died suddenly in 1999 while dad passed away from cancer in 2007; they did not have a chance to attend Truth and Reconciliation Commission events or tell their story. At the time, nobody was talking about it. Although I did not always recognize it, my parents were exceptional human beings who endured an educational system that tried to diminish their spirits through dehumanizing and humiliating tactics.

One of the stories that stands out the most for me is the story my parents told about what it was like when they left residential school(s); they felt like they never quite fit in with family, community (reserve) or the “Whiteman’s world.” They did not know the language or culture anymore; they did not remember their relations and in the Whiteman’s world they were not white enough (they were not welcomed in restaurants, they had to ride on the car deck of the ferry). They could not obtain sustainable employment or rent an apartment due to the daily racism they combatted. My parents, like me, were raised with family cultural teachings on the land with a worldview that taught them to be good, kind, loving human beings. However, notions of inferiority overclouded them; my parents were denied the opportunity of ʔuuʔuuqʷačii. By no means does this represent their entire experiences at residential school; however, it is snapshot of who they were as survivors, but more importantly, who they were as human beings.

Unfortunately, their experiences following residential school would in some respects inform the way in which I saw or see myself in the world, particularly as inferior, afraid, but later resilient and strong.

The story of who I am in relation to my family and the “Whiteman’s world” is a story filled with yaʔakmis (love and pain) and tainted by colonialism, which informs who I am. Nan
Esther and Grandpa Joe did not want me to attend residential school, so I was sent to live with my mother and grandmother in the city. Having to leave the comforts of Nan Esther, Grandpa Joe and maḥtišas (Queen’s Cove) I always recall the moments of transition from one world, the NCN, into unknown and unfriendly, non-Indigenous, world. Growing up “Indian” in the territories of Skwxwu7mesh Uxwumixw (or Squamish), Stó:lō and later in WSÁNEĆ in the late 1960’s, 70’s and 80’s was confusing, to say the least, particularly because I began to lose my footing or place in the world, as quəʔas-sa. The memories of living between my mother in Vancouver and my grandmother in Mission and later Saanichton, BC with my parents are the memories of my childhood and early adolescent years. Together these memories and lived experiences articulate the idea of walking in two worlds, the Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

I do not remember why we lived in Vancouver, off Kingsway near 14th street, but it was brief and the first time I remember Dad (or step Dad) coming into our (Mom, sister, me) lives. After kindergarten our family moved to Tsawout, and over the years we lived in other places within Coast Salish territories. Unfortunately, like many survivors, my parents, suffering from the traumas of residential school, were ill equipped to raise children. In retrospect, I can honestly say that my parents did their best to raise me based on what they knew and for that I am grateful. Although I did not always recognize or acknowledge it, my parents taught me a great deal about life in their own special ways; they taught me resilience, perseverance, but most importantly, love. I say this now because as you read about how I came to learn to walk in two worlds, you might be taken back by some of the stories, which on the surface appear dark and sad; however, the stories do serve a purpose. Rooted in colonialism, are traumatic family experiences and stories that run across generations carrying memories that evoke a determination to confront colonialism with spirit, intent and love. Mom and Dad stood up for themselves (and
others) when confronted with discrimination; however, they were often met with poor treatment or even authoritative force (police, social workers, Indian Agents).

Having suffered tremendous physical, mental, sexual, and emotional abuse, as children in residential schools, my parents too had to learn to walk in the Whiteman’s world, which was not kind to them. There was a fear of authorities instilled deep in their minds, which influenced their behaviors and attitudes towards authority and non-Indigenous peoples. Dad would tell some of the same stories over and over, sometimes more so when he was under the influence of alcohol, and it was only recently I began to understand the deeper meaning that it must have held for him. The two stories relate to legislative discrimination where Indigenous peoples were not permitted in most restaurants and they had to ride on the car deck of the ferry, as “Indians” were not permitted on the passenger deck. As a result of these kinds of experiences, my parents taught me not to trust the Whiteman and in fact to “hate the Whiteman.” They insisted that the Whiteman is the reason we (Indigenous peoples) live on reserves, why we are poor, had little culture, language, and have no lands, or access to resources.

My parents would lecture me, telling me to never trust a Whiteman, never to date, marry or have children with a Whiteman or I would be disowned. This impacted me in ways that affected how I would raise my eldest son. For my parents, walking in two worlds meant recognizing that you were walking in the Whiteman’s world where Indigenous peoples were not necessarily welcomed, particularly if you were not assimilated. Only after receiving a post-secondary degree (Master’s in Indigenous Governance) did I recognize that my parents felt inferior or less than human due to the experiences they encountered in the Whiteman’s world. As such, their experiences informed my life experiences and how I would not only perceive the world, but also come to be in the world (inferior as well). Growing up in W̱SÁNEĆ (Saanich)
and LKWUNGEN (Victoria) territories, I witnessed firsthand the mistreatment of parents (under the influence of alcohol or not) by authorities, such as the police, social workers, doctors, and the like. Therefore, I proceeded to be fearful in life and did not trust people in authority or non-Indigenous people, particularly as I went between the two worlds. Although I experienced poverty, abuse, neglect, and despair in the hands of my parents, I was also able to later recognize the pain and suffering they not only endured, but survived.

Often I struggled with the realities of growing up on the “rez” and the need to “get an education.” Shortly after leaving home at the young age of 17, I began to question who I was, particularly in the context of being Indigenous or Nuu-chah-nulth. After becoming a teenage mother, I felt the strong urge to assert myself as an Indigenous woman; however, I was met with racism, discrimination, and violence. I once again retreated to feelings of inferiority and shame, preventing me from embracing post-secondary opportunities. However, Nan Esther’s words of encouragement continued to echo throughout the years to come. Without knowing what was in store, I set out on my educational journey where I would eventually take the plunge and go back to school to upgrade in preparation for PSE.

At this point in my life, I recognized that I wanted to advance Indigenous self-determination efforts through obtaining a post-secondary education. Successful in upgrading, I soon applied for a program at UVic entitled a “Certificate in Administration of Aboriginal Governments” (1996), which later led me to an undergraduate degree in political science with a minor in Indigenous Studies (2003) at the University of Victoria (UVic). I had to understand the “band” administration, given it had replaced the hereditary chief system, while the political science and minor in Indigenous studies would further my own understanding of colonial systems of governance. Having achieved a framework for understanding the current
sociopolitical status of Indigenous peoples, I went on to pursue a Master’s of Indigenous Governance (IGOV). Here I examinedʔiiḥatisath forms of governance and leadership to deepen my understanding of hereditary chiefs and leadership from a NCN perspective. Together, these accomplishments pointed me toward an educational pathway, as opposed to returning home to Nuu-chah-nulth to support aspects of governance. During the 15 years I spent at UVic, I encountered discrimination, racism and assumptions about Indigenous peoples. Feeling paralyzed and afraid I sought refuge in IGOV where I was amongst like-minded people and began to feel as though I had purpose. Issues of colonialism became obvious and apparent, forcing me to walk with courage in both worlds. As such, I decided to face my biggest fears and learn more about racism and intolerance while determining what decolonization meant to me, particularly, as an Indigenous educator.

This journey towards understanding racism and intolerance prompted me to do two things in 2012: one, apply to the University of British Columbia’s (UBC) Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership, and two, to enroll in the University of Victoria’s Department of Germanic & Slavic Studies’ I-Witness Field School. Sadly, racism is a common experience amongst family and me; racism as it exists scares the hell out of me. Having experienced it first hand, racism is something I have selectively chosen not to confront, until now. Plastered all over the UVic campus were these posters advertising for the I-Witness Field School where issues of anti-Semitism, racism, and intolerance would be addressed within the context of the Holocaust. In some respects, I felt as though this particular approach to these important topics would be best examined from a distance and from a non-Indigenous perspective; for me it was the one of the safest ways to learn about racism, intolerance, and anti-Semitism. Travelling to Europe,
specifically Germany, Poland, and Czech Republic to learn and experience aspects of the
Holocaust was exactly what I needed to understand my family’s experiences at home.

What resonated the most for me on this trip were the visits to concentration camps and
hearing from Holocaust survivors. Although I had grown up in and around residential schools, I
did not recognize the extent of cultural genocide until I studied the Holocaust. As I embarked on
the I Witness Holocaust Field School, I quickly learned about the National Socialist German
Workers’ Party or more commonly referred to as the Nazi Party, which killed more than 1.5
million people who were Jewish, gay or disabled. Peoples’ languages, cultures and humanity
were destroyed in an effort to purify or make Europe the ultimate white state. Upon our arrival
to the former Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland, the I-Witness field school participants
were informed of a connection to Canada. In the latter part of the tour we were taken across the
fields and railroad tracks to a place called Canada; it was a place (a physical building) where the
valuable belongings of prisoners, such as gold and money, were taken, sorted and sold. It was
called “Canada,” according to the tour guide, because Canada was seen as a rich country where
resources were in abundance and there for the taking. In fact as I learned later, Hitler himself was
influenced by the poor treatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Studying the Holocaust in Europe taught me what I did not know about the Holocaust,
genocide, and more importantly the untold stories of survival. The experiences are embedded in
my mind and heart, and will continue to surface as I write, and throughout my life. Moving
forward, this course would teach and prepare me for the next part of my journey, the EdD
program at UBC. Having kept a journal since 2012, I am able to go back, read, remember and
reflect. As I look back at the choices I have made regarding ?uuʔuuqʷaqii and my educational
journey towards understanding racism and intolerance, particularly within the context of post-
secondary education, I can see this is the place I need to be. I chose the Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership and Policy at UBC because of the practical nature of the program (or because it was rooted in practice). From a leadership and policy perspective I wanted to grow, I wanted to learn how to both decolonize and indigenize post-secondary education. The EdD at UBC has challenged me in ways I did not expect, and sadly it has also lived up to the pedagogical and epistemological standards of Eurocentrism.

As a visitor to the territory, and in terms of family protocol, I made an offering (water) along the ocean shores upon my arrival to Musqueam near UBC. I prayed, giving thanks to the creator while calling upon the ancestors to give me strength and guide me in the important work (EdD course work) ahead. The work of confronting colonialism is incredibly intense, but in many respects rewarding. I draw on two predominate EdD classroom experiences that have both positively and negatively impacted me in ways that I will never forget. The first experience (July 23, 2012) took place in EDST 593 (Ethics) class where I witnessed the love and pain of acknowledging the local Indigenous people and place. One of the two instructors brought us to UBC’s First Nations House of Learning to acknowledge the Musqueam; it is an experience I distinctly remember because until that point there was no acknowledgement of Musqueam, something I quietly questioned in our first class. Although this day provided me with some hope that Indigenous peoples, epistemologies, and pedagogies have finally penetrated the walls of the academy, it also left me wondering what this acknowledgement meant, particularly within the context of the EdD program itself and EDST 593?

This particular course on ethics (EDST 593) was incredibly challenging for me, in part because the theories were limited to non-Indigenous perspectives. It was the time when I began to seriously question the act of acknowledging territory within the context of post-secondary
education. However, as the course unfolded, aspects such as Indigenous knowledge and Elders surfaced with respect to ethics, which connected me to the past, present and future (Personal Journal - August 8, 2012). Following this class and for the first time a fellow cohort member approached me with hostility asking a question regarding Indigenous knowledge, Elders and ethics. This individual felt as though it was unfair to single out Indigenous peoples, knowledge and ethics as an example, particularly when non-Indigenous peoples have knowledge, elders and ethics. Given this person was a fellow cohort member I was unsure what to say and instead apologized as though I had done something wrong. As I left class I began to experience feelings of sadness, hurtfulness, and sheer anger; I needed to let it go so I began the daily task of journaling these thoughts and feelings knowing one day it would serve me well to remember these stories.

The second and perhaps most profound was in the last EDST 508 class where the discussion was centered primarily on our research proposal. It was late July 2013, and by this time I was questioning whether the EdD was for me, as I felt unsupported in my research topic of post-secondary education, Indigenous peoples, and colonialism. Progressively and with every day I began to feel as though I needed to be in an Indigenous doctoral program with like-minded people where support and encouragement were paramount to a good education. As I continued to struggle, I slowly began to pull away and resent the ignorance amidst fellow classmates and instructors. I quietly contemplated my future, but recognized there was not a whole lot I could do at the moment, but to accept the challenge and finish the course. Upon arriving to class I was delighted to learn about the literature exercise where we would select one of our favorite authors and prepare to share a section of the book with the class. I was happy because I could now bring
in the familiar, the Indigenous perspective, but who and what would I share with the class to reflect the frustration and anger of how I was feeling?

First I turned to one of my favorite female authors, bell hooks and her book *All About Love: New Visions* (2000) because this particular book helps centre me, and helps bring me back to the place of love. I knew this doctoral journey would be hard or difficult and challenging, therefore, I remind myself to live and work with a good heart and mind while embodying love. I can turn to any page in this book to be reminded that as difficult as life can be, we must approach life with love. Although bell hooks can help ground me, I felt as though this particular book was not going to capture my true feelings I held towards the EdD program or education in general.

Feeling invisible and unheard, I turned to Lee Maracle, a Stó:lō author whose writing evokes a kind of internal rage calmed by the beautiful articulations of Indigenous self-determination. The book *I am Woman: A Native Perspective on Sociology and Feminism* (1996) is one of my favorite books because Maracle integrates aspects of who she is as an Indigenous woman, academic, and storyteller.

Maracle is known for her honesty, brilliance, and ability to draw Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples into her writings. As such, I re-read this particular book submersing myself in her words to find what passage would help me transcend the feeling of hopelessness. Maracle’s thought provoking insights, her anger and determination spoke to me like it had not spoken to me before; it was like I was reading it for the first time. Feeling empowered I ploughed through the book finding the passage I would share in class. Here Maracle articulates raw feelings and frustration with arrogance and white privilege. Familiar with her pain I selected the following passage to share on July 15, 2013,
Locked in your white-skinned privilege and blinded by your arrogance, you call on me to forget the past and be like you. You know not what you ask. If I forget my past, ignore our ancient ways, only violence will quiet the scream inside me. (p. 85)

Initially, I questioned my selection, but recognized I lacked courage and went off to pray for strength and clarity. The next morning I went into class and read the passage out loud. It was as though a burden had been lifted and my true thoughts had been shared. It was a way for me to bring attention to the feelings of frustration and hopelessness I had towards the program, the class, and potential doctoral research. Intuitively, I knew I would offend or intrigue my class and had to prepare, as best I could, in advance (preparation is prayer) of this class. There was complete silence once I was done reading and most certainly you could cut the tensions with a knife. Like prior presentations (on a select authors/readings) the instructors asked, “why did you select this reading and author?” I promptly replied that Lee Maracle has been one of my favorite female Indigenous authors since I could remember and that *I Am Woman* was one of the most empowering books I had ever read. For me, it only made sense to draw on Maracle’s fierce determination and wonderful articulation of what it meant to be a Native woman within the context of sociology, feminism, and education. Following my response there were no other questions, and the class dismissed; however, before class on July 17, 2013 ended, a disgruntled classmate abruptly got up and asked, “if she could walk her white privileged ass to the bathroom?” and looked directly at me. Not knowing how to receive the comment, I look to my two instructors who unfortunately did not hear or choose to ignore it.

Shortly following this class, I began to explore my options for transferring to another doctoral program at UBC. I felt as though I needed to find a program and people who supported my proposed topic of Indigenous self-determination, post-secondary education, and colonialism. Soon the time came to formally withdraw from the EdD program in pursuit of an
interdisciplinary PhD program at UBC. I took the time to articulate a doctoral research proposal, submitting a one pager to a number of UBC Indigenous scholars where my research topic was not only accepted, but also encouraged. As I began a new doctoral application process, I was also in conversation with a faculty member from Educational Studies who asked me to reconsider my withdrawal from the EdD program. Listening respectfully to the concerns I had, this faculty member offered support that would keep me in the program while emphasizing the need for this kind of research in education. The decision to withdraw and later remain enrolled in the EdD was one of the toughest times I have encountered in education. I can hear Grandpa Moe saying, “nothing worthwhile is ever easy my girl,” and as such I embrace, and brace for what lay ahead in an effort to reach what is worthwhile (self-determination).

Therefore, it can be said that who I am is deeply rooted in FCT, where responsibilities to become a good ancestor is my life quest. Admittedly, I initially did not understand FCT or nan Esther’s instructions “to get an education,” because it would be the only way “to survive in the Whiteman’s world.” It was not until my mid-thirties and some PSE that I began to understand her statement and words of encouragement. Nan Esther, Grandpa Joe, Grandpa Moe and many other have given me a deep sense of who I am, not only as a family member, but also as an ?ihi?atisath woman. One of the responsibilities is to always acknowledge hišuk?išcawak, particularly in relation to family, nature, home territory, and ancestors in an effort to perpetuate FCT. NCN teachings and worldview teach us to live in this world; as NCN we must be kind, loving, respectful, and generous human beings, as a means of achieving ?uu?uuqʷαačii. Who I am is dependent on everything that is one and connected (hišuk?išcawak) including all of nature, family, governance, and ancestral responsibilities, which informs how I walk in two worlds.
Although growing up Indigenous I could never articulate colonialism (i.e., capitalism, racism, white privilege) or the horrible treatment of Indigenous peoples, but I knew something was very wrong in the world in which I live. Wanting to understand why Indigenous peoples are hated, loathed, and misunderstood is what drove me to the doors of post-secondary. What I did not realize then is that when we Indigenous peoples arrive to the doors of post-secondary, we arrive with an established worldview, an understanding of who we are, which largely goes unnoticed by the general post-secondary population. A NCN worldview informs how I behave in the world, both privately and publicly while stressing the importance of family, relationships (to each, the land, animals, ancestors, etc.) and becoming a good ancestor; it is a worldview that teaches us how to respect and love one another. Indigenous worldviews have little to no value in the “Whiteman’s world” where Indigenous peoples are expected to conform to dominant society’s expectations of assimilation. Unfortunately, our non-Indigenous counterparts arrive uninformed, privileged, and entitled, lending to the epistemological collisions that continue unfolding post-secondary education classrooms.

The significance of the stories provides history of an oppressed people while demonstrating the struggles, obstacles, and challenges of doing such work (confronting colonialism). The stories help provide context; they help provide an image of the struggles and determination of not just family, but a people. Stories are powerful expressions of ?uuʔuuqʷaačii, particularly giving voice to the unheard and misrepresented original peoples of this place now called Canada. Stories are a part of who I am, they make up the truth about the obstacles and challenges that continue to plague my attempts at ?uuʔuuqʷaačii. Stories are required, especially as a way to give depth and insight into the problematic issues (racism, epistemological collisions, colonialism) we [all of us] continue to encounter in PSE. No one is unscathed from the wrath of
colonialism, but only some of us (Indigenous peoples) ever have to live it; in fact until we recognize the need to confront it globally, we remain a part of the problem and not the solution. All races of children will continue to carry the burden and price of colonial arrogance. Education plays a role in our understandings of who we are as “Canadians”; however, education has not confronted colonialism (i.e., capitalism, imperialism, racism, violence) within its classrooms. Indigenous peoples continue to be seen as the problem with little to no accountability on the part of the state or its institutions.

I agree with Styres, Zinga, Bennet, and Bomberry (2010) that as educators, we have a responsibility to learn to walk in more than the dominant Western world. Worldviews ought to be respected and embraced, especially because our future depends on it. The next chapter Unsettling the Academy will examine aspects, like cultural genocide, white privilege, and colonialism, aspects that currently unsettle the academy. To a degree, this EdD journey is fulfilling Nan Esther’s vision of getting an education, as a means of survival. The journey towards further understanding genocide, violence, and colonialism within the context of post-secondary education remains a journey filled with yaʔakmis and sheer determination. Nothing worthwhile is ever easy; therefore, as educators, as caring humans, we need to prepare for the hard and unsettling work of confronting colonialism within education.
Chapter 5: A Nuu-chah-nulth Perspective on Unsettling the Academy

“Education has gotten us into this mess, and education will get us out,”
Honourable Senator Murray Sinclair (June 2016)\textsuperscript{29}

Senator Sinclair’s sentiments resonate, calling attention to the failures of Canada’s colonial and Western approaches to education and Indigenous peoples. The reference to the “mess” goes beyond residential schools and education. The problem goes much deeper, particularly when the larger context of history and politics is considered. From an Indigenous perspective, the history and truth of Indigenous peoples in Canada has been intentionally left out of education and curriculum, a hidden secret if you like. From this perspective, it is a history and truth about dispossession (the taking of lands, resources, and children), dehumanization (residential schools), violence (murdered and missing women), and oppression (Indian Act). From out of the darkness this history and truth emerges revealing the complex nature of unpacking the “mess,” particularly within the context of education. The Senator adds, “Education is the key to reconciliation” specifically in this case, the TRC’s Calls-to-Action. He adds, “Education is the means by which we will be able to fix this,” which on the surface sounds encouraging, but is much more complex to say the least.

This chapter, Unsettling the Academy, is an attempt to shed light on Indigenous peoples and this educational “mess” Senator Sinclair references; however, from an additional perspective, mine. This chapter includes four sections; the first explores naming what is named and what is not named in relation to colonialism while the second section examines more closely the notions of settlers and unsettling. The third section speaks more specifically to the unsettling

\textsuperscript{29} http://rabble.ca/blogs/bloggers/kairos-canada/2016/06/murray-sinclair-education-key-to-reconciliation
of the academy. Together, these aspects contribute to the unsettling of the academy, but from an Indigenous perspective. The purpose of this chapter is to offer insight into what unsettles the academy while naming what is not necessarily named (colonialism, violence, oppression) in an earnest effort to unpack the mess.

5.1 Naming

Words are names, and names are words weaving themselves throughout the stories we tell. Battell Lowman, and Barker (2015) also add, “The words we use to name ourselves are important” (p. 1), therefore time must be spent exploring the stories and meaning of names, particularly in relation to self-determination. I have come to know naming through family cultural teachings and stories; however, I use the term ‘naming’ cautiously, especially, as I share intimate stories of truth, which can become unsettling. In Chapter Four family names were articulated in terms of beliefs, values, and places emphasizing hišukʔičawak and the importance of being in relationship(s).

Admittedly names, or naming in general, are a global phenomenon and a fundamental aspect to life. Indigenous names carry ancestral linkages to the past, to places, family, history, and events (Smith, 1999, p. 157). As a human race we could not get by in life without naming. Given Chapter Five is entitled *A Nuu-chah-nulth Perspective on Unsettling the Academy*, I assume that I will need to provide good and sound articulations of what it is I mean when I say “unsettling” and “settlerism.” A NCN perspective on naming and names for non-NCN is a critical aspect of this chapter for two reasons: first, is to provide clarity, and second, to say there are Indigenous names for non-NCN. This aspect of the chapter is not meant to offend, but to offer insight into naming, particularly as it relates to settlers and unsettling.
Names include family knowledge, purpose, time, and place; our names are what we still have given to us by family while holding deep and meaningful stories. Since leaving maḥtǐ̊̊as and my great grandparents Joe and Esther Smith, I have not spoken nor do I understand much of ?iṭ̓ı̊̊sətɬ language and/or dialectics. Sadly, English is the predominant language I use at home, work, and school; therefore, I acknowledge that I am attempting to describe important NCN words, values, or beliefs in English. I have been told by Elders that English takes away from the actual NCN meaning and translation. Having said that, naming (NCN) continues today and occurs in ceremonial potlatch. Everything has a name, and as such, everything has meaning.

Maori scholar Linda Smith (1999) emphasizes the importance of naming, adding that other things were given names; it was a process that allows Maori to retain control over the meaning of names (p. 157) in their language. Nuu-chah-nulth languages are complex and unique; unfortunately they are on the brink of extinction. Although a bleak horizon, NCN languages revitalization continues to grow, prompting the need for family naming ceremonies. Grandpa Moe once told me that in the first year of a child’s life they do not belong to us, not just yet. In the first year, the infant is determining whether or not they want to stay on earth. After the first year, the family can then give the child a family name. Smith (1999) reinforces the importance of children’s names when she notes, “Children quite literally wear their history in their names” (p. 157). Sharing similar attributes, the NCN pass names down from one generation to the next while keeping and using family names.

These names were given during a ceremony where new names could be introduced (through agreement or arrangement) and then carried forward within the family unit. For most NCN, names change over time and with changing circumstances, such as puberty or marriage, where new names are bestowed. These ancient names go back in time throughout family
generations and hold significant meaning in both the physical and spiritual worlds; everything has a name and meaning and sometimes stories attached to them. Just as Umeek shares the story of raven stealing the light so people could enjoy it.

In Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Métis & Inuit Issues in Canada (2015), Vowel notes that there are several names for Indigenous people, such Aboriginal, First Nations, Indian, and so on; however, there are few or no names for non-Indigenous peoples who live in Canada (p. 14). Nuu-chah-nulth place importance on naming, and as such I need to be up front when articulating positive and negative experiences in confronting non-NCN/Indigenous peoples. It is OK for a non-NCN to say I am Indigenous or Native, while it is not okay for me to say White in reference to people who are not NCN. I often hear and see ‘white’ used to identify non-Indigenous peoples (who come from European ancestry). Half the battle, at times, is determining what kind of language is appropriate and what terminology to employ, particularly when engaging in relationship-building conversations. Vowel stresses that Indigenous and non-Indigenous have to find “terms to use, or we cannot have a discussion,” and goes on to add that she is looking for terms, not “offensive labels” (p. 15).

Naturally, Indigenous and non-Indigenous have been confronted with trying to find respectful names or terminology, as a way to express that which is not so easily expressed. In this respect, I return to NCN teachings regarding names drawing on Umeek’s (2011) introduction of mamaln’i, the name used to describe non-NCN. Umeek translates the phrase into English, which means “people of houseboat,” or more simply the “boat people,” to describe the European explorers. Umeek suggests that it is in part because NCN had never seen such a boat that housed people (p. 110). The ?iiḥatisatḥ spell mamaln’i differently - mamahi, as such I will use the latter spelling. mamahi is linked to the arrival of the mamahi to NCN territories or what is now
known as the west coast of Vancouver Island; this marks the beginning of great change for the NCN.

Although today you will likely hear NCN use the word mamalñi in reference to non-NCN, I use it here in reference to the arrival of Europeans, but I will also use the terms non-NCN or non-Indigenous, as a respectful way to acknowledge those who are not NCN. I find comfort in NCN language and meaning especially because thought and consideration are put into names. Naming is a part of unpacking the “mess” in education, and involves careful and respectful consideration.

Tensions arise amidst mamalñi and Indigenous in part because of fear of the unknown. There are untold histories that exist in Canada, particularly the one told by mamalñi and one told by Indigenous peoples. For NCN, this is all too common, particularly accounts of John R. Jewitt and the NCN people of Yuquot or Friendly Cove in the early eighteen hundreds. Jewitt himself kept a written journal from the time he was taken as a slave in the massacre of the Boston (a ship anchored in the cove). Having been set free, Jewitt writes and later publishes his book *White Slaves of the Nootka: Narratives of the Adventures and Sufferings of John R. Jewitt while a Captive of the Nootka Indians on Vancouver Island – 1803-05* in 1815. Jewitt speaks to the friendly nature of the local “savages,” whom he writes he has never encountered before (p. 26). His journal takes account of events, such as the massacre where he is taken captive for two-years during which he was journaling observations of the “Nootka” or NCN. Jewitt’s story initially captured my attention as an undergrad due to the NCN connection to history.

It was the first time I recognized the absences of NCN epistemologies and pedagogies in Canadian history. There it was on paper, in black and white, this notion of a “savage,” which, to tell the truth, enraged me. As a people, the NCN were described as savages who slaughtered
humans and took slaves. In retrospect, if I had not been curious and read *White Slave of the Nootka*, I would not be where I am today questioning mamalhí history and asserting my family cultural teachings. The history instructor was super supportive and introduced me to a fellow NCN history Master student, Gloria Jean Frank, who later shared a part of her research and granted me permission to use it in a manner I see fit. What she shared with me was an interview (she conducted) with this particular Elder (who has since passed away) regarding the Boston massacre, which countered Jewitt’s accounts. Since listening to the cassette-taped interview (which I still have today) I have not forgotten this oral history, which had been passed down to the Elder. He was a well-respected elder who was also incredibly knowledgeable and spoke fluent muwačath. The story was about the arrival of the mamalhí to Yuquot and the welcome given by Chief Maquinna and family.

Following the arrival of the Boston and its crew, the Elder notes tensions arose as a result of the mamalhí disregard for NCN governing structures, values and beliefs. According to the Elder, the mamalhí began taking resources (trees) without permission while raping and killing NCN women. The Elder spoke of Chief Maquinna who felt he had no other choice but to plan and execute an attack on the Boston and its crew. As I listened to this interview and the emotion in the Elder’s voice, particularly as he began to explain the reason for the attack, I have felt compelled to reinforce this oral history and to honour the gift shared with me. Hearing this interview and learning the NCN side of the Boston massacre was a profound moment in my life. For the first time in my life, I realized that as NCN we have oral histories that speak to events, which have been recorded by mamalhí; the difference is in the story lines, particularly aspects of NCN storytelling and experiences of colonization. For me, this particular story is important for a number of reasons; it is a part of my self-determining journey, giving me continued strength and
courage to voice what is not true, to voice what is true while giving me the ability to voice, to name the violated--our relatives, the women and resources.

An unpleasant history and contentious relationship exist between mamalñi and Indigenous peoples that often does not get discussed, let alone unpacked or named. I remember going to Uncle Tim and Grandpa Moe about this experience, and they kind of chuckled. It was at this time I committed to learning about NCN ways of being, which countered the stories I grew up hearing about in school. Therefore, I began to take more seriously the importance of NCN truth telling, especially in relation to who we are as a distinct group of human beings who happen to occupy a time and place here on earth. Naming is important, as well as the story of Yuquot and the mamalñi because it demonstrates the richness of oral history while serving to help us unpack the educational mess Senator Sinclair references (June 2016). A reason I include this specific story is because it holds a powerful place in my heart and in my mind, particularly as it relates to truth telling. Paulette Regan (2010), a non-Indigenous scholar who writes about her experiences as a settler learning about Indian Residential Schools, argues that an unsettling pedagogy has to be included in “truth telling and reconciliation processes,” particularly so we can learn “to live in truth” (p. 15).

This is the funny thing about truth; it usually involves more than one story and sometimes those stories can involve naming, giving voice to that which has had no voice. Generally there is intention, meaning and purpose assigned to names. This particular story allows me to pay respect to the family lineage of the Maquinna while shedding light on the NCN name and interpretation of mamalñi. I include naming to demonstrate the evolving relationships between Indigenous and mamalñi, which over time has not been great to say the least. There can be much learned from the NCN story of Chief Maquinna, the crew of the Boston and the massacre in terms of the way
in which we perceive history in Canada; the story also provides context for naming and the opportunity to engage in truth telling from a NCN perspective. The final and more important reason to discuss naming is to give credit to those who have come before, to articulate a perspective of naming, and now settlers and unsettling. Having said that, a NCN perspective on Unsettling the Academy is undoubtedly influenced by the unfolding discourse on colonialism, unsettling and settlerism. Out of respect for the growing discourse on colonialism, unsettling and settlerism, particularly within the context of PSE, a brief introduction and overview of current scholarly perspectives is in order.

5.2 Settlers and Unsettling

The terms settlers and unsettling is terminology recently introduced and applied by both non-Indigenous and Indigenous academics (Battell Lowman & Barker, 2015, p. 2), particularly within the context of politics and education. Naturally, a brief introduction to unsettling and settler is in line given the inclusion of such theories. However, it must be acknowledged that the kind of unsettling I am referencing is about a particular kind of unsettling, one that exists within the Indigenous Canadian context. It is particularly fitting that I pay respect to those scholars who have paved the way for discussions on unsettling and settlerism. Having said that there are four literary sources that help provide a framework for understanding concepts of settlers and unsettling. The first is Paulette Regan’s (2010) book Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada and the second book is Unsettling Canada: A National Wake-Up Call by Arthur Manuel and Chief Ronald M. Derrickson (2015). The third book, Settler Identity and Colonialism in Canada (2015), by Emma Battell Lowman and Adam J. Barker and the final book is Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Métis and Inuit Issues in Canada by Chelsea Vowel (2016).
5.2.1 Settlers

First, and perhaps more importantly unpacking the term “setter” is necessary given the inclusion of the term, but also because scholars like Regan (2010), Battell Lowman and Barker (2015) identify as settlers. Regan uses settler to identify herself; she notes that settler “refers not only to Euro-Canadians whose ancestors came to Canada during the colonial period but also the more recent immigrants from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds who are part of contemporary settler society” (p. 240). Barker (2009) notes that the term settler refers to “any non-Indigenous individual who is living on Indigenous lands and participating in contemporary Euro-American society” (p. 329), adding that the term itself “attempts to break free of totalizing racial or ethnic signifiers such as ‘white’ or ‘European,’ while still recognizing the influence of race and heritage in identity construction and social privilege” (p. 329). Together Regan (2010) and Barker (2009) provide a working definition while identifying themselves, as “settlers.”

Admittedly, “settler” is not a term that everyone likes or agrees with, particularly in relation to refugees and immigrants, who were not a part of the initial settlement of Canada; it is a loaded term that requires further exploration by non-Indigenous peoples. Aspects of multiculturalism also arise, specifically those which “equate Aboriginal people with racialized minorities and particularly, racialized ethic immigrants.

By inaccurately assuming shared commonalities among diverse groups (Dei & Calliste 2000), multiculturalism erases the specific and unique location of Aboriginal peoples as Indigenous to this land by equating them with multicultural and immigrant groups. Aboriginal people adamantly reject this equating of their Aboriginal position with ethnic minorities as a form of colonialism (Curthoys 2000; Short 2005). Whether through anti-racism or multiculturalism, when colonialism in Canada is left unaddressed, racialized ethnic immigrants are too easily positioned as innocent (Lawrence and Dua 2005, 132).” (St. Denis, 2011, p. 311).
5.2.2 Unsettling

Theories, concepts or ideas of “unsettling,” particularly within the context of Indigenous peoples, residential school, and education arose while witnessing Indigenous Governance (IGOV) alumnus Paulette Regan’s doctoral defense in 2006. Later Regan published (2010) a powerful and intriguing book entitled *Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada*, which influenced my decision to pursue a doctorate. Having read her book a number of times, I continue to find comfort in Regan’s words, theories, and the practical application. Particularly, she takes responsibility for her personal discomfort while encouraging others [non-Indigenous] to do the same. Specifically, Regan asks,

> How can we, as non-Indigenous people, unsettle ourselves to name and then transform the settler – the colonizer who lurks within – not just in word but by our actions, as we confront the history of colonization, violence, racism and injustice that remains part of the IRS [Indian Residential Schools] legacy today? (2010, p. 13).

As a settler, Regan emulates and models a kind of settler responsibility that remains largely unseen or unheard of until more recently. She calls others into action and the unsettling of non-Indigenous peoples through education about federal government policies and practices, namely Indian Residential Schools (p. 14). Most certainly there is a legacy, but also a continued assault on Indigenous peoples, which Regan confronts openly in her book, in words and in her actions. The legacy of Indian Residential Schools or IRS, colonialism and injustices continue to persist today. Violence and racism (internalized as well) plague Indigenous peoples in a way that interferes in the pursuit of self-determination. In fact it is part of the “mess” Senator Sinclair references. For obvious reasons, Regan encourages Canadians to move away from this idea that “we [Canadians] know what is best for them [Indigenous peoples]” (p. 12) and to make room for relationship building. Further, she contends that education and the unsettling of oneself will
support the injustices Indigenous peoples face today. During Regan’s doctoral defense I was
taken back as I witnessed Regan, a non-Indigenous individual, take personal responsibility and
acknowledge the ongoing violence and racism Indigenous peoples experience.

It was an emotional experience and turning point for me as I was directed towards
research in areas related to decolonization, reconciliation, and indigenization in post-secondary
education. As a non-Indigenous, self-identified settler, Regan is in a position to say what she has
said, particularly as it relates to solving the “Indian Problem.” Most importantly, Regan is
influential, as an educator, researcher, and advocate of truth-telling, as she engages the reader in
aspects of unsettling. In the same breath, Regan (as an ally) recognizes her privilege evoking a
sense of responsibility, which transcends Eurocentricism and embraces settlerism. Regan tells it
like it is and does not shy away from the challenges found in the truth; she argues that non-
Indigenous peoples must become unsettled or nothing is going to change (p. 19), and she is right.
Regan, as a self-identifying settler, authentically engages the reader in difficult and challenging
ideas of unsettling and settlerism. I have immense respect for fellow IGOV alumnus Paulette
Regan, as a human being; her book offers us all a new perspective on the work ahead of us in
terms of truth telling and reconciliation.

Years following Regan’s book, a respected member of the Ktunaxa nation, the late
Klein provides an intriguing Forward while former Chief of the Westbank Nation, Ronald
Derrickson writes a thought provoking Afterword. As a respected leader (from the colonized
province of British Columbia), Manuel followed his father, George Manuel’s footsteps in
pursuing justice for Indigenous peoples. Sadly, Manuel recently passed away (January 11,
2017), but is remembered for his sheer determination, fierce leadership, and charisma. He is also
remembered for his ability to courageously confront injustices at an international level while “unsettling” notions of Canada, as peacekeepers or a friendly nation. The *Forward* by famous Canadian activist and author Naomi Klein sets the tone for book as she identifies the growing frustration of Canadians with respect to the government and policies. Klein argues that it is no longer acceptable to build Canada’s economy on greedy values that disregard Indigenous peoples’ rights to self-determination (p. 1). She believes that only through unsettling oneself and strengthening relationships with Indigenous peoples can government policies change.

Manuel draws from experience to provide an exceptional overview of the legal and political struggles of Indigenous peoples while offering a unique perspective on unsettling Canada. In a powerful, but gentle way he shares memories to articulate stories of family, language, culture, and politics while shedding light on the historical and contemporary struggles of Indigenous peoples. In the very early stages of the book (chapter 1), he speaks to growing up in Neskonlith, Secwepemc (ancestral territories, near Chase, BC) describing the breath-taking scenery. Manuel does one other important thing in chapter one as he points to issues of racism experienced “from across the river” (p. 2). Like Neskonlith, Secwepemc and other places in Canada, little is known about the Indigenous peoples and colonialism creating the two separate worlds we live in, the Indigenous and the non-Indigenous (p. 2). In this respect, Manuel has named, in part, the Indigenous/Canadian context that we currently understand today, the ‘us [Indigenous peoples] and them [non-Indigenous].’ Knowingly or unknowingly, this “us and them” mentality continues to exist today and in some respects is a part of the “mess” Senator Sinclair notes.

Manuel, from an Indigenous perspective, specifies where the “mistruths” about Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state arise and where they end (p. 3). He pinpoints the
“doctrine of discovery” and “legal fiction” (p. 3) of Canada, as a particular source of contention and mistrust amongst Indigenous peoples. Manuel engages the reader through a series of significant legal and political events that are sure to unsettle the best of us. He delves into historical policies that led to the Indian Residential Schools (IRS) and the federal Liberal’s 1969 White Paper, which was geared towards the abolition of the Indian Act and absorb Indigenous peoples into a melting pot (p. 29). Manuel walks the reader through the aspects of Indigenous resistance (occupations, grassroots movements) and legal tactics (proposed nation-to-nation negotiation, which did not happen). He sheds light on the political efforts made to advance Indigenous self-determination, particularly through challenging the legitimacy of the Canadian Constitution. Indigenous leaders, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and Premiers gathered at the Conferences on the Constitutional Rights of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada (1983-85) to determine the constitutional rights of Indigenous peoples.

Manuel’s pursuit of justice and the right to self-determination has taken him to the United Nations (UN) where he joined international forces to pass the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples (UNDRIP), which did pass in 2007. Canada opposed UNDRIP at every stage and every corner until the bitter end. Amidst the unfavorable, disappointing, uphill political and legal struggles of Indigenous peoples, Manuel remained optimistic, hopeful, and determined. In some respect, I attribute this to his family, particularly his father George (an influential figure in his life), who he lovingly references throughout the book. Manuel pays special tribute to the fight we [Indigenous peoples] have had to fight, particularly in the following two statements,

Still, we have not given up and, as my father, Grand Chief George Manuel, often pointed out, the most important gift we have received from our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents is the legacy of struggle. (p. 4).
By all accounts, Manuel lived his life honoring family teachings and the legacy, as he moves through his articulation of the Indigenous struggle. Manuel and Derrickson speak to the fierce loyalty Indigenous peoples have towards the land, and this must be something understood by non-Indigenous peoples. Therefore, the point of successful negotiations will depend on how well we can work together to achieve a common understanding of the issues related to the land (p. 229). Unfortunately, as a country we are still not there because we have not been unsettled by this country’s history and treatment of Indigenous peoples. This, in fact, is the most unsettling aspect of the work ahead of us, especially as educators, and as leaders. Undoubtedly, it will take some unsettling, it will take a special person with courage to read his book and take it to heart. I am sure if Manuel were alive today, he would likely be touched by the reaction to his book, particularly the call-to-action that would include reading his book to set the foundation for understanding Canada’s relationship with Indigenous peoples.

As Canada moved towards celebrating its 150th birthday, a group who identifying themselves as *Unsettling Canada 150* ([http://unsettling150.ca](http://unsettling150.ca)) called for a nation-wide action on July 1st, 2017. Through the *Unsettling Canada 150*’s website and social media outlets they encouraged Canadians to read *Unsettling Canada: A National Wake-Up Call*. At the time, having read the book, I felt somewhat encouraged and inspired by this particular call-to-action, and although the event went largely unnoticed by many, it was certainly worth observing. Becoming unsettled also requires action; one must not only become unsettled, but also educated in the struggles of Indigenous peoples. This is a global struggle, particularly if we are prepared to acknowledge what is before us [humans] in terms of policies that undermine not only Indigenous self-determination, but also the future outlook of this planet. Grand Chief Ronald Derrickson shares the profound words found in his daughter’s *warrior song*, which say, “Wake up. Fight for
it. The journey’s just begun…” I am awake. Ready to fight, as my journey to educate non-Indigenous has begun. As I venture into aspects of settlerism, I do so to pay homage to those who bravely call themselves settlers and engage in the difficult, but rewarding work of decolonization.

Frankly speaking, I have friends and colleagues, like Paulette Regan, Adam Barker, and Emma Battell Lowman, who proudly identify as settlers. This name holds a particular meaning within the discourse of Indigenous peoples, unsettling and settlerism. Regan’s (2010) entire book is premised on being a settler; she embraces her identity while encouraging others to become unsettled by Canada’s dark history. She draws on former Prime Minister Harper’s 2008 apology for Indian Residential Schools (IRS) to make a settler call-to-action; she notes that “the apology marked a watershed moment for national truth telling about Canada’s past” (p. 2). With the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), Regan is encouraged, viewing it as an opportunity for the public to participate in truth telling (p. 8). Regan has helped shape the definition of settler; particularly as she argues that “we [settlers] must take risk interacting differently with Indigenous people – with vulnerability, humility, and a willingness to stay in the decolonizing struggle of our own discomfort” (p. 13). Standing strong, Regan acknowledges her privilege as a settler and the responsibility that comes with such an identity (p. 13).

Regan is self-reflective, stressing the importance of unsettling the settler within. Regan is an influential scholar who helps provide a framework for understanding residential schools, unsettling, settlerism and truth telling. As mentioned earlier, Battell Lowman and Adam also identify as Canadian settlers, and I am fortunate to know them both. I came to know Adam in 2004, as a member of a cohort in the Indigenous Governance program at UVic and later I met
Emma. I have tremendous respect for them both, as allies and warriors who accept the challenge and have gone on to co-author *Settler Identity and Colonialism in Canada* (2015). Battell Lowman and Barker (2015) also set forth to give definition to settler identity, and equally as important, they give definition to 21\textsuperscript{st} century colonialism in Canada. Recognizing the term is loaded, the authors take personal responsibility for identifying themselves as settlers while give meaning to the term through an honest articulation, noting,

*Settler*. This word voices relationship to structures and process in Canada today, to the histories of our peoples on this land, to Indigenous peoples, and to our own day-to-day choices and actions. *Settler*. This word turns us toward uncomfortable realisations, difficult subjects, and potential complicity in systems of dispossession and violence. *Settler*. This word represents a tool, a way of understanding and choosing to act differently. A tool we can use to confront the fundamental problems and injustices in Canada today. *Settler*. It is analytical, personal and uncomfortable. It can be an identity that we claim or deny, but that we inevitably live and embody. It is who we are, as a people, on these lands. We are Settler Canadians. (p. 2)

In a powerful and elaborate way, Battell Lowman and Barker also help define settlerism in a way only settlers can. The authors speak passionately about their own realization of who they are as Settler Canadians, which includes acknowledging the price Indigenous peoples pay at the hands of violence and dispossession. Battell Lowman and Barker see the value of identifying as settlers who aim to confront colonialism and the injustice Indigenous peoples continue to face today. With their hearts on their sleeves, Battell Lowman and Barker remain committed to unsettling while maintaining relationships to Indigenous peoples. They set out to explore Canada’s narrative, social structures and reaction of resistance towards Indigenous peoples with hope of learning how we are all going to live together on the land (p. 2).

Bravely speaking to the need for Canada to fix the “Indian Problem,” Battell Lowman and Barker turn it around to ask Canadians to see “that problems facing Indigenous communities originates with us” (p. 6). What I have come to appreciate about Battell Lowman and Barker is
their devotion to broaden their understanding of the Indigenous struggle for self-determination. Barker and I were in the 2004 IGOV cohort spending a good deal of time together, which led to our 2007 graduation. Their book and publications offer the reader, the settler, the human being, a source of great comfort, but also discomfort; nonetheless Lowman and Barker have done their homework. I appreciate how we can work together in honest and passionate conversations about the work ahead of us, uncomfortable, or not.

As I absorb the words and meaning of settlerism these authors have shared, I try and wrap my brain around it in a way that I can I reflect back on what I have learned and give back. I feel as though it is not my place to determine what to call non-NCN causing a level of discomfort that continues to plague me in ways that I did not expect. So naturally, I toyed with the idea of not including it, as though I could get away with it or something (thinly veiled sarcasm). Further, I would add that unsettling and settlerism go hand-in-hand, and therefore, I must be prepared to speak or respond to either theory or concept. By drawing on friends and colleagues to assist in articulating settlerism, I was able to broaden my understanding, but not necessarily overcome the discomfort of using the term settler to describe academic colleagues, friends or strangers. This feeling comes from experiences of being stripped of identity and having it replaced with Indian, Native, or Aboriginal. Over the last five years, I have been in search of words, ideas, something to help me articulate this feeling that something is missing from this important conversation. However, it was not until June 2017 when I was introduced to Chelsea Vowel’s (2015) chapter entitled Settling on a Name: Names for Non-Indigenous Canadians (pp. 14-22) that I could come to terms with my discomfort. In this chapter Vowel speaks to the nature of the book, one founded in relationships reflecting the past, present, and future, and asking the question “how are we are going to live together on this land we call home?” (p. 14).
This particular sentiment of learning to (better) live together on this land is something shared by authors Manuel and Derrickson (2015, p. 12) and Lowman and Barker (2015, p. 116) who bring the question of relationships back to the center.

Vowel notes there is “no sanctioned and widely accepted terms with which to refer” to non-Indigenous (p. 14) stressing that the right language must be identified or a discussion cannot occur (p. 15). In some respect, one can begin to see the importance of finding the right language together and be transparent about it when building lasting relationships. Vowel has certainly struck a chord when she said that applying “settler” to non-NCN is not a racial term, but rather a relational one (p. 16). Regardless of terminology or name employed, there is value in acknowledging the role of unsettling within the Canadian/Indigenous educational context; the names or terms offer the curious non-NCN reader a starting point for understanding relationship with Indigenous peoples and communities.

In this chapter, I have explored some key issues that I perceive to be central to Unsettling the Academy. The significance of what is and what is not named is considered including how to identify non-Indigenous peoples. Key authors who have taken up settlers and unsettling are explored. The matter of naming is essential if we are to have real conversations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. In the next and final chapter, I continue with my consideration of the love and pain (ya?akmis) of unsettling and Indigenizing the academy, recommending some key actions that can move us forward with this major project of transformation.
5.3 A Nuu-chah-nulth Perspective on Unsettling the Academy

*I lost my talk*

*I lost my talk
The talk you took away.
When I was a little girl
At Shubenacadie school.

*You snatched it away:
I speak like you
I think like you
I create like you
The scrambled ballad, about my world.*

*Two ways I talk
Both ways I say,
Your way is more powerful.*

*So gently I offer my hand and ask,
Let me find my talk
So I can teach you about me.*

By Rita Joe

I love Rita Joe and her poems because her words touch my heart, open my mind, and help me do the important work I do in education. This particular poem is my “go to” poem for academic presentations on Indigenous peoples, colonialism, and genocide in Canada; however, it is usually the last slide I show. For me, this poem carries a childhood story of pain and despair that leads into present day resentment while leaving hope for the future. Generally speaking, this poem unsettles non-Indigenous peoples because of its obvious references to hopelessness, oppression, and genocide (from the eyes of the child). The poem shares an Indigenous truth about educational experiences that denied identity and language. In my experience, this kind of

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30 Rita Joe and *Canadian Woman Studies*: 1989, *Canadian Woman Studies* 10, 2&3, p. 28
unsettling can lead towards feelings of guilt, shame or anger often leading the reader to ignore or deny the last and most important paragraph. With kindness, sprinkled with bravery, Rita invites the reader to join her in journey to create understanding about who she is as an Indigenous woman. The poem is embedded in the past, present, and future of our relationships together on these lands.

There is just as much value in understanding the past experiences of Indigenous peoples, as there is in the present and future. Rita points to the past, as a source of contention while teaching us about the horrendous treatment of Indigenous peoples in residential schools. She eloquently brings us into her present reality with her feelings of despair and powerlessness, but not before leaving us with some hope for the future. Like Rita, I too want to show you who I am and offer insights into discourses of unsettling and settlerism; more importantly, I hope you take my hand, unsettled or not, so we may begin this journey together. Without doubt, my Nuu-chah-nulth-aht perspective on unsettling will vary from already mentioned authors Manuel (2015), Battell Lowman and Barker (2015), Vowel (2016), and Regan (2010). Each book offers a perspective on Indigenous peoples, unsettling and settlerism in Canada that help shape our own understanding of each discourse. Manuel’s lived political and cultural experiences guided him through acts of resistance and perseverance, either on the land or in the courtroom.

Through exploring their own identity, Battell Lowman and Barker engage readers in their authentic desire to decolonize. Vowel’s guide to understanding Indigenous peoples is honest, personal and intriguing. Regan is a pioneer in the field of unsettling, but a true warrior of humanity in her vision of reconciliation. I will build upon the existing discourses; I will also offer a unique perspective based on observation and experience. I feel privileged to have both rich FCT and a Western education, which guide me along this journey. Nan Esther’s vision and
instructions to get an education has given me the determination to make it this far. Further, I will never forget the contributions of loved ones who have gone onto the spirit world, particularly Marie Cooper and late Joyce Underwood. These beautiful souls dedicate their lives to family cultural teachings, Western education, and Indigenous self-determination and always with the future generations in mind. They inspire me while giving me the strength to go forward in Indigenous and post-secondary education with a good heart and mind. Unsettling the current colonial structure occurs across faculties, disciplines, departments, and administration; it has left institutions and educational leaders grappling with notions of decolonization, indigenization, and reconciliation. I know I am. In this chapter I continue to examine this unsettling from my own lived experiences, both personally and professionally.

Since 2007, I have taught or facilitated learning(s) centered on understanding Indigenous peoples in Canada. Together with the above-mentioned literature and years of experience, I have some insight into what might further unsettle non-Indigenous within the academy. I chose to use “academy” because it is most representative of those who attend PSE and the discourse of art, science and literature\(^31\); quite simply, I like the word “academy.” Although from a NCN perspective, the academy doors are fiercely guarded with a particular reverence for Western epistemological frameworks for teaching and learning. This points to the challenges that lay ahead with respect to confronting the ugly and paralyzing truth about Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations in Canada.

The truth is subject to personal interpretation; however, from a NCN family perspective, it can also be experienced collectively. Therefore, the same truth can exist both separately and

\(^31\) [https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/academy](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/academy)
collectively. The truth from Indigenous peoples’ perspective is unpleasant to say the least, and stems from colonialism; it can leave some paralyzed with feelings of guilt, shame and fear. Here I draw on my lived experiences as well as experiences teaching in the Post-Degree Professional Program (PDPP) and Child and Youth Care: Indigenous Context at the University of Victoria (2007–2011). From these experiences come the unsettling aspects of truth that I have observed, both as a student and employee, within post-secondary institutions. Influenced by Regan (2010), Manuel and Derrickson (2015), Battell Lowman and Barker (2015) and Vowel (2016) and their theories of unsettling and settlerism, I am able to add to the discourses through a Nuu-chah-nulth perspective that emphasizes the unsettling of the academy. What I continue to learn is that doing the good work is not easy, particularly unpacking the “mess” in education.

It is overwhelming to witness the reactions of learners to the history, policies, practices, and treatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada; it is unsettling to learn the truth, as Regan (2006) shares her lived experiences of hearing residential school survivors’ stories of pain and loss. It is just as unsettling for me, the author, as it is for you, the reader, to be confronted with this kind of ugly truth about the place we all call home. Internationally speaking, Canadians like to see themselves a peacemakers with little to no history of colonization32. Regan (2006) nails it on the head when she says, “The peacemaker myth lies at the heart of the settler problem; it informs, however unconsciously, the everyday attitudes and actions of contemporary politicians, policy makers, lawyers, and negotiators, and it remains an archetype of settler benevolence, fairness, and innocence in the Canadian public mind” (p. 87). Canada, as a peacemaking country, is a myth-debunked by scholars like Regan, causing an element of unsettling and curiosity. In

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addition, Canadians become unsettled by the lack of understanding with respect to Indigenous peoples, which stems from the dominant culture’s construction of history and education.

From this perspective, there is no way around the mess or escape from feelings of discomfort, but instead it must be tackled head on with confidence. As such I have consciously chosen to teach/facilitate courses with Indigenous content; in the past I have taught mandatory courses (i.e. child and youth care, education), and today I facilitate peer-based sessions on understanding Indigenous peoples. Combined with a NCN perspective, these experiences contribute to the NCN perspective on unsettling, within the context of the academy. In my humble opinion, there are three unsettling aspects to truth that are often overlooked or briefly touched upon; they are, genocide, racism, and expressions of Indigenous self-determination. It is not to say Regan, Battell Lowman, Barker, or Manuel do not speak to those particular aspects of truth; however, it is to say that from my experiences and observations, what unsettles people the most is learning how to bring a relational understanding of who Indigenous peoples are and what they are about in terms of self-determination. This process can be painful for Indigenous peoples/educators at times, however, it is the ya’akmis aspect of engaging in such work.

From my observation, as an educator in post-secondary education, cultural genocide unsettles those whose image of Canada has been shattered by the truth of the poor treatment of Indigenous peoples. Further, as the conversations evolve about the government’s policies and practices, the learner begins to recognize the intent was not about assimilation, but genocide. As courses, programs and services for Indigenous peoples in post-secondary continue to grow, so does the truth about the dehumanizing treatment of Indigenous peoples by government and society in general (in terms of racism, violence, etc.). Genocide, as a word or a name, sometimes evokes anger, shame, and even curiosity in those who open themselves up to learning about
Indigenous peoples. We need to hear and understand Indigenous peoples’ experiences with government policies and practices, particularly the *Indian Act*’s sections that pertain to residential schools and creations of reserves, which can be described as genocidal. However, and more recently, the term “cultural genocide” has been introduced by the TRC in its final report along with Vowel (2016) sentiments who notes that the TRC has sufficiently “made its case for the inclusion” of cultural genocide, as the term to describe Canada’s treatment of Indigenous peoples.

Vowel encourages others to pick up the TRC’s final report or at least the executive summary and 94 Calls-to-Action and read it. The term cultural genocide has been employed over the years by Indigenous scholars to describe the dehumanizing treatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada (Manuel, 2015, p. 32). As described in the TRC’s *A Knock on the Door: The Essential History of Residential Schools* (2016),

*Cultural genocide* is the destruction of those structures and practices that allow the group to continue as a group. States that engage in cultural genocide set out to destroy the political and social institution of the targeted group. Land is seized, and populations are forcibly transferred and their movement is restricted, spiritual practices are forbidden, and objects of spiritual value are confiscated and destroyed to prevent the transmission of cultural values and identity from one generation to the next. (p. 3)

The TRC’s definition of cultural genocide captures the intense reality that the killing of culture existed through a policy like residential schools and the banning of the potlatch.

Although Vowel avoids taking a position on the uses of the term cultural genocide, she does note that some are put off by the term adding, “it unnecessarily modifies the word genocide” (p. 174). I appreciate the TRC’s efforts to provide definition to Indigenous experiences with residential schools; however, it is just that, a definition provided by a government-funded commission. The *Indian Act* is in itself a genocidal piece of legislation and is responsible for the ongoing
destruction of lands, resources and families. Grandpa Moe used to say that the family is the backbone of who we are asʔiiḥatisatḥ, and that naturally the government, through policy and practice, would want to destroy the family and culture to get access to the land and resources. He truly was a genius, but I did not figure out what he meant until I returned to post-secondary education to obtain a Bachelor of Art in Political Science with a Minor in Indigenous Studies. This combination of academic fields not only brought to light how political structures and systems operate in Canada, but also how, through policies and practice, Indigenous peoples were targets of genocide.

Neu and Therrien (2003) in Accounting for Genocide: Canada’s Bureaucratic Assault on Aboriginal People reinforce the concept of genocide by adding, “Those government processes are firmly entrenched within the broader phenomena of modernity, colonialism and genocide” (p. 5). Undoubtedly, cultural genocide has occurred, continues to occur under the guise of colonialism. I can attest to the pain felt from the killing of the culture (family cultural teachings) through internalized racism and hatred, which has led to substance abuse, suicide and mental illness that have and continue to kill members of my family today. Family experiences of genocide are told through oral, recorded or written stories passed down from one family generation to the next ensuring that we do not forget the painful experiences and realities of colonialism in Canada.

Running along the banks of maḥtišas (or Queen’s Cove) I can remember Nan Esther and Grandpa Joe working hard to keep grandchildren, like myself, warm and well fed. I was surrounded by nature and living off the plentiful resources while immersed in language, culture, traditions, and ceremonies. The times spent with my great grandparents in maḥtišas were foundational in terms of understanding who I am today. Nan Ether’s desire for me to get an
education so we [family] could survive in the Whiteman’s world was founded on the belief that I knew who I was, as quuʔas-sa. My great grandparents lived during a time when sacred ceremonies of the potlatch were banned, they could not vote, they were taken to residential schools and returned to their reserve with limited rights. This was their experience with government policies and practices right up to the time when I was born in 1967. I remember as a child playing on the beach where Grandpa Joe would tell us that when he was a boy there were so many fish that “you could walk on water over them.” This was followed by Nan Esther’s point that when I got older there would be no fish; they were instilling values, beliefs, and teachings that would help me survive in an ever-changing world; she modeled these values everyday showing us all the time.

Adjacent to us was Grandpa Moe, Grandpa Joe’s younger brother, who I always remember being a distinguished man with a thin face and grey hair. I remember he went to meetings with other Indigenous men; he was a politician for 60 years. More often than not, Grandpa Joe and I would wander over for a visit, a biscuit and tea. I remember sitting there quietly, sipping on my warm tea, I listened to them talk about the meetings Grandpa Moe attended with the Native Brotherhood and “Indian Affairs.” I grew up understanding the struggle for self-determination described in Chapter Four. I did not know at the time what it all meant, but what I did know was that it was important to be “Indian” and that the Whiteman or more specifically the government was the problem. I left maḥtiʔas before the church could take me off to residential school and instead went to live with my parents in Tsawout. As I mentioned in Chapter Four, my late parents were survivors of residential school; they survived in despair, silence, and violence. Both felt as though they did not fit into the Whiteman’s world – they were
not White enough nor did they fit in at home on the reserve – they “lost” or “forgot” their culture.

Residential school survivor testimony was given to the TRC over the course of five and half years (2009–2015) where Commissioners heard stories of genocide. Unfortunately, my parents did not live long enough to tell their stories, to be heard and heal wounds of the past. From the few dehumanizing stories they shared, I gather that as children and young adults my parents’ experience destroyed their sense of who they were. As a result, they took to drinking, getting drunk and more than a few times a week. At the time, I did not see their pain and suffering, only their addiction. The destruction of culture, practices, political and social institutions, stealing and raping the land while restricting spiritual practices kills the self-determining spirit; it is genocide, period.

There is no other way to get around stories of Indigenous truth and genocide, prompting an unsettling of those who were unaware of the atrocities or government policies and practices. Genocide is genocide is genocide is genocide, regardless of what word or name or term is placed in front of it. Racism has roots in colonialism (Memmi, 2000, p. viii). In *Racism* by Albert Memmi (2000), Kwame Anthony Appiah writes in the *Forward*, “In the course of developing his account of colonialism, Memmi had to come to grips with racism” (p. viii). Racism and colonialism are interdependent, and both are detrimental to Indigenous peoples and self-determination.

Memmi argues that racism exists as a philosophy with “three principal arguments” (p. 5), as follows:

1) Pure races exist, each distinct from the others, implying that meaningful biological differences exist between groups and the individuals that compose them.
2) Pure races are biologically superior to those that are not pure, and this superiority brings with it as well a psychological, social, cultural and spiritual superiority.

3) These multiple superiorities both explain and legitimize the dominance and the privilege of the superior group.

Racism is a global phenomenon experienced by people of color, people like Indigenous peoples of Canada who can attest to the great lengths the powers-to-be will go to feed the colonial monster. As I began to trace the theoretical roots of racism, I was immediately pointed in the direction of Memmi where I am reminded of the struggle I had in comprehending his book *Racism*. However, all these years later I still find value in what I can understand of Memmi, who was influenced by the political minds of Franz Fanon and Jean-Paul Sartre (p. vii). Needless to say, I struggle with the larger or broader theories of racism, but have chosen to stick with Memmi, in part, because he interprets racism as a theory and philosophy.

Memmi (2000) adds, “To understand racism, one must address the real purpose at which it is aimed and from which it is born” (p. 21). Throughout the book, readers can begin to understand the violent assault on peoples of color who have become colonized through the use of laws that require compliance. Racism is about power, control and violence, residing in the belly of the colonial beast. I do not always remember where I hear things, but I do remember who said them. Here is a quote from Malcolm X, who had this to say about racism, “You cannot have capitalism without racism.”

In my very simplistic and Indigenous way, capitalism is about corporations killing the people whose territory (land and waters) is rich with resources, like trees, fish, water where extraction is occurring at alarming rates. As NCN, I think we had to be labeled savage, lazy, drunks and “othered” as a way to make room for modernity or a modern day

Canada, which has the image of a country with a good economy, high living standards (job, mortgage and children), global peacekeepers who make delicious maple syrup.

When asked by one of my undergraduate students what I thought about the connection between racism and capitalism, I responded by saying that “they” [State] had to kill us, the caretakers of territorial lands, waters and resources. Our NCN values and beliefs do not permit us to condemn any living thing to extinction, or to rape and pillage the beautiful gifts (resources) bestowed to us by our ancestors. It is said within my particular family that our reverence for the important relationships to the land, resources and the creator, supersede the desire for material gains that derive from the depletion and extraction of resources. Therefore, racism is a necessity of colonialism as well as capitalism causing the existing rift between Indigenous and the Canadian state today.

As I near the end of my dissertation I recognizes that the journey to better understand myself, as an educator, lay in first understanding myself first as a human being. Over the years I have worked hard to understand perspectives of decolonization while integrating it into practice, not always an easy thing to do, but certainly worth the effort. For me, decolonization meant thinking differently while making others (students, faculty, friends) aware of colonialism and Indigenous peoples. I generally provide literature and information to help others determine for themselves what decolonization means to them. Decolonization has and is an important aspect of post-secondary education pushing the boundaries of the academy. It has only been in the last few years that I have spent time delving into Indigenization and reconciliation within the context of my practice. Initially I did not know what either meant, however, over the course of time I have come to realize that Indigenization and reconciliation can mean different things to different people. For myself, these processes continue to evolve and change, but bring forward much
needed awareness of colonialism, and the impacts it has on Indigenous peoples (particularly students).

To knowingly bring decolonization, Indigenization and reconciliation into an educational setting means to be prepared for enthusiasm, fear and rejection of such processes and theories. Regardless of what may or may not happen I spend a great deal of time preparing for class or circle in the sense that I am ready to handle both the good and bad aspects of such materials. I usually ask students and/or peers if they know anything about decolonization, Indigenization or reconciliation, and if they are willing to share those insights with the group and me. I do not go in lecturing about my own personal interpretations, but leave room for the group to develop their own sense of what those processes mean and allow space for further articulation or definitions of such terms; I find this approach to be less confrontational and more conducive to the conversations. I find people are more willing and inclined to engage in these difficult conversations if they feel they have more control over what the definitions mean to them. I remember when I first started teaching in post PSE students wanted me to define these terms as though there were only one definitions, however, over time they saw the value in determining what it means for themselves.

As a practitioner I recognize the silencing and oppression of Indigenous peoples, and consciously chose to allow students and/or peers to determine what decolonization, Indigenization and reconciliation mean to them. I say to participants that I do not have all the answers, and that learning is a life long process. I share with them a quote from a dear family friend, Victor Underwood, who once told me “there is no wrong way to do the right thing,” meaning we (as humans) have to start somewhere. I was raised to be mindful of others, and their feelings; I know now that FCT have and continue to influence and shape who I am, as a
practitioner, but more importantly who I am as a human being. A colleague once told me that
the work we do to educate others about Indigenous people means ‘holding a space’ for those who
chose to enter the classroom or circle. This colleague said it is hard, but rewarding work,
particularly to bare witness to the transformation that occurs when people learn the history and
truth about the treatment of Indigenous peoples. This insight has helped me tremendously,
especially in terms of facilitating tough conversations. As a practitioner, I do my best to be
present to emotions that arise as a result of learning about colonialism and Indigenous peoples.

These things NCN called capitalism, colonialism, and racism are inherently connected to
the arrival of Europeans to our shores. Unfortunately, this vicious and unsustainable cycle
continues to plague all of us today; it is a great source of contention with Indigenous peoples. It
goes against NCN self-determining principles of respecting hišuk?išcawak and life itself. Again,
this is part of the mess that must be unpacked in order to address Indigenous experiences with
racism. However, until recently, discussing racism is not something I wanted to do, nor did I
want to engage in a conversation about it.

In fact, I have spent a great deal of my life in fear of racism, primarily as a result of lived
experiences. Growing up with alcoholic Indigenous parents, we experienced poor treatment
almost every time we stepped out and entered a place of business, like the bank, grocery stores,
and restaurants. I remember non-Indigenous whispering and pointing as we entered the bank in
Sidney, BC with my drunken parents who were cashing a “welfare” cheque before hitting up the
liquor store. I was, and am, very much aware of the stigma associated with being Indigenous,
poor and having alcoholic parents, and as such, I would walk with my head hanging down in
shame. If my family, which included my younger sister, mom, dad and myself, made it back
home without poor treatment or racist comments towards us, I would feel a huge sense of relief.
Admittedly, it is hard to shake off these feelings of inadequacies and shame, which sadly followed me into my marriage, motherhood and post-secondary education.

For Indigenous peoples like myself, who enroll in post-secondary education, racism is a real aspect of our experiences. In *Colonized Classrooms: Racism, Trauma and Resistance in Post-Secondary Education* Sheila Cote-Meek (2014) writes, “Clearly, not only are Aboriginal peoples under-represented in the academy, but contending with racism has an enormous impact on an individual’s sense of well-being” (p. 66). Having experienced racism my entire life, I expected no different upon my arrival to PSE where racism lurks in the halls, classrooms, cafeterias and libraries. Assumptions and stereotypes continue to dominate mindsets of the average Canadian student who remains unaware of the atrocities faced by Indigenous peoples, historically and contemporarily.

During my undergraduate years in political science, I remember the rare time being called upon, as if I was an expert in the field of Indigenous peoples and politics. I was embarrassing; I wanted to crawl under a rock. I had little experience in my own First Nations politics, leaving it in favor of a PSE. In a political science study group, I remember being asked what the deal was with my free education; I was taken aback and singled out. My response was limited, given I knew the answer was much more complex than saying what I had heard grandpa Moe say: “it’s a fiduciary obligation of the Crown,” meaning it is government policy and practice. I also suggested that if they wanted to learn more, then they should do a research paper on the topic because that was the extent of my knowledge. I could see some disappointment on the faces of those who wanted to know more, right there and then, but what could I do? After all, I had enrolled in political science in search of the very same answers.
Upon reading Manuel’s (2015) *Unsettling Canada*, I could relate to the experiences of racism he described through the use of stories and memories. I immediately felt a kinship with Manuel’s writing, his stories and political genius. He speaks frankly to the racism he and his family faced in their own territory stating, “A generation later, as chief, I was still dealing with racist acts against our children” (p. 2). Racism continues to plague Indigenous peoples in Canada, both in and outside of education, creating barriers that causes the epistemological collisions seen in classrooms. The dominant story of Indigenous peoples is one of backwardness, being uncivilized and savages who are the problem, which is more commonly known as the “Indian problem.” There is no way of getting around the fact that racism continues to exist in Canada, therefore, and continues to be part of the everyday experiences of Indigenous peoples in PSE. The truth of the matter is that racism underlines concepts of the “Indian problem.”

Internalized racism is real, it has left me with this built-in fear and anxiety, a sort of unsettling if you like, particularly as I attempt to voice concerns of discrimination, racism and violence against Indigenous peoples. I have felt this way my entire life, and continue to be plagued by colonial demons of hatred and intolerance bringing me to this place where I am now. Racism occupies a great deal of my life experiences and informs how I walk in a world that is not my own. FCT, however, provide a framework for understanding one’s self, values, beliefs in relation to hišukʔišcawak, which includes confronting racism with integrity and kindness. These experiences provide an opportunity to informatively confront racism with confidence and integrity with the hope of inspiring positive change.

### 5.4 Expressions of Indigenous Self-Determination

There is a truth that speaks to unsettling experiences associated with expressions of Indigenous self-determination, legally, politically, or otherwise. These expressions are layered,
multiple and diverse unsettling the average Canadian who does not understand the complex nature of Indigenous self-determination. From observation and research there are three specific expressions of self-determination that unsettle non-Indigenous. The first expression is in relation to Indigenous rights and the need to protect and protest, drawing specifically on the 1990 *Oka Crisis* and the 2012-13 *Idle No More*. The second expression is the series of successful court cases regarding Indigenous rights, like Claxton v Saanichton Marina (1989) and other important victories like Sparrow v her majesty the Queen in 1990; however, my story is linked to the Claxton v Saanichton court case. The third expression of self-determination that is unsettling is negotiated agreements with respect to land and resources, like the British Columbia Treaty Commission (BCTC) process. As Indigenous peoples, we can be seen as a threat with respect to land and resource rights; therefore, we come up against these ideas that we want to send non-Indigenous peoples back to Europe, or that we want ALL our land back. Comments like “Indigenous peoples should recognize that they cannot go back in time in life that no longer exist” or “what do you people want?!” are frequent.

Without seeing Indigenous peoples for who they are or what it all really means to Indigenous peoples, there can be no real understanding of Indigenous self-determination. Until such a time, expressions of Indigenous self-determining efforts, such as modern treaties, victorious court cases that assigns rights to lands and access to resources will remain unsettling to many. Vowel’s (2016) notes that “there were times when emotions ran high because the issues we were discussing were challenging and very personal. When you are talking about the relationship between Indigenous and Canada, it is very difficult for the conversation not to get personal if you live on these lands” (p. 2). There is a lot at stake for all those who occupy Canada, particularly in terms of land, resources, rights and title; however, until expressions of
self-determination can be understood, little can be achieved by way of political investments like reconciliation. For Indigenous people, self-determination continues to be at the heart of the struggle; however, until it can be understood as a way of being and knowing in relation to hišukʔišcawak, the struggle will only continue.

Since I can remember, numerous grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins have willingly and actively engaged in all three expressions of self-determination. I grew up hearing and witnessing the struggles for Indigenous self-determination, the right to determine our own lives, in our territories. I heard stories from Nan Esther, Grandpa’s Joe and Moe about how “they” (government or Whiteman) put us on the reserve(s) and stripped us of our rights and were forcing NCN to become like them [Whiteman]. There was no doubt that I was being raised to understand this struggle for self-determination, self-independence; however, colonial interruptions occurred, interfering with the adequate transmission of family cultural teachings. Having come back to the struggle, I can better see the correlations between Indigenous self-determination and colonialism in a ways that help me understand what is unsettling about Indigenous protests, court cases or legal governing agreements. Growing up in maḥtišas with Nan Esther, Grandpa’s Joe and Moe I felt a deep sense of pride sitting around the table listening to them talk about the fight for our rights. At the time, the conversations were centered on what grandpa Moe called the “land question,” and as I child I did not know what that meant, but what I did know is that something was not right.

Only “Indians” lived on reserve. Only “Indians” were poor and “Indians” were not liked by non-Indigenous. Having children sit with grandparents and family during important conversations like this was normal and continues today with my children and grandchildren. It was Nan Esther who taught me the importance of respecting all forms of life, right down to the
spiders. She would be watching and ready for those mischievous and unfolding opportunities to teach me something. I was about four or five years old playing in the living room when I saw a bug and took it upon myself to stomp the life out of it, and when nan Esther asked me why I killed it, I looked up at her and said, “bugs are gross,” and “I don’t like them.” She then proceeded to ask me very seriously, “now who’s going to take care of their babies?” Naturally, I was devastated, but paid much more attention to this teaching. Although the meaning might be lost in this story, the point is that my great grandmother taught me the importance of life, particularly for living beings that do not have a voice to stop injustices. I did not learn the extent of Grandpa Moe’s 60 years, as politician, until he came to live with us in 1994 and began to leave me aspects of his knowledge.

Grandpa Moe spoke of his political activism and involvement in the early days of the Native Brotherhood, which then became the West Coast Allied Tribes and later the West Coast District Society of Indian Chiefs (Smith, 2007, p. 9). Even as I listened to him share stories of his life, travels and activism, I was not completely aware of the magnitude those stories and teachings would later play in my life. I had not made the connection between the struggles of self-determination and grandpa Moe’s stories until I had to pick up the struggle myself. Grandpa Moe, Joe and nan Esther lived during time when Indigenous peoples could not vote, children were taken away to residential school, and the potlatch was banned. Under these oppressive conditions, my great grandparents persevered and rose above to defend and protect a way of life that the non-Indigenous people did not understand. Grandpa Moe would talk about leaders, like George Manuel of the Neskonlith, whom I knew nothing of at the time; however, years later I was introduced to *Brotherhood to Nationhood: George Manuel and the Making of the Modern Indian Movement* (1993) by Peter McFarlane.
Grandpa Moe worked hard to instill important values and beliefs, but also the rich history of advocacy for Indigenous self-determination. So much so that I became very much influenced by the activism of both George and his son Arthur Manuel. Both have passed on to the spirit world, but not before leaving a legacy of determination and conviction. Together these influences informed my understandings of what Indigenous political activism looked like because at that time I was not able to comprehend the complex nature of the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state. Later, years after I left home, both my late parents became involved in the “Save Saanichton Bay” protest held at the entrance of the Tsawout community (reserve). Simultaneously, the elected chief launched a lawsuit to stop the Saanichton Marina 1989, which was successful in the end. Although I did not witness the day-to-day action and protest, I always remember my parents’ willingness to defend the waters they so dearly loved, particularly as people who relied on the bountiful resources it provided. T-shirts were made with “Save Saanichton Bay” that my parents wore quite proudly.

By this time in my life, I was aware of the activism and protesting as it relates to the assertion of Indigenous self-determination. Although the big test in terms of who I was did not come until the summer of 1990 when the Oka Crisis was unfolding in front of the world. The Oka Crisis [Oka] is a long and complicated story between the Mohawks, the town of Oka in Quebec and the rest of Canada, which I did not completely understand at the time (it was pre-Grandpa Moe). Therefore, I was less equipped to understand the nature of the conflict between the Mohawks and the town of Oka. I was 23 years old, married with one child, living and working in the territories of the We Wai Kai Nation (Campbell River area). In the summer of 1990, I was preparing to return to school in September to upgrade English and Math so that I could attend the University of Victoria. I was not sure what I wanted to study, but I knew I
wanted it to advance Indigenous self-determination even if I did not know what it all meant at
the time. When Oka happened, it called into question my ability to stand with Indigenous
peoples during a time of struggle and crisis; I was working at the local bingo hall and adjacent
dry cleaners. Campbell River, at the time, was a logging, mill and fishing town with a decent
Indigenous presence, both on and off the reserve(s).

Most of my friends, employers and clients were non-Indigenous holding some very
strong opinions about the Oka Crisis, which made me feel both afraid and ashamed. I remember
watching the news alone while images of militant Mohawks with guns flashed across the
Television scaring me to the core; I just wanted everyone to get along. I would go to work and
avoid conversations pertaining to Oka, keeping my head down and nose clean (so to speak). I
could never answer, let alone respond to the ever so hostile question “what do you people want?”
I would jokingly say, “can’t we all just along?” or say “I don’t know.” As a young Indigenous
woman, I was not prepared to engage in a conversation with roots in racism and
misunderstanding; it was something I felt, but could not articulate at the time. Unfortunately, I
had lost sight of family cultural teachings, self-determination, and the struggle trying desperately
to hang on and survive in the moment. When Oka finally ended. I was so relieved, hoping as a
country we could all just get back to our lives as though it never happened. I was not ready to
commit to struggle, but I continued to live in it.

As I entered PSE, first in political science followed by Indigenous governance, I sat back
quietly observing the road to self-determination while trying to find my voice and place within
the struggle. It was not until the Idle No More movement of 2012-13 that I stepped up to stand
with hundreds of humans to protest the Federal government’s infringement of Indigenous rights.
The government was introducing parliamentary bills that would minimize “Indigenous
sovereignty and environmental protections,” and I finally understood the nature of the struggle for self-determination. Initially, I was apprehensive and afraid of the consequences, but instead chose to educate myself through immersing myself in the facts regarding these new parliamentary bills. I quickly learned about the detriment the bills would cause to self-determination, but also the environment (in terms of pushing through the pipelines). I felt a strong sense of responsibility compelling me to join the front lines of Idle No More and taking my family with me.

Although feeling liberated from my own confines, I faced backlash in and amongst friends and family. This again was a big test for me. Would I be able to defend my participation in Idle No More, or would I fall and stumble? Feeling like there was only one way to find out, I began to engage in empathetic, hostile, or awkward conversations about my involvement in the movement. Even as an EdD student I engaged the cohort and instructors in the educational policy course (EDST 577), where there seemed to be little to no interest in Idle No More. The more hostile conversations occurred with longtime friends who were frustrated, wondering what Indigenous peoples want. The willingness to take the time, to listen and learn about the longstanding issues and racism prevented these conversations from becoming transformational. I had a close friend tell me (over Facebook messenger) I was a racist, and to stop harping on White people for something they did not do and to get over the past. It was then I realized that expressions of Indigenous self-determination, in forms of activism or protesting, were unsettling. On the flip side, a number of empathetic friends emerged with a desire to broaden their understanding of who Indigenous peoples are, and what the actual issues are.

34 http://www.idlenomore.ca/story
The final expression of Indigenous self-determination that is unsettling is the signing of legal agreements that include land and money (i.e. modern day treaties or non-treaty agreements), particularly in the province called British Columbia (BC). The First Nations in the province called BC are diverse in languages, geography and cultures; unlike the other provinces there are very few treaties (i.e., Douglas Treaties 1849) or agreements (i.e., Sechelt Indian Band Self Governance Act, 1986) with respect to land and resources. Having grown up within the struggle, I am most familiar with the pursuit of the Indigenous “land question” quoting Grandpa Moe who helped lay the groundwork for treaty negotiations. One of the most memorable moments I had with Grandpa Moe was in 1996 where we (he and I) were preparing to table ḥiiḥatisatḥ a position paper with respect to land selection. He told me “we [ʔiiḥatisatḥ] did not cede (sign over our rights or land), surrender or lose it [rights, land & resources] in war.” This was ḥiiḥatisatḥ starting point for treaty negotiations in 1994 where Grandpa Moe was my “right hand,” or as I would say to him “I am your right hand woman.”

He was adamant that ḥiiḥatisatḥ assert complete dominion and jurisdiction over our ḥawillé (hereditary chiefs) ḥaḥuuli (territory, including resources); however, unlike the Maa-nulth, the six nations of the Nuu-chah-nulth who signed a modern day treaty in 2006, ḥiiḥatisatḥ remains in Stage Four, the Principle-in-Agreement (since 2000). The Village of Zeballos along with provincial forest and fish farm licenses unlawfully occupy ḥiiḥatisatḥ ḥaḥuuli, leaving us with a number of 4-acre reserves. As the former elected Chief of ḥiiḥatisatḥ and Treaty Negotiator, I can attest to the misperceptions of treaty negotiations and/or self-government agreements. These agreements involve land and money, and from observation, it is something taxpayers feel very strongly about in terms of giving up something so Indigenous peoples can have something. There is very little understanding about the history of Canada or relationship with Indigenous
peoples leaving many without context for land claims or self-government agreements.

Unfortunately, the most common misperception about these kinds of agreements is that Canadians have to give up something (land primarily) in order for Indigenous peoples to have something, self-government. However, what is actually at stake is the extinguishment of Indigenous title and rights in favor of defined title and rights set out in the agreement, which include some rights and small parcels of land. This aspect of treaty negotiation is a stalling point, as Indigenous peoples continue to reject the extinguishment formula in favor of retaining rights and title to the land.

Fortunately, Indigenous political activists George Manuel and his son Arthur Manuel have helped pave the way for not only Indigenous peoples, but non-NCN to understand the larger issues of Indigenous rights, land claims, self-government agreements, movements and more. As Arthur Manuel (2015) says, “Nothing we have ever gained has been given to us or surrendered without a fight” (p. 3), highlighting the tensions that arise in pursuing the land question or negotiations. Without over-using Senator Sinclair’s “mess” metaphor, it is important to note the depth of the mess, which is layered and complex, requiring time and patience. The process of unpacking the mess will undoubtedly cause emotional reactions, as we [educators] wade through terminology (i.e., finding names for mamahi or non-Indigenous peoples) to becoming unsettled by racism, genocide and Indigenous expression of self-determination. Unfortunately (or fortunately), there is no easy way around the ugly truth with respect to Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations, history, genocide or racism; the only way is by making our way through the mess, together.

Unsettling the academy from a Nuu-chah-nulth perspective is an important part of this journey, particularly in an effort to get beyond the unsettling nature of processes like
Indigenization, decolonization and reconciliation. Only by considering aspects of settler identity and the unsettling nature that comes with Indigenous expressions of self-determination can we begin to understand the barriers to these important processes. This final and last Chapter brings it all together to reflect on the journey to humanize post-secondary education.
Chapter 6: A Time to Reflect

I remember the moment Grandpa Moe realized I was beginning to understand the struggle for Indigenous self-determination, which has stayed with me, always. It was in that moment he decided to pack up his belongings and come live with me and my family so that he could pass “everything he had” on to us. I was struggling in life trying to figure out who I was and Grandpa Moe knew. He helped me find out who I was as quuʔas-sa, as ?iʔḥatisaqsup (woman of ?iʔḥatisath), particularly within the context of ?uuʔqʷaačii. He taught me to always take the high road, not to fall into gossip, jealously and hatred; he would say you have to rise above it, as it is part of the journey to becoming a good, kind, loving human being or quuʔas-sa. As a family we spent time sitting in the living room listening to grandpa share stories of the struggles to become human. As an elected council member, and later elected Chief of ?iʔḥatisath, I took Grandpa Moe with me; we spent a great deal of time together traveling from one meeting to another discussing politics and life. His life was spent rooted in family cultural teachings (FCT) while recognizing his role as a leader and elder.

Grandpa would say it was his job to pass on FCT to the younger generations of the family so that they would understand the importance of seeing themselves within the context ?uuʔqʷaačii. He would acknowledge that his time on earth was coming to an end, and that he would not be returning to this place, but be welcomed into the great beyond. This is ?uuʔqʷaačii or self-determination in the truest sense, and in that moment grandpa began to articulate what it meant “get past the gate (gates of heaven).” Grandpa would say that he done it [becoming a good human being] right this time around sternly saying, “when the time comes I will go to the great beyond to become a good ancestors and be there to guide you.” There is a belief and understanding in my family that part of our [humans’] time here on earth is to help
prepare us to become good ancestors in the afterlife. Right from the womb to birth to adolescence, we are taught how to become a good human being. Emphasis is placed on understanding NCN role in relationship to hišukʔišcawak or everything connected and one.

These family cultural teachings influence, guide, and inform how I understand myself, as quuʔas-sa, while recognizing that I am still learning how to become a good, kind, loving, and generous human being. Like Grandpa Moe, I, too, want to become a good ancestor who honours FCT. The role of family is essential, particularly in guiding one in the right direction, spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and physically; interwoven together, there is no separation. As I grow older I learn that becoming a good human being means I must continue to listen and observe FCT carefully; I must embody them while passing them onto the younger generations so that they, too, may become a good human being and later a good ancestor. Understanding one’s responsibilities and obligations within the context of FCT runs deep and long in my family. The passing down of FCT ensures that an understanding of ʔuuʔuuqʷaačii is passed down, and in place for the next generations’ benefit. Who I am as NCN very much informs who I am as a human being and an educational practitioner; the two are intrinsically linked and connected to my heart and mind.

Therefore, wanting to become a good ancestor is connected to my personal, professional, and academic passions to create understandings of Indigenous peoples and self-determination. In becoming a good human being, I have curiously pursued understandings of Indigenous self-determination and the ongoing injustices of colonial policies and practices. To this end I have learned much about who I am, as human and what it takes to become a good ancestor. As I near the end of my doctoral journey, I am reminded of the yaʔakmis it takes to create understandings of Indigenous peoples and self-determination within the context of post-secondary education.
The last five years have been spent re-immersing myself in FCT, relevant literature, and critical discussions regarding Indigenous peoples, self-determination, and PSE. This chapter will summarize where I began in this journey while reflecting what I have learned, offering humble observations. The next section “coming full circle” summarizes the journey from the beginning, while the second part addressed the observations made since 2012. The conclusion offers a few words of encouragement to those who choose to embark upon the journey to integrate IWKB.

6.1 Coming Full Circle

This journey to understand who I am, particularly in relation to PSE, began long before I embarked upon this doctoral journey in 2012. Of course, as I near the end of this journey and head towards the defense of my dissertation, I realize I have come full circle in terms of where I started. This journey of self-discovery has me hearing the echoes of nan Esther and her words of encouragement; I am reminded of why I embarked upon this educational journey. I set out to educate myself in the Western ways, as nan Esther encouraged, as a way to help Nuu-chah-nulth (NCN) people achieve self-determination. As I came to know who I am, as quuʔas-sa, as an educational practitioner, and grandmother, I recognize the responsibility to pass on FCT. I was born curious and my family has fed that curiosity by nurturing my spirit while encouraging me to get an education. I have pursued knowledge across disciplines, steeping myself in Western ways of knowing and being as it relates to political science, Indigenous governance and now post-secondary education.

This post-secondary journey has led me down the path of yaʔakmis, the love of new knowledge and the pain of navigating epistemological dominance. It was five years after graduating with a Master’s in Indigenous Governance before a doctoral research question(s) presented itself, prompting me to seek out the Doctor of Education (EdD). At the time I was
teaching undergraduate students a required course with Indigenous content, which taught me that most Canadians did not know about the history of Canada. I had not yet made the connections between my own personal experiences of racism and intolerance growing up Indigenous and the absence of Indigenous ways of knowing and being within education. It was at this time I questioned my ability to confront my fears and overcome internalized racism. Turning to the Creator, ancestors, and family it revealed itself to be a life challenge, the next step in my journey to become a good human being and ancestor. I felt strong and ready to learn more about racism, and intolerance. Having the future in mind, the children and grandchildren the journey to understand myself within post-secondary education began.

One of the most memorable years of my life was the summer of 2012 where I began to prepare to embark on doctoral studies and to leave for a 3-week trip to Europe to study the Holocaust. By this time, I had been teaching in post-secondary education for five years, and was eager to understand the dynamics of teaching content related to Indigenous peoples and their colonial experiences. Studying the Holocaust opened my eyes to the global hatred towards humans who embody a culture and spiritual understanding of themselves in relation to everything that is connected and one. Genocide is not about race; it is about killing humans who revere culture, spirituality and the earth. Once I started to learn about racism, intolerance and anti-Semitism, I began to see the connections between Jewish and Indigenous peoples in terms of reverence for culture, spirituality and the associated responsibilities. The journey to a foreign land to study hatred, intolerance and racism changed the way in which I understood myself, and Indigenous experiences of colonial genocide. The global connections between humans who respect life and sacred ceremonies while holding true to ancestral responsibilities was the thing I took to heart over the common experiences of genocide.
The segregation (ghettos, reserves) of humans, the taking of their valuables (resources, precious belongings) and scared objects (ceremonial masks) while killing them is a shared experience of half the planet’s population. Studying the Holocaust opened my eyes to global genocide and helped prepare me for the EdD program at the University of British Columbia (UBC). I decided not to teach mandatory Indigenous courses to undergraduate students so I could understand not only my own experiences of teaching, but the experiences of the students as well. I struggled to teach content related to Indigenous peoples to students who, for the most part, were unaware of the colonial policies and practices of the Canadian state. Initially, I did not recognize the kind of trauma associated with learning or relearning about Indigenous peoples’ experiences of genocide. Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students experienced a form of trauma as a result of learning about the hidden history of Canada; it was time for me to step back, learn more and improve upon my own educational practice.

For me, this was a personal journey to understand how NCN principles of ?uu?uuqʷaačii could support my doctoral endeavors and practices. What do NCN principles of ?uu?uuqʷaačii mean within my teaching practice, and further how could these principles influence post-secondary institutions? Unpacking the colonial mess and the experiences of Indigenous peoples within the context of PSE became my doctoral mission. I want to either eliminate or, at the very least, minimize the trauma experienced in the classroom. First, however, an examination and articulation of current perspectives on Indigenous self-determination within the context of policy and practice was in order. These perspectives of Indigenous self-determination vary amongst Indigenous peoples and the Canadian State. There are two kinds of Indigenous self-determination, the first is what might be considered a more “traditional” perspective, and the second perspective has deep roots in colonialism. The difference between the traditional and
non-traditional perspectives of self-determination is that the traditional or NCN perspectives are rooted in interconnectedness of all beings while the non-traditional perspective is one rooted in self-interest, which overlooks responsibilities to everything that is connected and one. Both perspectives continue to exist simultaneously and in opposition of each other. I do not like nor use the term “traditional” to describe Indigenous self-determination; instead I refer to the NCN term ?uuʔuuqʷaacii to describe my own understanding of Indigenous self-determination.

Although Indigenous perspectives of self-determination are diverse and vary in nature, generally speaking, there are common characteristics in relation to cultural teachings, values and beliefs that arise from relationships with each other, the land, ceremony and ancestors. The State’s perspective(s) of Indigenous self-determination arises out of old colonial policies and practices that oppose and undermine Indigenous perspectives of self-determination. Canada exercises an unlawful sovereignty, which includes the dispossession of Indigenous peoples from lands and resources that sustain self-determination. These State imposed policies and practices with respect to Indigenous peoples and governance often go without consultation. Instead, the Indian Act continues to dominate state legislation while maintaining policies and practices that infringe upon Indigenous peoples rights to self-determination.

This is not to say there are no existing, formal or legal agreements or treaties between the state and Indigenous peoples, but it is to say that more often than not these agreements favor the state’s interpretation of Indigenous self-determination. This interpretation is absent of NCN values and beliefs that respect hišukʔišcwak and the right to determine a way of life that honours FCT. Instead, these interpretations are responsible for the destruction of FCT and the ongoing despair seen in Indigenous communities today. Through the EdD process, it became apparent to me that I was still in search of answers in terms of how NCN principles of
?uuʔuuqʷaačii could influence my practice while influencing change within PSE. The endeavor to broaden my own understanding of the issues with respect to post-secondary and Indigenous peoples prompted me to return home for family guidance and direction. Rooted in FCT, ceremony and prayer the journey to understand my practice, while making a positive contribution to education, began to unfold. Amid the dense fog, metaphorically speaking, the path to a greater understanding guided me towards the unexplored terrain of Indigenous self-determination or more specifically NCN ?uuʔuuqʷaačii. This path to understand myself, as NCN, within the context of post-secondary education, is a journey fraught with experiences of invisibility and racism, but more so with misunderstandings of who I am as NCN. The lived experiences, as both student and teacher, within PSE became the source of my methodology (personal narrative).

I have drawn upon experiences to articulate the research findings that asked what the principles of NCN ?uuʔuuqʷaačii mean within the context of integrating IWKB within post-secondary initiatives. Moreover, what are the possibilities and limitations (yaʔakmis) along with what needs to change in order for the principles to be realized in these initiatives? Having taught Indigenous content course to undergraduates, it became apparent that little is known about NCN ?uuʔuuqʷaačii, Indigenous peoples and self-determination. Therefore, in an effort to address the questions, I had to take a step back and sit with my family before I could articulate principles of NCN ?uuʔuuqʷaačii. Recognizably there are a number of Indigenous scholars who have put forward their interpretations of self-determination adding their voices to the discourse. To give words or define NCN ?uuʔuuqʷaačii is not a liner process, as it requires the knowledge of FCT, patience, but more importantly it requires living ?uuʔuuqʷaačii. Fortunately, I was able to draw on NCN literature, my community Master’s project (2007), and oral history passed down by
Grandpa Moe, Uncle Tim and others. How I come to understand myself within the context of family is exemplified by who I am as quuʔas-sa or human.

Recognizing the importance of family and protocols, a brief introduction to who I am as sii-yaa-ilth-supt, or Dawn Smith, was necessary in terms of understanding the person behind the words, stories and dissertation. Describing family lineage is expected and an important aspect of ceremony, particularly in the context of doing something big and important, such as a dissertation. In reciting family lineage, place becomes apparent as well as where you are from (territory, house), and your family helps to provide context for those who have come to witness the ceremony. In this case, you as the reader, become the witness to the recital of my family lineage. Place, family and cultural teachings are foundational aspects of who I am as quuʔas-sa, as such, tribute must be paid in a manner consistent with FCT. As I pulled together the rich content and history of who I am and where I am from, a pattern arose revealing connections between stages of life (infant, adult, elder) and becoming a good human being. Values of love, kindness, respect, humility and generosity are at the core of who we are as NCN, as families and individuals.

As NCN, we hold true to the belief that we are all one and connected, as such, we honour those relationships of co-existence with all beings and pay tribute through acknowledgment and ceremony. A recognition of our existence, the importance of roles and responsibilities, as quuʔas-sa to ensure values and beliefs remain integral to who we are as NCN. Senator Sinclair also called on Canadians to look at themselves and ask “where do I come from, where am I going, why am I here, and most importantly, who am I?” Asking these questions is something Sinclair hopes can begin the conversation around who we are as Canadians. This articulation of who I am is meant to help you, the reader, understand who I am, but more importantly, it is a
guide to begin to ask yourself the same questions. Understandably, this is asking a lot of non-Indigenous Canadians, given that as a country we have never had to look at ourselves and ask those kinds of questions before, and it can be unsettling to say the least. Unsettling is something I witnessed and experienced myself within post-secondary institutions, and in conversation with non-NCN colleagues and others. It is a source of great contention requiring further examination. The discourse of unsettling, particularly as it relates to Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations (or lack of), is growing rapidly.

I drew on teaching experiences and the scholarship of Paulette Regan (2010), Adam Barker and Emma Battell Lowman (2015) to unpack notions of unsettling from a non-Indigenous perspective. Unpacking the colonial mess of education is difficult, and unsettling for everyone, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. To learn about the poor and unjust treatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada is unsettling. When the truth about Indigenous peoples and State policies and practices are revealed, it quickly becomes apparent that Indigenous peoples are on the losing end of the stick. It is increasingly difficult for Canadians to argue that Indigenous peoples have had plenty of opportunity to pull themselves out of poverty and despair. Little is known about Canada’s oppressive policies and practices as it relates to Indigenous peoples and self-determination. Canada and its educational systems have intentionally and purposefully constructed an image of Canada whereby the Indigenous peoples are seen as inferior and dependent on the state.

Most Canadians see Canada as a country known for its diplomacy and peacekeeping efforts; however, when the truth about the attempts to eliminate Indigenous peoples and self-determination is told, it becomes unsettling. It can be difficult at times to teach Indigenous content, particularly having borne witness to the guilt, shame and fear that arises. Learners are
challenged with understanding the diverse interpretations of Indigenous self-determination, the
colonial experience and societalc racism faced by Indigenous peoples. All this new learning is a
lot for students to take in and absorb, particularly over one semester; no wonder post-secondary
institutions struggle to integrate Indigenous ways of knowing and being into spaces and
curriculum. Perhaps more thought needs to be put into the structure of such courses, particularly
as a way to respect the Indigenous knowledge(s) that is being shared. Again, little is known
about Indigenous peoples, self-determination and how to integrate Indigenous worldviews and
perspectives in post-secondary education and curriculum. Instead we are left asking “why?” or
“how?” is the integration of Indigenous ways of knowing and being important to post-secondary
education?

This work can be intimidating and daunting, and incredibly taxing on the soul; however,
indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation are processes well under way providing ample
learning opportunities for the willing. Once I engaged in these processes I could see the need for
further examination, particularly in an effort to improve upon my own practice. Recognizably,
this work is not easy, and there are times I want to give up, instead I find ways to move forward.
How? That is something I get asked often, “How can you do this kind of work (educating non-
Indigenous peoples) in an era of ignorance and racism?” Initially, I did not know how to respond
to such a question; although over the years, and with the help of family, and cultural teachings I
say “I don’t do this work for myself, but for the children and future generations” and that “it is
my responsibility, particularly if I want to become a good ancestor.” Grandpa Moe once told me
that our people did not fear death because we strived to be good humans. As we grew old we
embrace the death because it means becoming an ancestor; we are not only concerned with the
here and now, but the after life as well. Here is where emphases is placed on yaʔakmis;

admittedly, there is more pain than love, however, the ever presence of love supersedes the pain.

6.1.1 Bring hił kʷiiʔił sił. Home

Coming full circle always includes bringing the work I do home; to this trip I bring hił kʷiiʔił sił home to family for approval. Just as the ancestors before me, I too am obligated to bring forward what I learn and share it, but not before ensuring accuracy with immediate family knowledge keepers like Uncle Tim and Grandma Josephine. I simply cannot go out into the world and share FCT without first going home to ask my family if I can share our valued teachings and beliefs. In the spirit of accountability I have gone to my grandmother first (April 28, 2018). I did an oral presentation of hił kʷiiʔił sił that brought both a tear to her eye, and a smile to her face. She said, “you pass.”

Figure 7: Grandma Josephine, April 28, 2018. Nuu-chah-nulth territory (Port Alberni, BC).
Following my visit, I brought the hard copy to Uncle Tim, but did not do an oral overview. Instead Uncle Tim will read it, and give me feedback prior to my final submission. I am grateful to have such amazing family in my life who are so generous.

6.2 Observations

In 2012 I left my administrative and teaching positions at the University of Victoria (UVic) to pursue higher education that would help me improve upon my practice, as an educator. Since then I have learned much about myself, NCN ?uu?uuqʷaačii and how to approach the challenging work of integrating Indigenous ways of knowing and being into post-secondary education. There are a number of important FCT in terms of education that include acts of observation, doing and sharing of the observed learning(s). Emphasis is placed on observation, and well more observation until the lesson is learned accordingly; it is then said that you are ready to engage and convey FCT with others. Holding true to these teachings, I humbly offer a few observations, as opposed to recommendations, which I have made along this particular journey. The desire to understand myself within the context of colonialism and post-secondary experiences, specifically epistemological dominance, blindness and collision has been overwhelmingly challenging, difficult and even lonely at times; however, nonetheless it is a journey worth sharing.

Finding the starting point that supports institutions’ goal of integrating IWKB is perhaps one of the biggest limitations facing PSE. Integrating IWKB in post-secondary is a complex process with multiple aspects to consider, such as Indigenous self-determination, history of educational policies and practices (i.e., residential schools) and much more. These limitations and examples are generalized to demonstrate existing obstacles to the integration of Indigenous
ways of knowing and being within PSE. Having said that, like any limitation there are also possibilities, which must be considered within the context of PSE and the integration of IWKB.

I have been observing new and interesting things ever since I can remember, and observation is the way in which I learn the best. Certainly, learning can be seen as both difficult and rewarding, simultaneously requiring will, determination and guidance (family and spiritual). As humans, generally speaking, we do not learn in isolation, but instead we learn with the help of one another and shared lessons. I set out in search of answers to questions that would help me improve upon my practice while being able to offer practitioners insights into doing the “work” of decolonization, indigenization, and reconciliation. Observations have been made and continue to arise, particularly as I draw from the initial questions posed and recent experiences. Unlike a standard dissertation where recommendations are made, I offer these humble observations, which are meant to provide the reader and/or educator with insights drawn from personal and professional life experiences. Some of what I have to share may be familiar and perhaps even a little unsettling, however, my hope is that these observations are useful in terms of improving upon the Indigenous experience in PSE for all.

Observations arising from the research questions reveal the complex nature of integrating Indigenous ways of knowing and being within post-secondary spaces, and Indigenous initiatives. The first question I sought to ask was: ‘what do the principles of NCN ?uu?uuqʷaačii mean within the context of integrating IWKB within post-secondary initiatives?’ To understand principles of NCN ?uu?uuqʷaačii I first had to provide the NCN context, particularly because very little is known about ?uu?uuqʷaačii. Expressions of Indigenous self-determination, oral or otherwise, vary and change over time, particularly with the introduction of written text. As such, Indigenous scholars like Umeek (Richard Atleo), Vine Deloria Jr., and Gregory Cajete have
paved the way for the discourse and scholarship of Indigenous self-determination. These authors share aspects of Indigenous self-determination that are rooted in culture, spirit and ceremony, honouring hišukʔišcawak, and ancestors. Recognizing the personal nature of this journey, it was fitting to share FCT of ?uuʔuuqʷaačii, which are similar to other Indigenous perspectives of self-determination, but at the same time different.

This process revealed the beautiful teachings (love, respect, humility, generosity and kindness) that center on becoming a good human being, teachings that are largely absent from post-secondary education. What also became apparent in teaching courses with Indigenous content was the lack of knowledge regarding Indigenous peoples and self-determination. This posed an immediate challenge given these Indigenous courses, mandatory or otherwise, are constrained by time given the standard post-secondary term of thirteen weeks. These courses are generally designed to cover content specific to the discipline, often overlooking aspects of Indigenous peoples and self-determination. For example, the Child and Youth Care Indigenous Context course focused on IRS and the Sixties Scoop, and less on the rights of Indigenous peoples to self-determination. This leaves unpacking what Senator Sinclair refers to as “the mess” challenging for those in PSE. In part, the problem is trying to understand what exactly the mess entails. It is a good question to be asked, but more importantly one worth pursuing.

Unfortunately, the integration of IWKB within PSE has gone without proper understanding of context, leaving people asking why initiatives like Indigenization are important to the institution. Processes of integration are fraught with issues, like racism, a lack of funding and more, which stem from colonial State policies and practices that go unnoticed. Shortly after the arrival of mamahni, the need to exercise power and control over Indigenous peoples began, and it continues to dominate and define State-Indigenous relationships. Colonial policies and
practices, which include jurisdiction over education, are void of NCN principles of ṣuuʔuuʔwačii. The State agenda has and continues to be about assimilation, dispossession and the denial of Indigenous rights to self-determination. Canada asserts sovereignty that values individualism and a stable economy, which are reflected in Canadian society and education. Funded by governments, the role of education has been to prepare individuals for the work force or higher education; it has not been about diversity and inclusion. There is an absence in policy and practice of spirit, ceremony, and reciprocity that disrespects the connection between everything that is one and connected.

Education is a State institution, and as such the correlations between Indigenous experiences with IRS and current day policies and practices have not improved much over time. Epistemological dominance, ignorance and collision arise in education, as a result of policies and practices that frame Indigenous peoples as “the problem”; a people incapable of helping themselves given the financial resources and opportunities afforded by the State. It is my firm belief that post-secondary education and institutions were never designed with Indigenous peoples, people of color or living with a disability, in mind. This is evident to those who experience racism, discrimination, and hatred in the hierarchical structures of society, which includes post-secondary education. Post-secondary education was limited to wealthy non-Indigenous while denying access to those who did not fit the standard criteria; until recently, epistemological dominance, collisions and ignorance went largely unnoticed or unchallenged in post-secondary education.

Integrating NCN principles of ṣuuʔuuʔwačii within post-secondary initiatives is limited by the obvious lack of knowledge regarding NCN principles of ṣuuʔuuʔwačii. These principles are embedded in the beliefs that everything is connected and one (hišuk?išcawak) while
simultaneously embracing values of love, respect, humility, kindness, and generosity. Principles of Ḫuuʔuuqʷaaⱡii within PSE are almost non-existent, particularly as institutions struggle with the enormous task of integrating multiple and diverse IWKB. Like governments, post-secondary institutions are guilty of determining what is best for Indigenous peoples through programs and services directed at the problems Indigenous students face (retention, succeeding). A good example is the 2007 Aboriginal Service Plan (ASP), of which Camosun College and the University of Victoria (UVic) are signatories.

At the time, I was the Indigenous Student Advisor for the Faculty of Human and Social Development (HSD) at UVic with a letter in hand inviting UVic to apply for ASP funds. Not knowing what to do with it, I showed a colleague who threw around some ideas that would improve Indigenous student success. Having familiarity with bureaucratic processes, I emailed the Dean of HSD for direction recognizing the significance of the ASP proposal. At the time, UVic was just hiring the first Director of Indigenous Affairs, where the proposal was developed and then submitted. However, the ASP lacked proper consultation with local Indigenous communities, faculty and staff. Instead, Indigenous administrators and others were left scrambling to meet deadlines to develop adequate programs and services that would improve recruitment and retention of Indigenous students. Little attention was given to the historical context of Indigenous peoples experiences failing to acknowledge education’s role in the destruction of IWKB. This early government initiative was filled with good intentions directed at improving Indigenous student success, but riddled with institutional ignorance.

From personal experience and observation Indigenous student success relies on the support the student receives from family and community along with the ability to walk in two worlds (non-Indigenous and Indigenous). Indigenous students, generally speaking, arrive to post-
secondary prepared to encounter epistemological dominance, collisions and ignorance while holding true to family cultural teachings. My story, as a child of parents, grandparents and great grandparents who survived residential school, includes learning how to navigate both Indigenous and non-Indigenous worlds. My parents may have survived residential school, but then succumbed to alcoholism and other addictions that left my sister and me to fend for ourselves. Having survived my childhood experiences, I quickly learned how to navigate and walk in both worlds, which has benefited me greatly in life and PSE. As I began to educate myself about colonialism, particularly racism, violence, and oppression, I realized how ill equipped I was to understand how these systems worked together. Moreover, I realized I had to confront racism, discrimination and violence, which is something I tried to avoid due to fear.

No doubt fear has held me back, fear of not knowing how to articulate personal experiences of racism and violence, fear that I would experience more backlash. Fear is a powerful thing until the moment you realize that fear is the only thing standing between you and your truth. As I began to teach non-Indigenous about Indigenous peoples, I grew stronger, having to confront racist stereotypes and ignorance in the classroom. This gave me the encouragement to apply for a doctorate in education. I knew going in that little was known about Indigenous peoples and self-determination, but what I did not know was best practices for integrating IWKB while confronting colonialism, although it was not through lack of effort, as I took on contracts at UVic to aid in the development of the Indigenous Cultural Acumen Training (ICAT) program. At the time, there was little research on initiatives like Indigenization, forcing people like me to draw on practical experiences of teaching Indigenous content courses.
6.3 yaʔakmis

Together these experiences led to my break in teaching and later, led me to doctoral studies that gave me a chance to immerse myself in the literature and research on Indigenous self-determination, decolonization and Indigenization. As the process began to unfold, I could see limitations and possibilities of integrating IWKB within post-secondary education. However, it was not until I became a faculty member at Camosun College (May 2017) that practical application of integrating Indigenous ways of knowing and being within the context of post-secondary surfaced. As such, the limitations and possibilities of integrating IWKB within PSE are influenced by my lived experiences, as an Indigenous practitioner and researcher. Drawing on the metaphor of yaʔakmis I will integrate aspects of love and pain as it relates to the possibilities and limitations. First, however, a look at the painful aspects that limits the integration of Indigenous ways of knowing and being within PSE. It is important to first become familiar with the limits in order to fully appreciate the possibilities. The limitations are:

- lack of institutional knowledge about Indigenous peoples and self-determination
- lack of clear direction in terms of Indigenous initiatives
- lack of adequate resources that would support these initiatives
- Indigenization and Check Lists
- Seeing Indigenous peoples as victims

With post-secondary institutions moving towards inclusion and diversity, which includes Indigenous’ initiatives like Indigenization and reconciliation, the need to understand who Indigenous peoples are, and what self-determination is are even more pressing. Growing up and going to school I never saw myself reflected in the spaces or curriculum of the schools I attended. Indigenous peoples, and ways of knowing and being have been absent from education, thus attempting to integrate challenging. Little is known about Indigenous peoples and self-
determination within PSE. Instead a sort of pan-Indigenous lens has been applied, giving the impression that all Indigenous peoples are the same. Indigenous peoples in the province known as British Columbia (BC) are multiple and diverse compared to their counterparts in the rest of Canada. In BC, there are a 198\textsuperscript{35} First Nations with 59\textsuperscript{36} different dialects, making BC one of the most diverse provinces in Canada.

Unfortunately, from my perspective little regard has been given to the local Indigenous peoples and self-determination, particularly within the context of place, cultural teachings and relationships. This lack of knowledge lumps Indigenous peoples together, ignoring their distinctiveness, presence, knowledge and rights to self-determination. In the past, Indigenous’ principles of self-determination, and ways of knowing and being were overlooked in education. Diverse and local Indigenous principles of self-determination are rarely understood within the context of PSE leaving them vulnerable to further ignorance and misguided intentions. The lack of knowledge regarding Indigenous peoples and self-determination is proving to be an obstacle in advancing initiatives within post-secondary. Epistemological dominance and ignorance remain the norm while epistemological collisions go unattended, isolating Indigenous initiatives to Indigenous students.

Drawing on personal experiences and recent observations, I have witnessed a lack of direction with respect to Indigenous initiatives. The interest to develop culturally responsive training for faculty came while I was still at UVic, as the Community Internship Coordinator for LE, NONET. The Staff and Faculty Aboriginal Cultural Training (SFACT) program was designed specifically for the LE, NONET program. In the following years, UVic has revamped

\textsuperscript{35} www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100021009/1314809450456
\textsuperscript{36} http://www.fpcc.ca/files/PDF/2010-report-on-the-status-of-bc-first-nations-languages.pdf
SFACAT and renamed it the Indigenous Cultural Acumen Training (ICAT) program, where I was contracted to develop the online curriculum. ICAT was to include Indigenous worldviews, historical context (colonial policies and practices) and resources that would support moving forward with Indigenous initiatives at UVic. Working with a small, somewhat inexperienced team we took the old SFACAT, new research findings and attempted to develop a framework for ICAT. This development process did not involve meeting with UVic’s leadership, but instead the Acting Director of the Office of Indigenous Affairs (now known as the Office of Indigenous Academics and Community Engagement) and the LE, NONET Research Coordinator.

Although ICAT was a UVic directive, I did not get the impression it was a priority for the university. Later I co-facilitated an ICAT pilot where it was difficult to determine its effectiveness amongst the faculty who participated. I am no longer affiliated with UVic’s ICAT nor do I know its status as a program. Although programs like ICAT have good intentions, they are often led without institutional leadership, particularly from the President’s Office. Instead Indigenous faculty and staff are left to develop programs and services that meet the criteria of funded programs, like the Aboriginal Service Plan (ASP). Much of UVic’s ASP has been spent improving programs and services for Indigenous students with little attention given to education for staff and faculty, curriculum or policy development. Indigenous programs and services are just that, they are for Indigenous students who need support to stay in school and be successful. I find this problematic, as it frames Indigenous peoples as having some sort of learning deficit that require additional support and funding. As a result, Indigenous peoples in PSE continue to be seen as the problem, they are treated poorly and continue to encounter ignorance, racism and violence.
What Indigenous peoples encounter in PSE is real, and the leadership of the institution needs to acknowledge and address it accordingly. Sadly, PSE institutions are businesses and driven by concerns over money, limiting their ability to recognize what is good education for everyone, leaving Indigenous peoples on the sidelines yet again. This is what I set out to change; I wanted to work with UVic and its good intentions with respect to Indigenous programs, services, and ICAT. However, as an institution UVic was not ready, lacking necessary leadership to tackle changes that respect Indigenous peoples and self-determination. What I did not know at the time was that PSE institutions and their leadership struggle in terms of knowing where to start, how or why the integration of IWKB is important to education. If Indigenous initiatives are important, and success is the outcome, then these initiatives require the proper guidance, leadership and planning on the part of the institution. Little can be achieved by way of institutional change, if Indigenous peoples, self-determination and their colonial experiences are not understood within the context of their experiences.

Post-secondary institutions are also limited by the lack of resources that would adequately support Indigenous peoples and initiatives. An important resource that is lacking is base funds for Indigenous initiatives that support the overall goals of the institution. Other resources include the lack of capacity in terms of Indigenous faculty and staff who support both students, and the institution in terms of Indigenous initiatives. Post-secondary institutions who take advantage of funding, like ASP, for Indigenous initiatives run into obstacles that manifest themselves in the delivering of programs and services. These initiatives are limited by “soft funding” (or are not base funded) where everything currently hinges on the successful re-application of the ASP; institutions like UVic and Camosun College have been successful since the onset of ASP. Pidgeon notes the tension that arise in institutions when provide “culturally-
relevant services to a small percentage of the student population,” (p. 85). Further, there continues to be PSE institutions that are ignorant of the value that Indigenous initiatives offer. Additionally, what remains unknown is how long ASP funding last, and how post-secondary institutions will continue to support Indigenous peoples and initiatives. What is known is that Indigenous faculty and staff who are currently term employees lack job security while balancing the demands and stresses of processes like Indigenization. The lack of resources, financially or otherwise, contributes to the ongoing marginalization of a marginalized people. Institutional visions of integrating IWKB must be considered within the context of base funding or the current efforts will be lost.

Further, Pidgeon (2016) also identifies what does not work with respect to the practice of Indigenization within PSE, and the “checklist” approach, which “tokenizes” processes of Indigenization. She questions the institutions asking if “the institutions Indigenization strategy positively change the lived experiences of Indigenous students, staff, and faculty? Are Aboriginal peoples seeing themselves reflected in the curriculum, the classroom, the hallways, in their academic programs of choice, in the staff room, or at Senate?” (p. 86). These are important questions to ask particularly, as they impact processes of Indigenization that include building relationships with Indigenous communities (who will likely know if such changes have been made). Governments, their agendas, and funding, are all subject to change once Election Day comes, therefore, consideration on the part of PSE must be given to the future of Indigenous initiatives. Together the lack of knowledge regarding Indigenous peoples, self-determination, along with lack of poor direction and limited resources, institutions struggle to adequately support Indigenous peoples and initiatives.

The possibilities are:
• To embrace the willingness of Indigenous peoples to work together to support processes of Indigenization, decolonization and reconciliation.
• Continue to build on existing post-secondary Indigenous initiatives and frameworks.
• Go beyond Indigenous initiatives directed at Indigenous students to embrace a more holistic approach that includes employee education, policy and curriculum development.

The possibilities of integrating IWKB are not exclusive to this list; however, from experience and observation, these possibilities are also closely linked to limitations. One of the biggest possibilities afforded to post-secondary institutions is the willingness on the part of Indigenous peoples and communities to be involved in the delivery of Indigenous programs and services. As such, PSE institutions and leadership will need to learn how to respect, value, and recognize this willingness as a valuable contribution and resource.

Indigenous peoples have sought political and legal recognition of the right to self-determination, which include Indigenous control over Indigenous education. Experiences with State control over Indigenous education has proven to be detrimental, leaving Indigenous peoples to continue to fight, but also rely on government funding and programs. As an undergraduate student at UVic in the early days of 2000, I did not see myself reflected in the institutions, making it difficult to confront the political struggles of Indigenous self-determination. However, the gap between post-secondary institutions and Indigenous peoples is growing smaller, as a result of Indigenous leaders, scholars and others who work effortlessly towards Indigenization, decolonization and reconciliation. Having begun my educational practice at UVic in 2001, I benefited from working with a number of influential Indigenous academics and scholars; they inspired me to find ways to integrate FCT into my practice. I was also fortunate, as the LE, NONET Community Internship Coordinator, to work closely with local Indigenous peoples, elders and communities, particularly the Lekwungen (in Victoria, BC), the
WSÁNEĆ and other Indigenous nations. This approach to working together is not an uncommon practice for Indigenous academics or educators alike.

Indigenous peoples, generally speaking, recognize the value in maintaining relationships with one another in terms of the collective benefits. Indigenous faculty, staff and students are very much aware of the obligations to community and therefore act in a way that respects those obligations and relationships. Indigenous peoples maintain the right to self-determination, which is expressed politically, academically, and otherwise. Indigenous rights to self-determination are articulated in ways that reflect the spiritual, physical and political connections to future and ancestral obligations. Most Indigenous peoples and communities are more than happy to engage in processes that would improve upon Indigenous student experiences and the development of Indigenous initiatives like Indigenization. However, what prevents most post-secondary institutions from this kind of engagement is the lack of knowledge with respect to the local Indigenous peoples whose territory the institution occupies, and the history of those lands.

More recently, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) has published a “Guide to Acknowledge First Peoples and Traditional Territories” to aid the practice of territorial acknowledgement. This guide is designed to support teachers who wish to acknowledge the local Indigenous peoples and territory. This resource is a great place to start for institutions thinking about how to develop relationships with local Indigenous peoples. In addition to this guide, the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) has a publication entitled “Post-Secondary Education Partnership Agreement Tool Kit,” which offers institutions a guideline for developing meaningful partnerships with Indigenous peoples and communities. Much effort, on the part of Indigenous peoples, has been spent trying to break down institutional barriers to share worldviews, cultural teachings, perspectives and more. The willingness of
Indigenous peoples to engage post-secondary institutions with respect to Indigenous initiatives has now been made evident through examples given; however, it is now time for institutions to prepare themselves to engage respectfully with Indigenous peoples and communities in areas related to Indigenous initiatives. Indigenous peoples and communities have and continue to make effort to connect with PSE; however, this engagement has not necessarily been reciprocal. As an institutional directive, it leaves Indigenous peoples and communities having to come to the institution to share knowledge, teachings and wisdom. If the TRC goals are to be successful, the efforts will need to be two-way.

The second and obvious possibility for post-secondary institutions is to continue to build upon existing post-secondary Indigenous initiatives and frameworks. As mentioned earlier, post-secondary institutions and Indigenous initiatives can be limited by government funding, but they can also be a source of Indigenous student success while advancing Indigenous self-determination. Indigenous initiatives that arise from programs like ASP support Indigenous students lending to the retention and, later, the successful completion of studies. When I was an undergraduate student at UVic, there were no such programs to support me; however, 15 years later, Indigenous students have access to a number of Indigenous initiatives. Having been at UVic since the inception of the ASP, I have witnessed the evolution of Indigenous initiatives, programs and services that lend themselves to the success of Indigenous students. Initiatives like LE, NONET programs where the Community Internship, Research Apprenticeship and bursary programs continue to offer much needed academic, community and financial resources to Indigenous students.

Other ASP partners, like Camosun College and Vancouver Island University, also offer Indigenous initiatives that support students and lend to their success. Although I have been
critical of the ASP, it does provide funding opportunities that ultimately support institutional goals of Indigenous recruitment, retention, and success. After years of implementing the ASP and Indigenous initiatives, post-secondary institutions are now learning what works, what does not work and best practices for moving forward. The yaʔakmis associated with institutional growth and change could be shared more equally. Indigenous peoples and communities take risks to engage with PSE institution and so institutions should also take risks.

The road to Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation within PSE is winding and bumpy, leading to unknown and challenging terrain. There is still so much to be learned, especially from Indigenous peoples and initiatives, like the Elders-in-Residence program at UVic and Indigenization at Camosun College. As in life, love does not exist without pain, just as there can be no possibilities without limitations. The elders tell me “there is no wrong way to do the right thing.” If the institutional goals are to recruit and retain Indigenous students who will complete their studies, then perhaps the lesson here is to find the balance between the needs of Indigenous peoples and the institution. Working together not only benefits Indigenous students, but also everyone in the institution. However, Pidgeon (2016) is cautious noting, “Indigenizing the academy is not one strategy, or one policy change—it is culminating and complex living movement that aims to see post-secondary institutions empowering Aboriginal peoples’ cultural integrity through respectful relationships through relevant policies, programs and services,” (p. 81). Further, Pidgeon argues, “Indigenous initiatives for systemic change and sustainability requires clear funding commitments that are not dependent on the securing of the next grant,” (p. 87). This is a critical component of Indigenization that cannot be left unaddressed, as ASP funding continues to decline.
Much of the ASP has been geared towards programs and services for Indigenous students with less attention paid to employee education, policy and planning, and curriculum development. As mentioned in early chapters, Camosun’s Indigenization Plan does include a 4-corner post model for Indigenization. The corner posts include: 1) services to students, 2) curriculum processes, 3) employee education, and 4) policy and planning. In February 2017 the Centre for Indigenous Education and Community Connections (IECC) at Camosun College offered me a short-term contract supporting processes of Indigenization. It was here that I was able to immerse myself in Indigenization, which included services to students (elder-in-residence, etc.), but also employee education, and policy and planning, and later curriculum development.

Having been exposed to the practical aspect of Indigenization, I was able to see the gaps I had not considered earlier in my dissertation. My Indigenization experiences in post-secondary were limited to theories and a bit of curriculum development, leaving me ill prepared to discuss practical applications of such initiatives. Having applied for a term faculty position, as the Indigenization Education Developer, I have the good privilege of being mentored by faculty and staff who have embarked upon their Indigenization journey. Due to the confidential nature, I will not go into the details about Camosun’s Indigenization Initiatives; however, I will say that Camosun has made great strides towards providing services to students and the development of employee educational programs. Camosun has drafted their first Indigenization policy and have begun to assist faculty members who want to indigenize their curriculum.

Fortunately, part of my new role is not only to help indigenize curriculum, but also to facilitate the employee education program entitled TELTIN TTE WILNEW or TTW. This program encourages employees to participate, as a way to increase understandings of Indigenous
peoples, their experiences with colonialism and how it affects Indigenous students. Camosun also offers the faculty and staff an opportunity to participate in a “Community of Practice” (CoP’s) in areas of their interest, such as Indigenization, Sustainability, Mindfulness, Digital Pedagogy and more. CoP’s are “an opportunity to build community and engage at the edge of your teaching and learning potential. If you have a passion for what you do and want to interact regularly with a team of colleagues around a common interest,” CoP’s provide a space and time for peers to come together and discuss topics of shared interest. I currently facilitate the CoP’s for Indigenization and Sustainability where IWKB are integral to this peer-based engagement.

These possibilities are drawn from observations and experiences and are not limited to the above mentioned points, particularly as post-secondary institutions move towards embracing Indigenous initiatives.

The last question guiding my inquiry is “what needs to change in order for the principles to be realized in these initiatives?” For NCN principles of ?uuʔuuqʷaačii to be realized within post-secondary education, NCN themselves will need to initiate or be invited by the institution. I proudly recognize the existing NCN scholarship along with the growing number of NCN faculty and students who bring with them FCT, which have the potential to influence post-secondary education. However, and more importantly, NCN principles of ?uuʔuuqʷaačii are localized to NCN peoples and territories. NCN teachings are secondary to the local Indigenous peoples in terms of whose territory the institution is located. For NCN principles of ?uuʔuuqʷaačii to be realized or understood within the post-secondary, institutions will need to acknowledge the

37 http://camosun.ca/about/teaching-learning/events/communities-practice.html
absence of such principles. Realizing NCN principles of ?uuʔuuqʷaačii within post-secondary education, particularly Indigenous initiatives, cannot work in isolation of NCN or the institution.

Therefore, NCN principles of ?uuʔuuqʷaačii cannot be fully realized within the context of Indigenous initiatives, but instead recognized as a part of the diverse Indigenous worldviews that make up Canada. Further, what needs to change for principles of Indigenous self-determination to be realized within Indigenous initiatives is the understanding of Indigenous peoples, and why Indigenous initiatives are important to institutions. This practical application arose more recently out of the work I did on behalf of Camosun to develop the “Indigenization: A Guide for Leaders and Administrators.” In order to produce such a guide, I had to interview a number of leaders and administrators, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to determine best practices for Indigenization. What I learned about experiences of Indigenization was that people had to know themselves, values, beliefs and prejudices before embarking on such a journey. To know who you are is also what Murray Sinclair asks of Canadians; it is also a deeply held NCN teaching that helps situate one within the context of the larger picture (i.e., education).

Understanding who you are opens you up to possibilities of understanding who Indigenous peoples are, experiences of colonialism and desires for self-determination. Knowing your values, beliefs and prejudices provides space for the Indigenous peoples, worldviews, stories of colonialism, and more. Collective experiences have taught me that institutional leadership is a critical component of Indigenous initiatives like Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation. These initiatives require leadership and courage to integrate Indigenous ways of knowing and being within the institutional fabric. Given people know little about Indigenous peoples and self-determination the context for understanding Indigenous initiatives can be difficult. Having recently co-developed and authored “Indigenization: A Guide for Leaders and
Administrators,” [guide] a BCcampus38 Given the six Indigenization guidelines will not be released until July 2018 the project coordinator has provide the following details:

1) The Indigenization Project was tasked to develop open educational learning resources for public post-secondary institutions and staff across the province. These learning resources or guides, build on the why and how of Indigenization to support increased awareness and understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures and perspectives and ways of knowing. Ultimately, this incorporation of Indigenous epistemologies into professional practice will enable post-secondary institutions to:

   a) Develop the structures and processes by which Indigenous students experience their post-secondary education in resonance with their own lives, worldviews, and ambitions;

   b) Help meet the goal, inherent in the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, that non-Indigenous people be prepared to live well and work well alongside Indigenous peoples; and

   c) Appropriately respond to social and economic development education and training needs of Indigenous nations, communities and organizations across British Columbia.

• Supported by the Ministry of Advanced Education's [Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan], the Indigenization Project meets the efforts of post-secondary institutions to Indigenize practices and decolonizes processes (goal one of the action plan). This project also supports the reconciliation work of post-secondary institutions to address the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

• Guided by a Steering Committee, the Indigenization project is fortunate to have the voices and expertise of renowned Indigenous scholars and trusted representatives from various levels of Indigenous education in public post-secondary, and First Nation and Métis educational authorities and organizations.

• Open learning resources are focused towards specific audiences within post-secondary who fulfill different roles in education from leaders and administrators, curriculum developers, front line staff and advisors, teachers and instructors, to researchers. An additional resource was developed as a foundation to Indigenous and provincial and national relationships. All of these resources are adaptable to meet the specific needs of various institutions and Indigenous educational partnerships.

29 The guides are a part of the Indigenization Project, collaboration between BCcampus and the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training.
It is anticipated that the Indigenization resource guides will help provide the framework for educators to adapt for their learners. Indigenization initiatives, as I have learned, is a process by which people must be ready to engage with a good heart and mind. However, there is still so much more work to be done in order to overcome the obstacles of integrating IWKB within education. Experiences of teaching Indigenous courses and facilitating TTW have taught me that as Indigenous and non-Indigenous we are still learning to overcome this idea of “us and them.”

There are times I hear people say “what do Indigenous peoples want?” which is a great question; however, it is usually followed by “that was in the past” or “can’t we just all get along?” I also hear “we can’t just give all the land back” or “we can’t just go back to Europe.” Susan Dion (2009) introduces the idea of the “perfect stranger” or someone who claims to know little to nothing about Indigenous peoples (p. 179). It is a position that keeps people where they are, uninformed, as Dion argues (p. 179). There continues to be assumptions, on both sides, that go back to the time mamalhn̓i arrived to Indigenous territories; it is this thinking that permits the continuous “us and them” saga.

Non-Indigenous peoples want to know what Indigenous peoples want, Indigenous peoples want non-Indigenous peoples to recognize Indigenous rights to self-determination. Unfortunately, government processes that recognize Indigenous rights to self-determination or sovereignty are layered and complex, requiring much more attention than this dissertation can provide. However, I think it is safe to say that non-Indigenous peoples will likely continue to struggle with notions of Indigenous self-determination. Education has left little to no room for cross-cultural understandings, leaving institutions and practitioners at a loss in terms of integrating Indigenous initiatives. Racism remains a predominant experience of Indigenous peoples, in and outside of education, where stereotypes are projected and ignorance is
perpetuated. Current approaches to integrating Indigenous ways of knowing and being have been piecemealed together without much consideration given to the practical barrier of “us and them.” By considering this factor, particularly in education, it opens up room for the unsettling that occurs for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous when confronted with Canada’s history, policies and practices.

Becoming unsettled is not to be a negative process, although it can be very uncomfortable, in fact, there is no way around it in terms of integrating Indigenous ways of knowing and being within education. Unsettling is a part of the journey and process to indigenize, decolonize, and reconciliation. Unfortunately, tensions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous remain high due to unaddressed issues of Indigenous self-determination, land claims, court cases and more. More importantly, these tensions are misunderstood due to the lack of knowledge regarding Indigenous peoples, self-determination and history. Part of unpacking the “mess” is developing an understanding of one another, what are our values and beliefs, especially in relation to Indigenous peoples and the land we live on. Leadership is essential in terms of leading by example, as people begin to understand processes of Indigenization and decolonization, they will be more inclined to engage.

Having recently joined Camosun, I witnessed the leadership it takes to make Indigenization a reality. Camosun has a long history in terms of their relationships with Indigenous peoples. Led by a team of leaders, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, Camosun continues to maintain and build relationships with local Indigenous peoples and communities while prioritizing Indigenization and reconciliation. Camosun is a good example of a post-secondary institution taking action with respect to Indigenizing and reconciliation. Since arriving to Camosun, I have heard at least two Indigenous colleagues say “Indigenization is
reconciliation” and “reconciliation is Indigenization”; both integral to one another. Across the institution, including academic programs and services, Camosun has adopted 39 of the 94 TRC Calls-to-Action with an implementation plan. As the college embraces these initiatives, it also provides ample opportunities for students and employees to engage in aspects of Indigenization and reconciliation. Camosun’s 4-corner post model for Indigenization and reconciliation serves as a model that benefits everyone at the college. The practice of Indigenization is a journey yet to be fully realized, as it has only just begun; it is a process that requires openness, time and understanding.

Leaders and others will have to be prepared to be vulnerable and make mistakes, as the practice continues to grow and evolve. In addition to leadership, what needs to also change is the bureaucratic approach to the integration of Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Although government initiatives, like the ASP, provide opportunities for post-secondary institutions to engage in Indigenous initiatives, it also limits institutions. Most Indigenous programs and services are dependent on initiatives like ASP, to fund term positions that support students, employee education, and policy as well as curriculum development. It can be limiting because eventually the funding will cease to exist leaving institutions to find resources to create base-funded programs and services that benefit the entire institution. Indigenous capacity building must be part of the long-term vision for Indigenization and reconciliation, particularly as the work generally falls to Indigenous staff and faculty. This has been long recognized by Indigenous faculty and staff who dedicate their lives to improving the quality of education for all students.

The practice of integrating IWKB leaves me feeling, at times, overwhelmed and frustrated, as I tend to hold term positions based on finding additional sources of funding. If post-
secondary institutions are serious about Indigenization and reconciliation, then financial resources will have to be identified and committed in the planning of Indigenous initiatives. During the interview for the BCcampus guide, leaders at Camosun along with Indigenous leaders were asked what they saw for the future of Indigenization; most said it would be an integral and permanent part of education. Pidgeon (2016) has a response to the future of Indigenization adding, “Indigenization of the academy has truly transformed higher education when Indigenous students leave the institution more empowered in who they are as Indigenous peoples and when non-Indigenous peoples have a better understanding of the complexities, richness, and diversity of Indigenous peoples, histories, cultures and lived experiences,” (p. 87). Over the years, institutions have begun to recognize the importance and relevance of including Indigenous ways of knowing and being; the value of engaging with Indigenous peoples and communities is in the relationships and partnerships, which benefit not just Indigenous peoples, but everyone.

6.4 Conclusion

*There is room on this land for all of us and there must also be, after centuries of struggle, room for justice for Indigenous peoples. That is all that we ask. And we will settle for nothing less* (Arthur Manuel, 2015, p. 12)

Upon seeking inspiration for the conclusion, I picked up Arthur Manuel’s book *Unsettling Canada: A National Wake-Up Call* (2015) and re-read parts of it. I immediately came across this profound statement that resonated deeply, speaking to a shared vision of justice for Indigenous peoples. I started this journey as a way to understand processes of integrating Indigenous ways of knowing and being within education. Encountering epistemological dominance, ignorance and collisions in the classroom was enough to send me off in search of answers that would contribute to both Indigenous self-determination and post-secondary education. Coming across institutional ignorance and racism, as both a student and teacher,
forced me to examine more closely issues of colonialism, specifically within the context of the educational policies and practices. Part of understanding the issues is recognizing the history and complex nature of the relationship between Canada and Indigenous peoples; perhaps asking first “how is my own history, as a non-Indigenous person connected to Indigenous peoples?” This speaks more directly to the idea that as a country we first must unpack the mess that got us here in the first place, which means spending more time listening to Indigenous stories of truth.

Little attention has been given to the healing necessary to overcome obstacles of racism, hatred and ignorance. Indigenous peoples remain seen as the problem and victims of their own circumstances. As such Indigenous academics and scholars work hard to push up against such ideas in an effort to break these stereotypes. One way in which this is done is through the sharing of experiences, especially through the use of stories; it has not always been easy for Indigenous peoples to tell their stories of colonialism. However, today the echoes of the ancestors can be heard giving courage to those who dare to share stories of genocide, oppression and violence. More recently, I came across the African American poet Alexander Elle who poems resonated with deeply with me; she writes, “You’re not a victim for sharing your story. You are a survivor setting the world on fire with your truth. And you never know who needs your light, warmth and raging courage.”39 This rings true for me, as a second-generation survivor of residential school; particularly, I navigate my way through my own truth, and at time with raging courage, but this does not make me an angry “Indian” or “angry Indian woman” it just makes me passionate about truth telling.

39 https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/350647520983391888/
With roots in colonialism, education in Canada has come a long way since Nan Esther’s time as a student in residential school. Today, education, its institutions, leaders and Indigenous peoples are at the cusp of learning how to do the hard work of Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation. To overcome feelings of shame, guilt and fear, we are going to have to prepare ourselves to become unsettled. Following the TRC and recent changes in education, we can no longer hide behind ignorance and say “we don’t know” but instead say what it is “we don’t know where to start.” Indeed this work is difficult and challenging, but more importantly this work is emotional, and becoming vulnerable is the first step in connecting the heart and mind. Only when I became vulnerable to the work of decolonization (which came first), Indigenization and reconciliation, was I able to open up my heart and mind to move beyond fear (racism, intolerance and violence). For me, being vulnerable means being prepared to take risks that will advance the cause (self-determination in this case). To be vulnerable is not easy, however, it certainly is worth taking the risk, particularly as you begin to witness the change (in attitudes, behaviors) unfold right before your eyes.

The risk I took in writing this dissertation was to be vulnerable in the assertion NCN and IWKB while placing the emphasis on FCT, restoring an element of humanity to my family and to Indigenous peoples. Until recently Indigenous and NCN ways of knowing and being have been ignore, dismissed and therefore absent from PSE. However, the time to deconstruct epistemological dominance and embrace IWKB while restoring a level of humanness to Indigenous peoples is upon us in PSE. As practitioners, we have a responsibility to pave the way for those practitioners to follow. Although I am critical of government funding, the ASP and UVic, it does not go without recognition of the efforts already made to advance Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Post-secondary education’s path to Indigenization, decolonization and
reconciliation is underway and evolving every day, offering practical tools for respectful integration.

What I have learned along this journey informs how I want to be in the world, as a practitioner, but more importantly, as a human. Only after completing the writing aspect of my dissertation did I recognize the gift of FCT to my practice, particularly the human qualities of love, respect, kindness, humility and generosity that inform and guide my practice. Having shared aspects of who I am and NCN principles of ŭuuʔuuqʷaačii, my hope is to help you in your journey to understand Indigenous peoples and self-determination. As I come to know and understand myself, I am reminded that as in life, the integration of IWKB requires much love, patience, kindness, respect, humility and generosity. One of the greatest lessons grandpa Moe left me was the understanding that even in great despair, there is always hope; this is our NCN teaching. Like loved ones before me, I too want to become an ancestor, and learning to humanize post-secondary education is one part of that journey, čuu (ok I’m done, I’m finished).
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Appendix A

Dawn M. Smith Family Tree 2018

Chief **Maquinna**
House of Ha Wih Ta Comtl
Married. Wife’s name unknown
He had 6 daughters

**Daughter 1** **Daughter 2** **Daughter 3** **Daughter 4** **Daughter 5** **Daughter 6**

**Daughter 1** married a man from Makah (name unknown)
And had a child, **John Uri Smith**

**John Uri Smith** had more than 1 wife, which was permitted in those days. His 2nd wife (? was **Cecelia** of ?iḥatisath. Before divorcing they had 4 children:
Mary, **Joseph**, Moses and Julianne

**Joseph Smith** married Esther (Nuchatlaht, her mother was Ellen Brown)
Together they had 16 children.

**Josephine George** (nee Smith) of ?iḥatisath
Married twice, 1st Timothy Paul (hišqʷiʔatḥ), 2nd Earl George (Ahousaht)
Children:
1) **Norma** 2) Floyd 3) Tim 4) Mark
5) Verna 6) Elizabeth 7) Earl 8) Martha

**Norma Smith-Claxton** of činixint/?iḥatisath/Tsawout
Married Clyde Claxton of Tsawout (parents have passed away)
Raised 2 daughters:
1) **Dawn** 2) Kelly

**Dawn Smith** of činixint/?iḥatisath
Married Dwayne Amos (divorced 2005) & together had 2 sons:
1) **Chancellor** 2) Bryden

Chancellor Amos of činixint/?iḥatisath married in 2009 (2011 divorced) together they had one son, **Quentin**