THE WARP AND WEFT OF IT ALL: UCWALMICW EDUCATION EMERGING OUT OF THE ABORIGINAL EDUCATION TAPESTRY

by

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Abstract

Guided by the central tenets of Lester-Irabinna Rigney's (1999) Indigenist paradigm; *resistance*, *political integrity* and *honoring Indigenous voice*, I take up the Ucwalmicw loom and blanket weaving as metaphor and praxis to honor Samahquamicw engagement in this PhD project. To contribute to the significant work already being done to define and transform Aboriginal education into the ever-emerging tapestries of Indigenous education, the research questions that guide the work disseminated here were:

1. In what ways can Ucwalmicw knowledge system processes disrupt mainstream understandings of Aboriginal education?
2. How can the facilitation of Ucwalmicw processes and protocols contribute to transforming classrooms for all students?

To maintain *political integrity* in responding to these two research questions I engaged with my Samahquamicw community members in ways that center on and honor Ucwalmicw voice. Two Sharing Circles were facilitated in the Q'aLaTKú7eM community. We shared meals together, and community members were reciprocated with hand-made gifts for sharing their knowledge and time with me. Local protocols guided our collective knowledge seeking, making and sharing which, for important reasons, included the need to facilitate a survey in lieu of the third planned Sharing Circle.

In *trusting again in our ways,* I came to *walk the talk* of Q'aLaTKú7eMicw protocols which require *beginning and proceeding in good ways* towards *wholistic approaches* to teaching and learning. Within the pages of this dissertation, I illustrate how Q'aLaTKú7eMicw contributions can and have mobilized Indigenous education policies drawn from a selection of nation-wide and provincial reports and accords. While the degree of harm that Aboriginal education continues to inflict on its students varies across student populations, tackling, with Ucwalmicw intentions, the issue of what is and is not considered in the curricula and, equally important, the pedagogies of university programs means doing so for the benefit of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students alike. To contribute to emerging models of Indigenous education with a good heart, mind and spirit requires doing so for *Tákem nsnek̓wnúk̓w7a* (all my relations).

Lay Summary

This PhD project shows how using Samahquamicw knowledge seeking, making and sharing methods can activate Indigenous education policies in ways that honor local values and intentions behind coming to know. Guided by the loom and blanket weaving as metaphor and practice, I apply Q'aLaTKú7eMicw community contributions in this inquiry into how to transform Aboriginal education in post-secondary learning environments. This dissertation demonstrates how matters of a diversity of nations, languages, and aspirations can begin to be addressed by mobilizing approaches put forward by local First Peoples' communities. Further, tackling, from an Ucwalmicw perspective, issues of what is and is not considered in the curricula and teaching practices of university programs requires that I do so for the benefit of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students alike. The outcomes of the study demonstrate the value of an *all my relations* approach to transforming education systems with a good heart, mind and spirit in ways that benefit all students.

Preface

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, J. Schneider.

This work was approved by The University of British Columbia Behavioral Research Ethics Board, Certificate number H13-00058, on February 27, 2013.

Previously published work by this author as cited in chapter two of this dissertation consists of the following:

Schneider, J. (2014). Taking an Indigenist approach to research: Engaging wise ways of knowing toward a vision of Stl'atl'imicw education. *Indigenous concepts of education: Toward elevating humanity for all learners.* (Ed.) van Wyk, B. & Adenjii-Neill, D. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, Pp. 125-137.

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Acknowledgements

I am an uninvited visitor filled with gratitude for the privilege of living, working and learning upon the ancestral, traditional and unceded territories of the Musqueam Peoples. The Musqueam territories include:

> the lands, lakes and streams defined and included by a line commencing at Harvey Creek in Howe Sound and proceeding Eastward to the height of the land and continuing on the height of land around the entire watershed draining into English Bay, Burrard Inlet and Indian Arm; South along the height of land between Coquitlam River and Brunette River to the Fraser River, across to the South or left bank of the Fraser River and proceeding downstream taking the left Bank of the main stream and the South Arm to the sea, including all those intervening lands, islands and waters back along the sea shore to Harvey Creek; AND (emphasis in the original) the sea, its reefs, flats, tidal lands adjacent to the above described land and out to the center of Georgia Strait. (Musqueam Indian Band, 1976, Para. 1)

The hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ speaking peoples have, "from time immemorial occupied, used and gained their livelihoods from the lands, waters and seas as described above" (Musqueam Indian Band, 2011, Para. 2). The Musqueam and their ancestors have never in any way ceded their ancestral territories to "any foreign government or power" (Musqueam Indian Band, 2011, Para. 4) by treaty or any other agreement. Moreover, the Musqueam have never considered the small tracts of land, known as *reserve land*, as payment for "their lost rights over the territory now known as Vancouver, North Vancouver, South Vancouver, Burrard Inlet, New Westminster, Burnaby, and Richmond" (Musqueam Indian Band, 2011, Para. 5). The Musqueam people strive to maintain control over their own ways of being, doing and knowing as not only their Indigenous right but as their human right to do so. I raise my hands, as is traditional to these lands on which I live, with great respect for the Peoples and the more-than-humans of these lands.

I respectfully acknowledge my supervisory committee, Drs. Mona Gleason, Jan Hare and Shauna Butterwick for their long-term patience and guidance over the course of this PhD study. Though I resisted implementing it (thus the need for long-term patience), I needed and gratefully appreciate their ongoing insistence that I stay within the parameters of this research project. I have come to terms with the need to write papers on the surplus of outcomes that needed to be excluded from this PhD dissemination process. Your consistent support of my need to infuse my Ucwalmicwness into all aspects of my learning and research journey are most appreciated. Kukwstum̓ckálap to all of you for your wisdom, experience and many meaningful and insightful contributions to how this work eventually came in to being.

I dedicate this thesis to the Samahquamicw of the Ucwalmicw – those who came before me, those who are presently immersed within education systems and those yet to enter mainstream classrooms. This work would not have been possible without your caring contributions both within and well beyond the community engagement activities for this PhD project. I appreciate, respect and love all of you. It is for Ucwalmicw futurity that this work will continue.

I raise my hands to the many Indigenous and non-Indigenous champions of Indigenous education who came before me, who are working hard today and who will continue to weave Indigenous voice and ways into the tapestries of Indigenous education. This is a vast and long-term process facilitated by the ongoing dedication of Elders, community practitioners, Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars and activists too numerous to name here. Without their hard work and persistence there would not have been any warp strands for me to weave into today. Kukwstumckáỉap!

Chapter 1 Honoring Protocols: Making Introductions

Chapter Overview
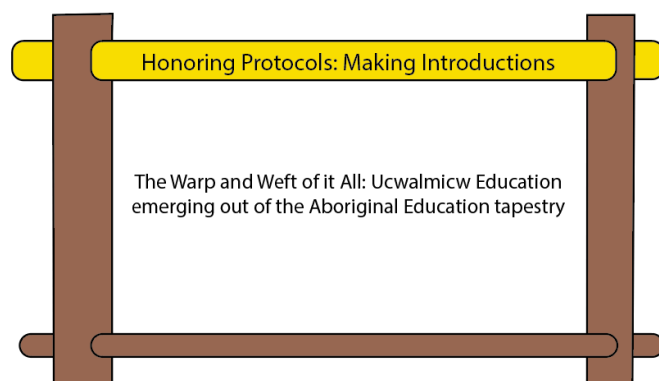
Figure 1 Honoring Protocols

I begin by honoring Ucwalmicw protocols that guide me to start all relationship building in a good way and that includes the making of introductions. I begin with the thesis glossary, employed here as wordarrows, to mitigate the harm that uncritical use of the colonizers' language can perpetuate. I mobilize Gerald Vizenor's (1978) concept of wordarrows by deconstructing and/or making explicit key terminology and concepts that surface often not only in this dissemination document, but also in Aboriginal education literature. I further enact the practice of wordarrows by intentionally aligning the headings, subheadings and images in an alternating left to right pattern throughout this thesis to evoke the rhythms and feeling of weaving back and forth between my academic and Ucwalmicw spirits that were present throughout this process. I do so to make known, from the start, the Ucwalmicw loom and weaving framework and praxis from within which I work. I introduce the Ucwalmicw Peoples and the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw contributors with and for whom this project was initiated before situating myself in this work. I give an overview of why, how and where this study was facilitated and present the intentions behind doing this work. I make the case for taking up an Ucwalmicw guiding framework in this PhD project by introducing the loom and weaving process, both as metaphor and practice, theory and method. This approach contributed greatly to my ability to complete this work from a good place with good intentions. I close the chapter with an overview of chapter two: *Indigenous Education: The ever-emerging tapestry,*

Acutely aware of the fact that I am not here alone, I invite you, the reader, to weave yourself into this dissertation blanket by utilizing all of your human capacities for coming to understand. Given from the mind, heart and spirit, it is my hope that you receive the processes

and experiences shared here in the same way. I invite you to twill and twine your own ancestral ways of coming to know into these understandings and teachings shared with only the best of intentions. In the spirit of reciprocal relationship-building, I further ask, as I ask the students in all my classes, that you share a new understanding that has come to you through this work with a friend or family member. We are all connected and connecting through the sharing of our stories, our experiences and our learning.

Wordarrows

> The language that we use shapes the way we think. Postmodern deconstructivists have illuminated the link between the dominant society's usage of language to silence the voices of those who are marginally located. It is the tool by which a meta-narrative of "truth" and normalcy" is perpetually reproduced. In centers of knowledge production like universities, the language of research becomes powerful and pervasive. (Kovach, 2005, p. 25)

For reasons described by Kovach in the opening quote, I engage upfront with the need to deconstruct the words and concepts that are taken up and/or not perpetuated in Aboriginal education, report and recommendation-making literature. To contribute to the transformation of systems that educate First Peoples and Settler Canadians alike, I problematize terminology that perpetuates the colonial mindset. I further provide explanations for the suggested use of alternative language that may serve as a reminder that certain facts have been sanitized, if not entirely erased, by the choice of words utilized by many scholars, educators and policy makers. Like Yunkaporta (2009) I introduce my worldview to make clear the assumptions I am working from and seeking to address, for *"...in identifying my language for this [thesis] I am identifying myself to the reader. This is a point of protocol"* (p. V)*.* Opening the thesis in this way aligns with Gerald Vizenor's (1978) concept of *wordarrows,* which tells us that words are like arrows shot at colonial and colonizing narratives. Wordarrows have transformative power that can provide a new discursive space (McLeod, 2001). Every word we choose to use does something, and we need to be ever mindful of the ideas we perpetuate and/or validate through the words we use. Am I contributing to the maintenance of the colonized/colonizing, superior/inferior mindset in the academy? Or am I contributing to processes that work to challenge and put out of commission omnipresent concepts and terminology that effectively erase the validity of diverse worldviews and practices that many students carry with them into university classrooms?

aboriginal: "To capitalize the words 'Native' and 'Aboriginal' is most likely an editorial decision. However, there exists a capitalization convention in the case of words denoting human groups with respect to nation and nationality such as in 'Canadian people' or 'German minister.' Not complying with those conventions reflects the dominant attitude of Euro-Canada: denying First Nations their status as distinct peoples/nations" (Retzlaff, 2005, p. 615). I use this term in this way, with a lower case 'a' only in direct quotes, followed by [sic].

aboriginals/Aboriginals: I use this misnomer, which unlike the term above is pluralized, in direct quotes only followed by [sic] to demonstrate the fact that a great diversity of nations originate on Turtle Island and it is more appropriate to use *Aboriginal Peoples* to acknowledge that fact. I do not want to contribute to the perpetuation of the idea that there is one homogenous group of 'Aboriginals'.

Aboriginal: This term is a state construct that serves a purpose: it references the "Indian", Métis and Inuit peoples as recognized by Canada in section 35 of the 1982 Constitution Act. Section 35(1) affirms and protects the existing rights, title and treaty rights of these state defined groups. I do not refer to my Nation or myself as being Aboriginal, I self-identify as my ancestors did and that is as Ucwalmicw (People of the land). However, because certain rights and protections are entrenched in this highest law of Canada, we cannot discard it and I use it in reference to such legislation.

Aboriginal education: The definition of Aboriginal education that I am working from is based on a review of reports, literature, practices and experiences of systems imposed upon First Peoples post-contact. Aboriginal education is a colonizing project and I use this term to distinguish it from *Indigenous Knowledge Systems* and *Indigenous education*, both of which are approaches to learning from and teaching with Indigenous pedagogies, content and intentions. I further use this term to indicate that I am speaking specifically to those remnants of assimilating curricula and processes that remain to varying degrees across institutions that are also doing transformative work in numerous ways and disciplines.

Ally/allies: I align completely with Russell Means' (2011) definition of ally; anyone who resists and struggles against the destruction of land, water, air, Helper Beings, languages and cultures is an ally to First Peoples and to diverse ways of being, doing, knowing and valuing.

Everything *does* something: For example, while the Canadian federal government's 2008 Apology for the intergenerational traumas caused by residential schools (IRS) is highly criticized for a variety of reasons, it did initiate some Canadians to question the extent of their knowledge regarding historic and contemporary acts of colonization. It confirmed for some disbelievers that residential schools were in fact forced upon First Peoples' children, families and communities in this country and others. Raising awareness towards facing realities like these are starting points in the relationship healing and building processes. The Apology did not acknowledge the state's attempts at genocide or stop the ongoing colonizing project, but it does the important work of cracking many mainstream Canadians' impressions of Canada as a tolerant, kind and polite nation.

Findings: From Ucwalmicw perspectives, I have not "found" or discovered anything and it is inappropriate to label what my community has shared with good intentions as "findings." I am more comfortable with naming the understandings that come to me upon implementing the sharings of my community as the actual findings of this process.

First Peoples: This is the term that I use most often to keep us mindful of whose homelands we are in. Placed upon our ancestral territories by the Creator, First Peoples sustain strong and spiritual connections to our homelands. No legislation or other form of state construct can change the fact that we originate on Turtle Island. When not appropriate to cite a specific nation in my writing, teaching, and/or discussions – I use the term First Peoples, capitalized to demonstrate respect for the diversity of Nations I am referencing.

First Nations: "In 1980, hundreds of Chiefs met in Ottawa and used "First Nations" for the first time in their *Declaration of the First Nations*. In 1982, the National Indian Brotherhood became the Assembly of First Nations, a political voice for First Nations communities in Canada. Symbolically, the term elevates First Nations to the status of "first among equals" alongside the English and French as 'founding nations of Canada" (http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/first-nations/, Para. 4).

Futurity: "Futurity refers to the idea that members of a society ought to be able to experience that their own efforts and contributions to their society play a part in making it so that a vibrant future is possible for the coming generations and in the perceptual experiences of young people living today" (Whyte, Caldwell, & Schaefer, 2018, p. 13). Transforming Aboriginal education into Indigenous education has everything to do with First Peoples' futurity.

Gift/Gifting: From an Ucwalmicw perspective, "gift" is an action not an object. It is the process of reciprocation that creates and sustains harmony and balance in relationships. We gift Elders to demonstrate appreciation and respect for what they have gifted to us- their time and wisdom. It is not the object that is central but the mindful act of maintaining reciprocity and harmony in the relationship. I therefore use the word as a verb in this thesis to reflect Ucwalmicw understandings of this important process.

Good ways: Beginning, being, and doing in good ways is to know and live protocols of respect, reciprocity, non-interference to foster relationship building and sustaining that centers on spirituality and harmony with all my relations.

Helper Beings: First Peoples' worldviews of land, plants, animals, air, water and fire do not see these life-giving and nurturing forces as resources, but as *relatives* or *helper beings* that are sovereign entities with roles and responsibilities, paramount to those of humans. My students ask if humans are Helper Beings and I believe we are not because as Russell Means put it, "Humans are the weakest of all creatures, so weak that other creatures are willing to give up their flesh that we may live" (2011, para. 32). Helper Beings (or relatives) can survive without us, we cannot survive without them.

"Indian": While this inaccuracy is seen as offensive by many First Peoples, it is enshrined in the Settlers' laws and legislation that are bound by precedent to early State proclamations and

policies in regard to First Peoples, in particular, Aboriginal Title. An important example is the *Royal Proclamation,* which was implemented not to protect First Peoples' interests but the Crown's in that it determined that no one but the State could negotiate land title with the "Indians". The *Royal Proclamation* acknowledges Aboriginal Title as existing prior to contact necessitating treaty making at the sovereign nation-to sovereign nation level. This 1763 Proclamation is enshrined in Section 25 of Canada's Constitution Act (http://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/home/government-policy/royal-proclamation-1763.html) and continues to be the foundation of present day land claim cases. Therefore, as inappropriate as the word "Indian" is, it *does* something very important and I continue to use it in reference to such bodies of law and legislation.

"Indian problem": This concept represents a *single story* (articulated below) perspective that many Settler Canadians have regarding First Peoples. It is a perception that is fostered by the *perfect stranger* (articulated below) culture that I see engineered and maintained by what is and is not taught in mainstream education systems. The *single story* perspective knows only the stereotypical representations of First Peoples that perpetuates the idea that they/we are nothing but a problem that is in the way of 'progress and development' and of 'great expense to Canada and its tax paying citizens'. Many educational programs and much contemporary literature continues to focus on 'fixing the Indian problem' with little or no recognition of the role that the *Settler problem* (articulated below) plays in obstructing transformation.

Indigenist: This project contributes to the articulation of a critical approach to knowledge seeking, making and sharing processes that center on Indigenous voice and ways, political integrity and resistance. I have personally experienced all of these features as being necessary to my maintaining and expressing my Indigeneity within academia. This concept is further articulated in the theory chapter of this thesis and guides the methodological approaches enacted and disseminated in chapter four.

Indigenous: This term references First Peoples in a global context and "…came into wide usage during the 1970s when Aboriginal groups organized transnationally and pushed for greater presence in the United Nations (UN)" (http://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/?id=7400). The term originates as a strategic approach to making visible, towards rupturing, ongoing colonizing projects and terminating the negative effects they have on Original Peoples and their Motherlands

Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKSs): A diversity of systems of coming to know and understand that are thousands of years old, experiential, local in nature, with distinct purposes that center on land, spirituality, relationships and harmony, among numerous other features. These systems grow out of the ancestral homelands of First Peoples and "…must be practical and purposeful… These ways of knowing are both cerebral and heartfelt" (Kovach, 2005, p. 28). More in-depth descriptions of IKS are provided in chapter two of this dissertation.

In-Shuck-ch/N'Skets: This is the sacred mountain of the Ucwalmicw Peoples' origins. It is spelled here first in English and I use this form when referring to organizations that use this spelling. The second spelling is in the Ucwalmicts language and I use this form in all other

references to the mountain. It can be found on maps of British Columbia under the colonial name of Gun Sight Mountain.

Knowledge seeking, making and sharing: I do not separate education from research in this thesis as might be expected within academic conventions because I am working from within an Indigenist worldview that sees all things as being interconnected and interdependent. I use knowledge seeking, making and sharing interchangeably with education and research to demonstrate my belief that the processes referred to in this document are applicable to all phases of coming to know and understand which are inter-related and all part of the whole picture, whether they be learning, teaching or researching.

Kukwstum̓ckálap: (cook-shtum-cal-up) One person thanking more than one person in the Ucwalmicts language.

Mainstream: I see mainstream as centered on monocultural ways that are, for the most part, privileged and fostered within all systems that 'serve' or 'accommodate' First Peoples. These systems are agents of individualism, consumerism, nationalism, and ultimately driven by capitalist values and aspirations, all of which are not Indigenous to Turtle Island. Mainstream, in my opinion, is to believe in and live by the idea that there is but one way of knowing, being and doing in this world, that there is one definition of success that we all must strive towards. Moreover, these ways are not spiritually, or relationship centered.

Metaphor: Alongside the use of story, I take up metaphors in the facilitation and dissemination of this research project. The use of metaphor is a central practice in Indigenous oral traditions. Indigenous knowledges, histories, laws, experiences, teachings and values were/are embedded within Nation specific metaphors. The saying "*all my relations*" is not just a saying. Every time we hear the phrase, we are reminded of the roles we each play in maintaining harmony and balance in complex sets of relationships. Transcribed on mountains, helper beings, and even on the wind, we are immersed within the teachings that surround us in our daily lives through metaphor. Framing this written document as a loom and weaving process kept me ever-mindful of the need for action in this coming-to-understand project.

Mono-culturalism: I do not like to use this term because I do not believe there is a monoculture. My concerns have more to do with a capitalistic, individualistic way of thinking, being, and valuing that is swallowing up and seeking to replace a diversity of beautiful languages, cultures and ways of being, doing, knowing and valuing. That, to me, is not culture because the work of cultures is to foster a sense of belonging, making connections, and responsibility that help shape one's identity. Individualism and capitalism work very hard to sever those connections and replace them with the pursuit of getting into the *haves* as opposed to being in the *have-nots'* segment of society.

Nation: "The concept of the 'nation' is a European or Western one describing a Western view of a political, cultural and economic entity. Using this term to describe traditionally clan and family-oriented societies is one attempt of First Nations peoples to negotiate their way into the Canadian (political) consciousness" (Retzlaff, 2005, p. 621). This term is used to ensure clarity

when communicating with state and judicial systems about the rights, title and responsibilities of the First Peoples of Turtle Island.

Native: I opt to not use this label because it does the work of erasing the diversity of First Peoples. Using 'native' perpetuates the belief that many Canadians continue to carry and that is that there is/was one 'native' nation, language, and culture. Re-educating requires the reiteration of many things, beginning with the names by which we reference First Peoples.

Non-Interference Story: "Indigenous methods, such as storytelling, [are] a legitimate way of sharing knowledge…" (Kovach, 2005, p. 28). To honor Indigenous voice and ways I utilize storytelling as a valid and appropriate way to illustrate an example of pre-contact knowledge systems in chapter two of this thesis. The *Non-Interference story* is embedded with multiple layers of understanding and I have mobilized it in First Nations Studies 101 classroom discussions prior to engaging with the history and effects of the Indian Residential School system.

Original Peoples: Along with *First Peoples*, I utilize this term when not referencing a specific nation. It reminds us that we are living, working, learning in and benefiting from the territories and 'resources' of the Original Peoples of Turtle Island. This fact can never be erased- not even by Treaty.

Our/their: Because I am writing about numerous Indigenous knowledges, experiences and ways that are common between a great diversity of Nations, I shift between the use of *their* and *our* in my writing. I further use the term *our* when presenting the outcomes of this project because I view this work as being the result of the contributions of Samahquamicw and therefore it is not *my* but *our* study. Use of this term honors the paramountcy of the collective and includes those who have come before and those yet to come.

"Perfect Stranger": Susan Dion (2008) coined this position after her inquiry into how teacher candidates viewed their responsibilities to incorporate Indigenous content and/or processes into their teaching practices. Dion found that a majority of those surveyed emphasized that because they had no knowledge of Indigenous Peoples, they did not have the capacity to incorporate Indigenous content and pedagogies into their teaching repertoires. This position is, as Dion argues, "…informed simultaneously by what teachers know, what they do not know, and what they refuse to know… and for many, a response to recognizing that what they know is premised on a range of experiences with stereotypical representations" (p. 331). I agree with Dion that many Canadians prefer this position of "perfect stranger" to First Peoples and this greatly affects the learning environments with which Ucwalmicw learners engage.

Plain Weave: "A plain weave is the process of pulling the weft thread (horizontal thread) over the first warp thread (vertical thread), then under the second, over the third, and so on until you get to the end of the warp threads"(http://www.theweavingloom.com/weaving-techniques-the-plain-weave/). This provides a very tight weave and was used on the border of the thesis weaving to demonstrate the resistant- to-change Aboriginal education framework from which Indigenous education is emerging.

Politics of distraction: These come in many forms and places and all play important roles in sustaining the project of colonization. Jeff Corntassel (2012) gives us pause to think deeply about how chasing after Indigenous rights is, in fact, a politic of distraction because it can divert us from living everyday as First Peoples. Graham Smith (2003) calls this distraction "watching the wrong door" as Indigenous Peoples are "kept busy" with activities that keep us from engaging with the deeper structural issues that sustain the status quo in Aboriginal education (p. 2). I view much of the literature and policy making on Aboriginal education as politics of distraction because the focus centers on adapting systems so that Indigenous students can 'succeed' in these colonizing institutions.

Q'aLaTKú7eM/Q'aLaTKú7eMicw: The first spelling references the site on which some members of Samahquam of the Ucwalmicw currently reside, it is located within our ancestral territories at one of the sites on which we exited the canoe in our Ucwalmicw Great Flood origin story. The second spelling, which includes the addition of the letters 'icw', indicates I am referring to the Samahquamicw people who reside at the place called Q'aLaTKú7eM.

Reconciliation: While many institutions are working to implement the TRC 94 Calls to Action (2015), it is important to note that, for many Indigenous Peoples, reconciliation is a highly contested concept. Winona LaDuke (2011) offers a definition that contributes to the *all my relations* pedagogical approach to teaching that is forming through the implementation of Ucwalmicw contributions to this project. LaDuke notes that reconciliation is about mutual healing and she illustrates this through story. An *all my relations* or *Tákem nsnek̓wnúk̓w7a* pedagogy is concerned with all students and bringing respect, balance and harmony to all relationships. Education systems will reconcile the past and present harms it inflicts upon Indigenous and non-Indigenous students when policy and practice mobilize this concept.

Samahquam/Samahquamicw: The first spelling refers to one of the communities belonging to the Ucwalmicw Nation and the second spelling refers to the people who belong to the Samahquam community. I am Samahquamicw of the Ucwalmicw.

Settler: This complex term refers to non-First Peoples who settle on and benefit in some way from the unceded and treaty territories and resources of the Original Peoples of Turtle Island. Many Settler Canadians, of diverse ancestral origins, profit in ways that the Original Peoples themselves do not/cannot. I use this term not to further divide Canadians and First Peoples, not to center on difference, and not to group diverse peoples and worldviews together, but to keep visible the ongoing political reality that is foundational to our inabilities to build respectful relationships. I do not promote a Tákem nsnek̓wnúk̓w7a pedagogy to dismiss, 'get over' or absolve single story attitudes or to make it possible for Canadians to distance themselves from the colonizing projects that work to varying degrees to privilege them. All need to know and come to terms with who we are beyond the identities constructed, perpetuated and/or imposed upon us by settler-colonialism/nationalism. The term Settler can be a source of discomfort for *perfect stranger* Settlers, and avoidance of those feelings has sustained the centuries old barrier to respectful relationship building with the Original Peoples of Turtle Island. However, to self-identify and mobilize as a Settler Canadian Ally, one can begin the process of coming to understand what it means to be Canadian, on these lands, *in relation* to First Peoples. This requires coming to terms with (reconciling) the truths about how Canada's historic and

contemporary colonizing projects impede our abilities to come together to affect social and political change and justice for all.

Settler problem: Regan (2010) calls on Settler Canadians to turn the lens inwards, to consider the 'settler problem' that they may knowingly or unknowingly play a contributing role in. There would be no 'Indian problem' without the 'settler problem' that is complacent in seeing mainstream ways and values as being superior to those ways that are Indigenous to Turtle Island. The approaches to truth-telling presented in this thesis and in my classroom lectures are shared with only good intentions that seek to make visible how students are, by design, trained to see only the 'Indian problem' that continues to divide Canadians and First Peoples.

Single story: I end the first class in all the FNST 101(Introduction to First Nations Studies) and EDUC 440 (Aboriginal Education in Canada) courses that I teach/taught with viewing *The Danger of a Single Story* video (Adichie, 2009). Adichie discusses how seeing or knowing only the stereotypes of any group of peoples is dangerous because it is perpetuated by systems of power that flatten the great expanse of experiences and complexities of entire Nations. Adichie notes that while there may be some truth in stereotypes it is critical to understand that they are not the only story of any group. A *single story* perspective sees difference as deficit as opposed to seeing the beauty of diversity. A single story perspective sees *them* and *us* as opposed to *we*; it sees superiority and inferiority. It divides. The 'Indian problem' is one example of a single story perspective.

Stl'atl'imx/Ucwalmicw/Ucwalmicts: Many community organizations that represent the 11 Ucwalmicw communities use the name Stl'atl'imx (southern dialect spelling) or St'at'imc (northern dialect spelling). However, in my community engagement sessions for this project, I learned that Stl'atl'imx is the name of a specific place in our territory and our proper name is Ucwalmicw. I use these two terms interchangeably because Stl'atl'imx has come to mean and is understood as referencing the Ucwalmicw Peoples. Changing the "w" at the end of the name of the People to "ts" indicates we are referring to the language of the people.

Tákem nsnek̓wnúk̓w7a: This brief statement reminds us that everyone and everything is interrelated and interconnected. What affects one, affects us all. This phrase represents a complex set of guidelines for ways of being that center on spirituality and reciprocity which contribute greatly to building and sustaining harmony and balance in all our relationships. This includes all humans, all animals, plants, waters, the earth, air, cosmos, ancestors and those yet to come. In the Ucwalmicts language we say *Tákem nsnek̓wnúk̓w7a* (tack-um-in-shnook-new-kwa) for *all my relations*.

Transformative: The Samahquamicw of the Ucwalmicw are represented by the frog and the

 frog is a symbol of transformation due to the metamorphic life cycle of this amphibian. Ucwalmicw perspectives of transformation are akin to how drastically the frog egg changes to a four-legged being that can survive on land and in water. The National Indian Brotherhood, now Assembly of First Nations, 1972 policy paper calls for equally substantial changes in Aboriginal education that see Indigenous student success that does not come at the expense of their Indigeneity while also acquiring the skills necessary to navigate the societies in which they are immersed.

Tribe/Tribal: I use these terms only in direct quotes followed by [sic] towards dismantling perceptions of First Peoples as being wandering bands of people with no governance, political, social, spiritual, legal, land stewardship and/or economic systems in place. First Peoples were/are responsible for vast areas of land, with distinct and intimately known territories, and movement with the seasons was a crucial component of tending to those lands, waterways and relatives in deeply harmonious ways. Being part of and not above the environments that sustain us, First Peoples' expansive knowledges, governance and land stewardship systems reflect and are rooted in each Nation's being in rhythm with the entirety of their ancestral territories.

Twill: A weave where the weft yarn is cast over two warp yarns and under one, over two and under one creating a diagonal pattern (http://moa.ubc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Sourcebooks-Weavers.pdf). Photo: (Gustafson, 1980, 98).
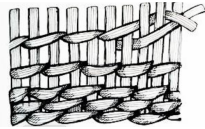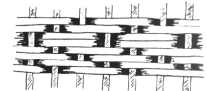
Twine: The twining weave takes up two weft yarns, one passing in front while the other passes behind each warp strand. This makes for a tighter weave and is conducive to creating patterns in the tapestry/blanket (Figure 3 Twining). Retrieved from: http://www.burkemuseum.org/blog/coast-salish-weaving-tools-technologies.

Warp: This weaving term refers to the foundational vertical yarns that mark the beginning of the weaving process, that is after all protocols and preparatory work have been completed. This yarn runs vertically up over the top rolling bar down and under the bottom roller bar, back up and over the top bar and down again across the width of the two roller beams. The number of wraps one does with the warp yarn determines the width of the finished weaving.

Weft: Think, "weft is left to right" to remember that the weft yarns of the weaving process are the horizontal yarns that weave the pattern, color and/or texture into the blanket. Weft yarns are woven in from the left to right and right to left then left to right again until the desired length, pattern and/or story of the tapestry or blanket is complete.

Western: refers to "… a mind-set, a worldview that is a product of the development of European culture. People are not genetically encoded to hold this outlook; they are acculturated to hold it (Means, 2011, para. 37). Western, to me, means colonizing and colonized; it references dominant, mainstream ideologies and practices that are consumed with perpetuating these ideologies and ideas across the globe. Education systems play a significant role in assimilating the masses into these Western perspectives that perpetuate individualism, naturalism and sever us from all relationships important to becoming fully human.

White: Use of this term makes me feel as uncomfortable as using the word "Indian" to erase the diversity of Original Peoples makes me. I see it as a generalizing term that lumps a great multiplicity of peoples with a plethora of worldviews and mindsets into one group and I therefore use it only in direct quotes followed by [sic]. I believe the worldview people are referencing when they use this term is the Western colonizing mindset and values described in this glossary under the term *Western*.

Wholistic: Like Debassige (2010), "I include the "w" at the beginning of the term holistic because I too concur with Antone, Gamlin, and Turchetti (2003) when they make the distinction as follows: 'Wholistic describes the Aboriginal philosophy in which 'everything is related' by virtue of shared origins and in which, by extension, the human being is considered an entire whole; that is, mentally, physically, spiritually and emotionally as an individual, in one's family and extended family, one's people, and with the cosmos in sacred relationships" (p. 10). Adding the "w" reminds me to be ever mindful of the "whole", and not just the "holes" (or gaps) in the Aboriginal education tapestry.

Wordarrows: We launch *wordarrows* at the colonial narrative every time we use our Indigenous stories, languages and pedagogies (Vizenor, 1978). Wordarrows create transformative space in which First Peoples resist "…the destruction of our collective memory" **(**McLeod, 2001, p. 31). I suggest that we must also dismantle the terminology and language of Aboriginal education because as McLeod notes there is power in the words we use. We must consistently employ terms and concepts that expose the ideas hidden beneath sanitized terminology that is designed to sustain the status quo. Making space in the introductory chapter of this thesis to deconstruct frequently used terminology is an example of wordarrows in action.

Ucwalmicw: *The People of the Land*

To honor the teachings shared with me by my Samahquamicw community, I acknowledge the traditional and unceded, ancestral territories[1] of the Ucwalmicw. Located in the southern interior of what is now known as British Columbia, Canada, see Figure 2: *Ucwalmicw Territory*, our territory,

> extends north to Churn Creek and to South French Bar; northwest to the headwaters of Bridge River; north and east toward Hat Creek Valley; east to the Big Slide; south to the island on Harrison Lake and west of the Fraser River to the headwaters of Lillooet River, Ryan River and Black Tusk. (St'at'imc, 2016, para.9)

The Ucwalmicw homelands are 2.2 million hectares in size (St'at'imc Government Services, 2015, p. 3) and the Nation is comprised of eleven communities. The lower or southern Stl'atl'imx includes the five communities of Samahquam, Xa'xtsa, Skatin, N'Quatqua, Lil'wat. The northern St'at'imc includes the six

Figure 2 Ucwalmicw Territory

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[1] www.biodiversity.org/assets/Taking-Natures-Pulse/figure-6.jpg Retrieved July 26, 2015

communities of T'it'q'et, Ts'kw'aylacw, Xaxli'p, Bridge River, Cayoose Creek and Seton Lake. "Ci wa lh kalth ti tmicwa (the land is ours). The St'at'imc hold Title, rights and ownership to our territorial lands and resources. We are Ucwalmicw (the people of the land). We are a nation, not an interest group" (St'at'imc, 2016, para.12). The Ucwalmicw Nation has never abdicated our responsibilities to our ancestral territories and at the time of this thesis weaving, no treaties had been signed to extinguish our rights and title. Ucwalmicw ways of life remain rooted in the places, waterways and mountains of our territories. Many of us continue to travel our ancestral lands from within the rhythms of our local environments to gather and reciprocate gifts of salmon, deer, cedar, devil's club, xúsum[2] and numerous other foods and medicines. Due to centuries of imposed spatial and ideological diaspora and because housing, employment, education and access to other important services are not available in many of our communities, the majority of Samahquamicw must travel from outside our home territory to engage in these rights and responsibilities.

The Samahquamicw communal sites of today are located in a number of ancestral locations within the southern Stl'atl'imx territories. The largest is situated at Q'aLaTKú7eM (recently known as 33 Mile and/or Baptiste-Smith) and there are presently around fifteen houses and a fairly new cultural centre/band office located in this community. In 2014, Samahquam had a population of 366 people with 112 living on reserve and 254 living off reserve (AANDC Canada, 2015). Samahquam has five federally registered reserve sites within our unceded territories.

There is a band-operated school, the *Head of the Lake School,* in Skatin serving grades kindergarten to nine, that is less than 15 kilometres past Q'aLaTKú7eM on the Duffy Lake Road. However, the majority of Q'aLaTKú7eMicw children attend schools in Mt. Currie and Pemberton. As 68% of the Samahquamicw population resides off-reserve (AANDC Canada, 2015), many attend public schools in Chilliwack, Mission, Hope, Burnaby and Vancouver, British Columbia (BC). There is no university located within the vicinity of Samahquam.

The communities of Samahquam and Skatin are the remaining two of four southern Stl'atl'imx communities that initially started the treaty process with British Columbia and Canada in 1993. The In-SHUCK-ch Nation[3] Interim Government has published numerous plans

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[2] Ucwalmicts for soapberry.
[3] This name references the sacred N'Skets, which is an important mountain in our territory and Origin Story, that was taken on to represent these two of eleven Ucwalmicw communities currently engaged in the treaty-making process.

and documents outlining what they see as our community's educational needs post treaty ratification. This organization's research demonstrates that we have a great need for human resource education and development in all employment areas from small business ownership to land use planning, to housing inspection, as well as full time social and family service workers, administrative and service delivery staff, teachers, and health workers (In-SHUCK-ch Nation, 2006). Post-secondary education is clearly of great significance to the Samahquamicw of the Ucwalmicw and nearing the final stage of the treaty making process makes more urgent this need to fill in the gaps of Aboriginal education. Weaving Q'aLaTKú7eMicw study contributions into current practices is all about contributing to the creation of learning environments in ways that will receive Samahquamicw students in good and practical ways.

Kicya7: Samahquamicw of the Ucwalmicw

Through enacting the Indigenist principle of resistance I mobilize my Indigeneity in as many ways as is possible from within Western teaching, learning and dissemination processes. I turn now to honor Ucwalmicw/Indigenous protocols that require me to introduce myself to make explicit where I am from and what my experiences are to demonstrate how I am positioned to contribute to the discussions at hand. Absolon and Willet (2005) confirm that, "we resist colonial models of writing by talking about ourselves first and then relating pieces of our stories and ideas to the research topic" (p. 99)**.** I further resist colonial expectations of thesis writing by first introducing myself through story where I make explicit experiential understandings of Aboriginal education and the effects it has had on all aspects of my humanity, not just the intellectual but the spiritual and emotional components of my Indigeneity as well.

She was born and raised away from her ancestral Stl'atl'imicw community. Her mother was a beautiful young Samahquamicw woman, too gentle and soft-spoken to speak against the abusive German Canadian who was her father. She did not know if there was a place for her in this world, she did not know if she was lovable or if she had anything to contribute. She grew up ashamed of her Ucwalmicw ancestry – that which was the very core, the heart, and soul of who she was – as her own father and society told her she should be. So deeply rooted was this shame that it led her to be deathly shy and terrified of being the center of attention. She learned to become invisible and existed pretty much unbeknownst to her grade one through twelve Catholic school classmates and teachers. She became so comfortable in her invisibility that she chose to

wear it everywhere she went for it protected her from the gaze of those who resented her for having a Samahquamicw mind, body and spirit.

Her skícza7[4] did not carry the Ucwalmicw ways of being or language for, from the age of 2, her mother had resided in the newly opened Coqualeetza Indian Sanatorium where she was treated for tuberculosis. Upon release from the sanatorium her skícza7 was sent directly to St. Mary's Residential School where she stayed until graduation at which time she married and moved north with her husband, away from family, away from community, away from her language, culture and the land. She rarely heard her mother speak about her childhood years and/or experiences in residential school so she grew up not knowing what that part of her skícza7's life felt like. She knew nothing about what was lost over those years and she had much to learn about the colonizing effects that education systems continue to affect upon her own and other First Peoples' lives.

Eventually she moved away from her mother and was raising four beautiful children of her own before thoughts of returning to school began to cross her mind. In her first semester of college, the English 100 instructor exposed her and her classmates to video footage of children in a residential school dormitory. She does not remember what the connection of the video was to the English course, but she recalls feeling fortunate that the room was dark when the class watched the film. Tears sprang from her eyes as she saw for the first time what it meant for her mother, aunties and uncles to have spent years in such a system. Her spirit crumbled as she internalized a heart-wrenching scream baffled as to how human beings could treat any child this way! She wished with all her might that she could go back in time to hug and love her young skícza7, stá7ta7 and seqsísqa7[5] and tell them over and over again how beautiful, brilliant, precious and loved they were and to make them promise her that they would never ever forget that.

This moment in her life also filled her heart with understanding and empathy for the numerous First Peoples' communities that endured and continue to suffer from the trauma of this abusive past... however, not all students felt this way... In another first-year college classroom – the group discussions between non-Indigenous and Indigenous students became heated and the words were coming out of her mouth before she even knew it— "We can't just get over it! We can't forget about our history when we continue to live with the fallout from it!" It would take 12 more years of education and connecting with family and community members for her to realize that we do not forget our history, we carry it with us; and we cannot forget that which continues to pummel us in contemporary times....

One of the most important things that she did over the course of her education was to return to her ancestral community to learn what it meant to be an Ucwalmicw woman. When she could not find the teachings within the university classroom or library she returned to the ancestral territory of her mother to learn and experience the ways of knowing, being and doing of the community to which she belonged. It is through these visits home that she came to trust for

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[4] Ucwalmicts for mother.
[5] Ucwalmicts for aunts and uncles.

the first time in her life that she had much to be proud of, that she did have a place in this world, that she had much to contribute and that she also had many responsibilities.

Áma sẅit! Kicya7 nskwátsitsa[6], éntsa Ucwalmicw. Good day. My name is Kicya7, I am Ucwalmicw. I belong to the Samahquamicw community of the Ucwalmicw and our ancestral language is the southern dialect of the Ucwalmicts language, which I recently learned is likely to be extinct by the year 2036. My grandparents are Kicya7 Annie Jim (Samahquam) and Smitty Jim (Skatin) and the name Kicya7 was given to me at a ceremony in Mt. Currie (Lil'wat) on December 15, 2008. Eight other women in our community received the name that day as well, demonstrating the importance of my grandmother Annie's ancestral name, which means *mother to all*. Kicya7 was a true Elder, meaning that she walked the talk of being and doing in good ways with good intentions. All loved being around her because of the joy she showed whenever she saw us, she was always welcoming and loving. Kicya7 not only knew the history of our territory and peoples, she defended them fiercely. My kwékwa7[7] was also a cedar basket weaver and, as far as I know, the last in my family to weave baskets. The last cradle she wove for my now twenty-seven-year-old cousin is still being shared with and enjoyed by new babies in our family.

Sadly, the story that opens this section of the chapter speaks to the type of family histories of most, if not all, First Peoples in Canada today. Dr. Georgina Martin (Secwepemc) calls this forced disconnect between culture, language, identity, belongingness and land, "legislated interference" (2014, p. ii). It is these imposed interruptions that sparked my interest in post-secondary education when I chose to begin my undergraduate studies at the College of New Caledonia in Prince George, BC. The following year, I began my Bachelor of Arts journey by declaring a major in First Nations Studies (FNST) and a minor in Political Science at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC). I soon realized that learning who I was as an Ucwalmicw person was taking priority over my political science interests as I focused on connecting with Samahquamicw family, community and ancestral ways in all of my undergraduate program assignments. This thirst for Ucwalmicw knowledge later led to my master's study being grounded in that which I had not yet had the opportunity to engage with in

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[6] http://www.firstvoices.com/en/Northern-Statimcets/phrase/263907494d88baec/My+name+is+
Retrieved July 27, 2015.
[7] Ucwalmicts for grandmother.

my FNST programs. While my bachelor's and master's degrees at UNBC were both in First Nations Studies I had not participated in Indigenous pedagogies, therefore my master's project, *Whispering the Circle back: Participating in the oral transmission of knowledge,* centered on and was facilitated from within oral tradition approaches to coming to know and understand. In addition to many years of engaging with education systems as a student, I have been a sessional instructor with Simon Fraser University's (SFU) Aboriginal Bridging programs (ABP) since September of 2007, a sessional instructor with SFU's First Nations department since January 2014 (FNST 101: Introduction to First Nations Studies, FNST 403: Indigenous Knowledge Systems in the Modern World and most recently FNST 286: First Peoples in BC), a sessional instructor with the University of British Columbia's (UBC) Teacher Education Office (TEO) from May 2014-July 2015 (EDUC 440: Aboriginal Education in Canada) and a sessional instructor in the Fraser International College (FIC) since September of 2014 (FNST 101: The Cultures, Languages and Origins of First Peoples in Canada). All of the courses listed center on learning from First Nations' peoples and our histories and ways of being, doing, valuing and coming to know.

Following the point that we can only know and write with authority on that which we have experienced (Absolon & Willet, 2005; Wilson, 2007; Kovach, 2009), I introduce this PhD thesis by connecting the study to myself through story and sharing details of who I am and how I came to be here. I reference my life, learning and teaching experiences to provide an important and necessary experiential snapshot from inside Aboriginal education[8], to provide the context for and key motivating factors behind this research. These experiences coupled with aspirations for the health and wellbeing of First Peoples in our own homelands initiated and sustain my ongoing interests in and commitment to broader approaches to the transformation of education. Through my master's and PhD programs and my teaching experiences, I understand the importance of practice and of experiential learning and these precepts of Indigenous knowledge systems are critical to the work of transformation. Taiaiake Alfred (2005), a Haudenosaunee scholar and activist who greatly inspires and motivates me, as does settler ally, Paulette Regan (2010) have both argued that it is *how* we untangle ourselves from colonizing knowledge systems that is

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[8] I use the term Aboriginal education to signal to the reader that I am referring to the literature, policies and practices that tend to focus on adapting policy, pedagogy and/or practice for the better inclusion and increased success rates of Indigenous students.

critical to the processes of transforming colonizing education. We must mobilize Indigenous pedagogies to better internalize and come to understand that there are ways of seeing, being, doing, knowing and valuing in the world other than those that are currently privileged in contemporary models of coming to know.

<div align="right">Project Overview</div>

Guided by the central tenets of Lester-Irabinna Rigney's (1999) Indigenist paradigm, namely, *resistance, political integrity*, and *privileging Indigenous voice,*[9] Samahquam community members and I engaged Ucwalmicw methods to draw out the protocols and processes of Stl'atl'imicw knowledge seeking and making that could contribute to the ever-emerging tapestry of Indigenous education. This process was guided by the following research questions,

1. How can Ucwalmicw processes of knowledge seeking, making and sharing disrupt mainstream understandings of Aboriginal education?
2. In what ways can the facilitation of Ucwalmicw ways of seeking, making and sharing knowledge contribute to the transforming processes of Indigenous education?

Within the coming to know, weaving and writing processes of this thesis, I demonstrate how applying Ucwalmicw protocols and pedagogies in the mobilization of Indigenous education recommendations facilitate respectful and localized approaches to making change. The Q'aLaTKú7eMicw contributions shared in this dissertation weaving offer relationship-building centered approaches to the positive work already well underway in transforming the delivery and outcomes of education systems.

Local Contributors – Ucwalmicw Community Engagement

In order to respond to the first research question as to how Ucwalmicw processes of knowledge seeking, making and sharing might disrupt mainstream understandings of Aboriginal education, it was necessary to first confirm what those processes are. Two Sharing Circles (held in Q'aLaTKú7eM on December 22, 2013 and February 2, 2014) and one community survey (administered at an Annual General Assembly in Mission, BC on July 19, 2014) were facilitated.

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[9] I prefer to consider this precept as the *honoring* as opposed to privileging of Indigenous ways and I use honor Indigenous ways from this point forward. This is likely due to the negative connotations attached to common understandings of the concept of privilege that I believe is highly dependent on the colonial project.

The subset of questions 1-3 below was asked and considered in a Sharing Circle format over the two above-noted sessions in the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw community Cultural Centre. These guiding questions were designed to determine what Samahquamicw Peoples identify as Ucwalmicw ways of coming to know.

1. What are the protocols around knowledge seeking and making in regard to Ucwalmicw education?
2. What are the processes of Ucwalmicw knowledge seeking and making?
3. What is our vision of education for Samahquam?

These queries were posed to the community so that we could begin by defining what the protocols and processes of coming to know are for the Ucwalmicw peoples. It is these Indigenous ways that center on balance, harmony and the importance of relationships that have much to contribute to current models of transforming Aboriginal education into Indigenous education. This is evident in the way that community contributors preferred to be identified in the upcoming written and oral disseminations of their knowledge sharing. The name chosen by the 20 contributors who participated in the two Sharing Circles noted above is *Q'aLaTKú7eMicw*. These participants felt that because we came to these understandings through group dialogue and collective remembering that it was appropriate to self-identify as the collective, Q'aLaTKú7eMicw. I differentiate between the two Sharing Circle contributions by adding the date in which the knowledge was shared (Q'aLaTKú7eMicw, 2013 or Q'aLaTKú7eMicw, 2014). To further clarify which information came from the survey responses, I cite that information as Samahquamicw, 2014 because the on and off reserve community members were present and participated in that process. I opt to differentiate the information because the methods used in Q'aLaTKú7eM were not the same as the survey approach in Mission. We are all Samahquamicw, but not everyone who participated in the survey process was at the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw sharing circles. The two approaches are clarified in chapter four: *Ucwalmicw Knowledge Seeking and Sharing* of this thesis.

Responding to the second research question, "In what ways can the facilitation of Ucwalmicw ways of seeking, making and sharing knowledge contribute to the transforming processes of Indigenous education", required the implementation of community sharing to determine the answers. These Ucwalmicw ways were shared with me with intention, that is, with

the understanding that I would apply them and learn from my experiences with doing so. This is the pathway to deeply understanding how Ucwalmicw protocols and pedagogies can function in a diversity of learning environments with which Samahquamicw students are/are not engaged. "When someone gives or shows you something, they are also giving you permission to use or do it" (Q'aLaTKú7eMicw, 2014). This Ucwalmicw teaching makes explicit the intentions behind what is shared with us. The experiential coming to know responses to this second query are disseminated in chapter six: *Weaving Ucwalmicw Ways into Aboriginal Education Policies and Recommendations.*

Following an Indigenist paradigm, a contemporary approach that emanates from within Ucwalmicw practices was employed in this project. A collection of Ucwalmicw protocols and processes guided present-day approaches to bringing community together for the purposes of knowledge seeking, making and sharing. The methods taken up are local in nature and honor the fact that Ucwalmicw ways are not, and have never been, static. Times have changed, as have our reasons for seeking and sharing knowledge and our audience has expanded to include communicating with the non-Indigenous communities in which we are immersed. Therefore, ancestral protocols like opening sessions with prayer, drumming and smudging were honored to prepare the contributors and me to engage in good ways with the upcoming work. Community members contributed their thoughts and teachings in Sharing Circles while I recorded their words on flipcharts posted on the walls around us. The flipcharts were reviewed, adapted and/or added to as seen fit by Q'aLaTKú7eMicw at the end of each session. We shared meals together, I offered hand-made gifts to reciprocate for the time and knowledge shared, and each day concluded with drumming and singing. More detailed information regarding the two Q'aLaTKú7eMicw sessions and the Samahquamicw general membership meeting survey process is provided in chapter four: *Ucwalmicw Knowledge Seeking, Making and Sharing.*

Study Intentions

Even amidst the shifting perspectives and recommendations that I have sought and continue to seek to address, as an Ucwalmicw[10] student and educator I continue to see and experience gaps

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[10] Ucwalmicw (and/or Stl'atl'imx) is the name of the First Peoples' Nation that I belong to, anthropologists refer to us as the Lillooet of the Interior Salish. Samahquam is one of the 11 communities of Ucwalmicw and Q'aLaTKú7eM is

in the ways that Indigenous education is considered and delivered in the majority of classrooms. This is extremely problematic considering the degree to which the Samahquamicw depend upon mainstream systems to educate our Nation members in ways that do not require us to leave our Indigeneity at the classroom door. A plethora of report and recommendation documents continue to reference the central tenets of the federally endorsed *Indian Control of Indian Education* Policy Paper (ICIE) (1972) that sought to ensure this for all Indigenous students. Towards transforming Aboriginal education into Indigenous education, I provide four foundational strands into which community contributions may be woven. Therefore, this dissertation loom is warped with good intentions as put forward by the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (1996), the *Accord on Indigenous Education* (Association of Canadian Deans of Education (ACDE) 2010), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *94 Calls to Action* (2015) and *An Audit of the education of Aboriginal students in the B.C. Public school system* (OAGBC, 2015). Although each document advocates for transformation, it will likely not come to fruition so long as change-making processes continue to center on closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous student success rates (ICOIE, 1972; RCAP, 1996; ACAATO, 2004; ACDE, 2010; Laboucane, 2010; Friesen, 2013). While these documents make mention of the need to educate all Canadians *about* First Peoples' histories and systems, the majority of attention continues to focus on meeting the 'unique' needs of Indigenous students. This approach, I argue in this dissertation, is problematic because it perpetuates colonial worldviews that see First Peoples as being the problem as opposed to the system itself. It is this entrenched and accepted understanding of transformation that this PhD project ultimately addresses.

Coming to understand what it means to self-identify as Canadian *in relation to* the First Peoples, lands and resources of this continent is, for the most part, overlooked and/or ignored in current systems of education. Most, if not all, students in the First Nations Studies courses I teach enter the classroom with the belief that it is only Indigenous peoples who are colonized. I know this because at the beginning of every semester, I ask each group, "Who is colonized?" Student responses range from the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada to Indigenous peoples around the world. Students are invariably surprised to learn that they too, by design, are implicated in the colonizing project. Institutional tendencies to focus only on Indigenizing spaces and curricula

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one of the residential sites within Samahquamicw territory. Adding 'icw' to the end of the word is like adding 'ian' to the end of Canada to indicate identifying as Canadian.

so that they are more welcoming and accessible to Indigenous students serve to concretize the "Indian problem" perspective of First Peoples' "success" (or non-success) in mainstream education. Regan (2010) attributes such tendencies to the *settler problem* and so long as the difficult to face aspects of our shared histories and contemporary situations remain non-existent in public classrooms, Aboriginal education will, by default, continue to perpetuate the problem. This in turn will continue to foster the colonizing myths of superior and inferior peoples and of 'valid' and 'invalid' ways of being, doing, knowing and valuing within our societies. While creating welcoming and Indigenized spaces for Indigenous students is imperative, it is but one strand in the overall tapestry of responses essential to transforming Indigenous education. It is not just the presence, or lack thereof, of Indigenous faculty, staff and content in the curricula that directly affects Ucwalmicw experiences in mainstream systems. There are many other strands requiring our attention and action.

Towards addressing the gaps generated by these tunnel vision perspectives of transforming Aboriginal education, I draw upon the local, community contributions of the Ucwalmicw. To ensure respectful engagement with my Samahquamicw people, I was guided by an Indigenist framework that centers on the local protocols and practices of the participating community. Proceeding in this manner demonstrates my appreciation for ways of coming to know that are so instrumental to my seeing the need for a humble and wholistic perspective of, and Ucwalmicw approach to, facilitating substantial change.

Setting the Loom: Weaving as metaphor and process

The…loom is first a mirror to reflect who you are now, then a window to imagine who you would like to become, and finally a doorway through which you will step into the realization of that vision (Merrill & Estell, 2007, p. 1).

Images of Indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) and state defined and imposed approaches to Aboriginal education are reflected in this loom as mirror. Through the loom window, we envision how Ucwalmicw ways could be woven in to further strengthen the transformative approaches to education reflected in the loom as mirror. The understandings that have come to me through implementing Q'aLaTKú7eMicw sharings represent stepping through the doorway of the loom to actualize the visions viewed through this thesis frame.

Figure 3 Setting the loom

The loom and dissertation blanket weaving are metaphor and they are process. The loom metaphor provides the structure for the writing of this thesis. Transforming Aboriginal education does not take place in policy and recommendation making; our actions are necessary to create meaningful and enduring change. The weaving metaphor represents the undeniably interwoven historical, current and future relationships between First Peoples and Settler Canadians. I heed the calls of Alfred (2005) and Regan (2010) to center on process by activating the guiding principles of Rigney's (1999) Indigenist paradigm through metaphor and through the weaving process to demonstrate that transforming Aboriginal education does not occur in one corner of the classroom if, and only if, there are Indigenous students present.

To engage in this PhD dissemination process in an Ucwalmicw way, I not only use weaving as metaphor, I also physically engage with it to wholistically come to understand the significance of the bodily and spiritual act of weaving. I honor Ucwalmicw knowledge seeking, making and sharing by learning and practicing blanket weaving while simultaneously writing the dissertation that is guided by the loom and weaving processes. I do this so that the physical, emotional and spiritual capacities to learn can contribute to my abilities to consistently write

from a good space with good intentions. The act of weaving engages all aspects of the weaver. annie ross[11], Cherokee/Mayan weaver extraordinaire, tells us that it is in the *making* that *we* are made (ross, 2010). Weaving the blanket while writing the dissertation contributes to my own transformation and provides me with key experiential and deep understandings of how Ucwalmicw ways can contribute to enhancing education systems. This act mobilizes the Indigenist principle of resistance as I resist being consumed by and contributing to academia's self-privileging perpetuation of dominant ways of thinking, being, doing, and representing.

Indigenist Dissertation Loom and Weaving: Guiding framework

To honor the teachings gifted to me by the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw contributors, I have opted to represent this study and our[12] 'findings' in a manner that perpetuates Ucwalmicw ways of coming to understand and share knowledge. I insert the word 'findings' in single (scare) quotes to denote the fact that these are not findings from an Ucwalmicw perspective, but the sharings-with-good intentions of the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw. These gifted teachings, some of which are thousands of years old, require implementation and reflection for the meaning making process to begin. It is in reflecting on my experiences with mobilizing Samahquamicw teachings that I come to understand. This means that I do not merely intellectualize that which has been shared with me in the knowledge seeking process. Additional, experiential steps are required to deeply understanding the intentions behind Ucwalmicw sharings.

Referencing Q'aLaTKú7eMicw teachings through the Ucwalmicw practice of weaving pays tribute to Indigenous protocols and practices from within a colonial institution that typically assumes the perpetuation of Western systems of knowledge production. These status quo approaches reflect the more "…predictable structure...that the academic world recognizes and reproduces" (Purnell, Beaulieu, Dick, & Phelps, 2008, p. 227). To share Ucwalmicw teachings in Ucwalmicw ways requires the use of a different form and the 2-bar loom provides the structure

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[11] I do not capitalize annie ross' name to respect her personal preference for how her name is printed. annie ross is a faculty member in Simon Fraser University's First Nations department.
[12] When using the word "our", I am referring to the understandings that have come to me through my engagements and communing with Samahquamicw family and community members in not only my master's and PhD programs, but also in my community work and participation in community events and activities; such as, contributing to and participating in ancestral offerings and naming ceremonies. I am referring to our collective work and contributions.

needed to weave Ucwalmicw practices into the tapestry of Indigenous education in good ways; Moore (1995) cautions us on the dangers of employing the preferred practices of academia,

> from an Indigenous perspective, we continue to function in this new system by participating in the very social formations that were instrumental in our own oppression. To participate in them means denying, at least to some extent, the value and authenticity of the Indigenous social formations that have been replaced and suppressed by the colonial formations. (p. 5)

I will not contribute to the further suppression of Indigenous ways in the sharing of Ucwalmicw work, and therefore, I take up metaphor and wool blanket weaving as respectful, more meaningful ways to put forth the teachings shared with me. This approach to honoring Indigenous voice and ways further facilitates my ability to maintain political integrity, self-determination and resistance throughout this PhD project. The Indigenist paradigm provided the space in which Ucwalmicw protocols and priorities could take the lead in and guide this potentially colonizing PhD process. I am responsible for Ucwalmicw contributions and for maintaining their integrity over making them intelligible in academic circles. Metaphors provide a culturally appropriate and anti-colonial way to do this.

Before taking up this metaphor and practice, I honor it by providing important, contextual information to make explicit the fact that these are spiritual, emotional, physical and not merely intellectual practices that inform the wholistically coming to understand processes of this PhD and life learning project. I turn now to providing this contextual information.

The protocols, processes and purposes behind Ucwalmicw blanket weaving

While the cedar basket weaving of the Ucwalmicw peoples is more commonly known and practiced in contemporary times, I have not seen or heard much about the goat- wool blankets once weaved in our communities. Elder Aunty Laura Purcell told me that we used to weave blankets from dog hair and goat wool and that my grandfather, Smitty Jim, was a mountain goat hunter. Teit (1906) notes that Ucwalmicw blankets "… seem to have been woven in the same style as among the Fraser Delta Tribes [sic]" (p. 210) and Gustafson (1980) reports that young girls learned to weave around the age of ten and were guided by their grandmothers. The making of blankets was a community-wide activity, with men and women working together to gather the

wool from mountain goat nests, to trade for the woolly dog fur, to build the looms and tools and to spin the wool and weave the blankets (White & Cienski, 2006). Used by the more affluent members of the community, the Salish[13] Peoples prepared wool weavings for use as bedding and cloaks and made others for ceremonial purposes (Wells, 1969). The Coast Salish Nobility wool blankets served, "…many roles in traditional life; they were used for ceremonies, as currency, as potlatch gifts, as payment of ceremonial workers, and as dowries" (White & Cienski, 2006, para. 1). Squamish Nation Hereditary Chief, Janice George-Joseph, speaks to the power of the cloak as being not only protection from the elements but, perhaps more importantly, the provider of spiritual protection for the person wearing it (Diamond Head Films, 2011). ross (2010) expands on this understanding,

> traditional teachings about making things are spiritual, physical, and mental, and in turn strengthen those aspects in the maker. The making is multifaceted, necessitating… a degree of mental wellbeing and spiritual openness with internal calm. The item produced is then able to carry forth good feelings and strength, to help its owner/wearer through challenges in life. (p. 57)

It is in making these gifts of strength and protection that the weaver too becomes strong and protected. We receive and/or maintain that which we gift to others. Good intentions woven into the blanket also foster good outcomes for the weaver. The spiritual nature and power of the weaving process and the finished blanket are garnered through intentional and specific acts:

> Before handling the treasured goat wool, the weaver underwent ritual purification. Normally, it took a woman a month to weave the blanket and during this period, as it is with other specialists working with sacred materials, she was celibate. The prayers and songs women used during the month-long weaving process ensured ancestral energy strengthened the garment. (White & Cienski, 2006, para. 14)

When we drum and sing our songs and when we pray we are calling upon our ancestors to watch over and be with us as we undertake this sacred task. The ancestral wisdom, strength and energy present around the weaver are woven into the blanket or cloak on the loom. This process thereby expands the notion of 'our' to include our ancestors and those yet to come who will enjoy the warmth and protection of the completed blanket.

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[13] This is an anthropological reference for a diversity of First Peoples whose ancestral territories are in what is known as the interior plateau regions of Turtle Island.

Oliver N. Wells (1969) writes that Salish wool weaving is not as well-known as the weaving of other Nations, such as the Navajo, due to the ease of access to Hudson's Bay blankets which, sadly, led to blanket weaving falling out of practice. While wool weaving is not as prevalent as it was in the past, the purposes behind ceremonial cloaks and blankets continue. It is not uncommon to witness at community events today the gifting of blankets to show respect for and to honor the leaders in our Nations. I have learned that wrapping a blanket around someone's shoulders symbolizes wishes of warmth, strength and protection for the receiver while acknowledging the good work that they do. That person need only wrap them self in the blanket to receive these gifts when needed.

I take the time and space in this dissemination process to describe the deep meaning and spirituality behind the preparation of materials, weaving, the weaver, community and gifting of the finished blanket because it is these ways of approaching the act of weaving that inform how I must proceed with writing the thesis blanket. There is much significance behind the making and gifting of our blankets and I must fully honor that when accepting the gifts of the Ucwalmicw loom and weaving process. The weaving metaphor is fitting for a number of reasons, the main one being that weaving is a practice that involves body, mind and spirit. This realization led me to acknowledge the need to not only write the thesis blanket but to also actually weave it. Therefore, "Cúżlhkan lhúlhucwen ku slap"[14] *while* I write, to keep me mindful of and connected to this need for wellbeing and spiritual openness throughout this Indigenist academic process. It is not appropriate to use weaving as metaphor only. Making this blanket makes *me*; it strengthens all aspects of my humanity as I become Ucwalmicw by weaving good thoughts, intentions and aspirations into this much more than academic process. Lavallee's (2007) teachings speak to the fact that I will be weaving myself into this work and for the outcomes of it to be positive and beneficial, it is important that I keep this in mind throughout the writing process. Physically weaving the blanket while writing the thesis simultaneously highlights the intentions behind coming to know both from an Ucwalmicw and a Western academic perspective. Weaving the blanket provides the space for my transformation as an Ucwalmicw person. The writing of the research onto this thesis loom provides the space in which to share how Q'aLaTKú7eMicw teachings can be applied for the benefit of all learners. This is very important to the people of

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[14] "I'm going to weave a blanket" http://www.firstvoices.com/en/Northern-Statimcets/word/1a4fd0c01d13d0e1/weave+something+%28to%29 Retrieved March 3, 2016.

Q'aLaTKú7eM who greatly inform not only this work, but who I am as an Ucwalmicw woman. Coming to know from Indigenous perspectives is all about processes that build and sustain harmony and balance in relationships. Community contributions are shared from that place.

It is my intention to 'read' the completed wool tapestry at my doctoral defense for, as Lavallee (2007) notes, "using symbols in research is an ideal approach that truly reflects an Indigenous method" (p. 135). I further intend to read the woven blanket to my Samahquamicw community before gifting it to them to reciprocate for their kind sharings and wishes for me and Ucwalmicw education. I will wrap our dissertation blanket around Samahquam with the best of intentions for meeting our educational needs in the best of ways.

The Dissertation Two-Bar Loom

The Warp and Weft of it All: Ucwalmicw Education emerging from the Aboriginal education tapestry
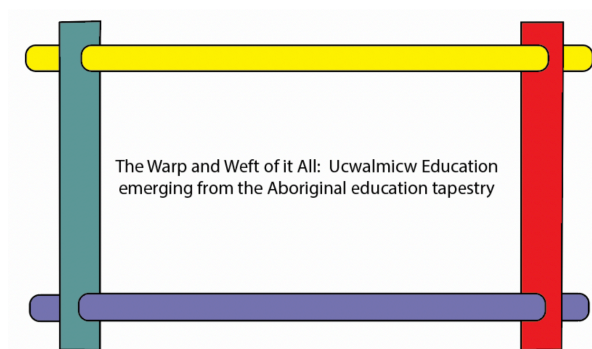
Before describing how each aspect of the loom and weaving process relates to and guides the thesis writing process, I present the components of the loom and weaving activities on their own as they relate to the actual weaving of a blanket, garment or tapestry. There are different types of looms, but it is the *two-bar loom* of my ancestors that guides the weaving and writing process presented here. There are four sides to the two-bar loom structure, two vertical support beams and two horizontal rolling bars onto which the weaving of the dissertation blanket is done. The stationary support (vertical) beams run parallel to the foundational warp yarns and the rolling bars run parallel to the weft (left to right-horizontal) yarns. The top and bottom roller bars rotate in the slots provided in the stationary, vertical beams and allow the weaver flexibility in positioning the section of blanket being worked upon. The weaver can easily roll the completed section of the blanket onto the back of the loom to position their work at eyes'-height no matter how near they are to completing the tapestry. This type of loom allows the weaver to create longer blankets within a shorter loom frame. I demonstrate next how the loom frames this dissemination process and then make explicit which features of the study are represented by the warp and weft yarns that will weave together to present the PhD dissertation blanket.

The two-bar loom provides the frame on which to weave Ucwalmicw pedagogies and purposes (weft yarns) into Indigenous Education principles and recommendations (warp yarns). The four sides of the loom represent the first four chapters of this thesis and provide the context onto which the

Figure 5 Top Roller Bar
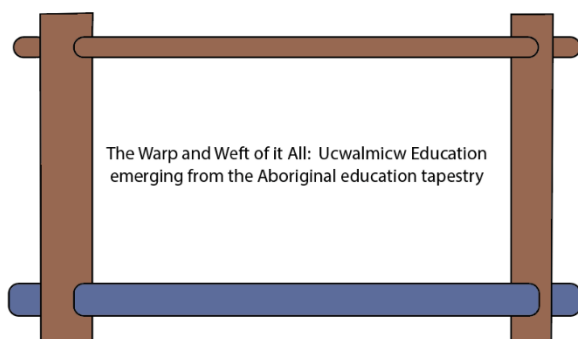
Figure 4 Bottom Roller Bar
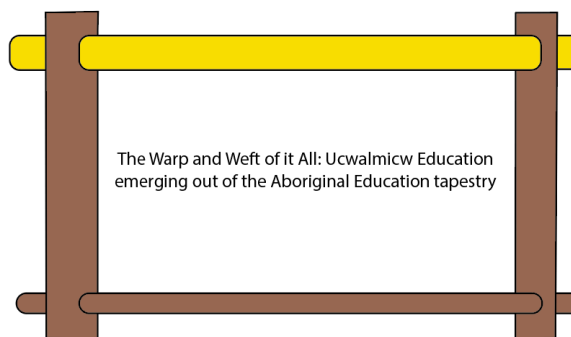
dissertation is woven. In Figure 4: *Top Roller Bar,* the yellow horizontal bar represents chapter one of the thesis that begins with wordarrows. before moving on to introduce the Ucwalmicw Peoples and myself as Samahquamicw peoples who bring a diversity of experiences and aspirations to the dissertation topic. In this first chapter, I also introduce Rigney's (1999) guiding principles of Indigenist theory and methodology; I present an overview of and the purposes of the study and provide the research and community engagement guiding questions that inform the dissertation process to come. I then describe how the loom and weaving metaphor and practice represent and guide the dissertation weaving.

The blue bottom roller bar of this dissertation loom represents chapter two, *Indigenous Education: The Ever-emerging tapestry* (See Figure 5: *Bottom Roller Bar*). This chapter provides the history and context of how we came to be where we are in Aboriginal and Indigenous education today. I review policies and practices of forced assimilation through segregation and integration and then provide an analysis of responses to these assimilating models and practices that have been and continue to be implemented as a result of the federal government's 1973 endorsement of the National Indian Brotherhood's (now Assembly of First Nations) 1972 *Indian Control of Indian Education* (ICIE) Policy paper. I close the chapter by articulating how this project can contribute to an expanded understanding of transforming Aboriginal education. An overview of chapter three is then provided.

Chapter three, *Guiding Principles: Indigenist Theories* is signified by the teal left vertical post) of the loom (See Figure 6: *Left Post*). This theory chapter provides an in-depth consideration of Rigney's (1999) three guiding principles, plus two additional tenets that were necessary for me to live out the Indigenist theoretical framework. This chapter demonstrates how Indigenist theory makes space for local approaches to coming to know and share knowledge which guided me to center on Ucwalmicw ways throughout this project.

The Warp and Weft of it All: Ucwalmicw Education emerging from the Aboriginal education tapestry
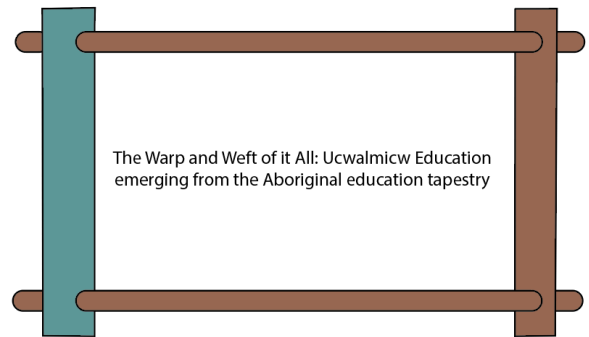
Figure 6 Left Post

Chapter four, *Ucwalmicw Knowledge Seeking and Sharing* provides our loom with the equally important and necessary right vertical post (colored red) in Figure 7: *Right Post*. In this chapter, I share the Ucwalmicw methods used in this project and provide a summary of the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw contributions. Together these four chapters define the parameters of and the context for this PhD study. They provide a wholistic framework to proceed from in that they are all intertwined and interconnected in intellectual, spiritual, physical and emotional ways. Who I am, who the Ucwalmicw are, connects in multiple ways not only with the weaving metaphor and process, but also with the teachings shared by Rigney (1999) and most certainly with the contextual history provided in the literature reviewed in chapter two. These four chapters provide the frame on which to weave Ucwalmicw teachings in to Indigenous education recommendations.
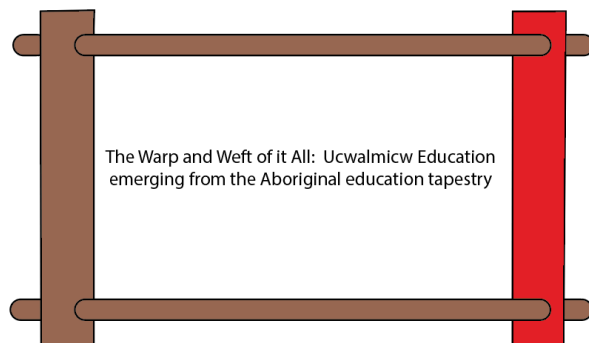
The Warp and Weft of it All: Ucwalmicw Education emerging from the Aboriginal education tapestry

Figure 7 Right Post

Weaving as process and metaphor

With the dissertation loom set, we are ready to take up the yarns that will weave the dissertation story onto the loom. In Figure 8: *Warp Yarns*, we see that chapter five, *Warping the Loom with Good Intentions for Indigenous Education*, provides the foundational yarns of the dissertation weaving process to come. The warp yarns wrap vertically around the top and bottom roller bars and represent four examples of recommendation documents published after
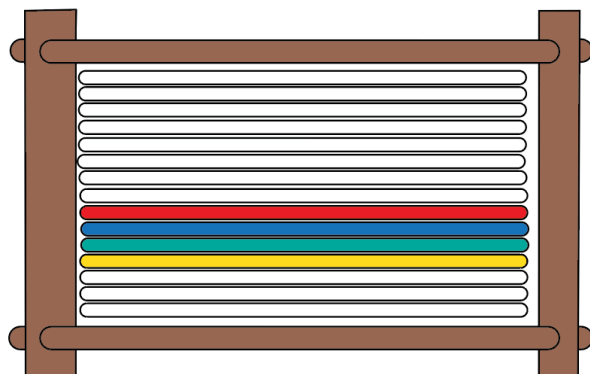
Figure 9 Warp Yarns

Figure 8 Weft Yarns

the federal government's endorsement of the 1972 *ICIE* policy paper. I provide an overview of each document as it relates to Indigenous education and identify two key strands from each to act as the foundational warp yarns of this dissertation blanket. It is fitting that these taut and stationary strands represent Indigenous education recommendations because without the weft yarns, without the weaving action, they too remain static, incapable of facilitating transformation on their own. It is appropriate to use the warp yarns to represent these Indigenous education reports because they are important and provide the strength and support needed to withstand the act of weaving to come. Chapter six, *Weaving Ucwalmicw Ways into Indigenous Education* forms the horizontal weft yarns seen in Figure 9: *Weft Yarns*. These strands are woven in from left to right and right to left and back again and are the yarns that bring life, energy and perspective to the tapestry. The weaving in of the weft yarns tells the dissertation story, they make visible the intentions of the weaver and they build upon the strength provided by the warp yarns and the loom itself. I begin chapter six by articulating the meanings behind the chosen Q'aLaTKú7eMicw contributions before demonstrating how they can twill and twine into and activate the underlying principles of

Indigenous education. Chapter six models how local knowledge systems can be woven into classroom environments in ways that promote and foster respectful relationship building.

Chapter seven, *Reading and Gifting the Finished Blanket,* is the closing chapter of the thesis and is represented in Figure 10: *Completed Blanket*. In this chapter, I 'read' the completed dissertation blanket by reflecting on how Chapter six responds to the research guiding questions. I demonstrate how this project can build upon the transformative processes that are becoming increasingly evident in public education systems. In the discussion segment of this chapter I reflect on how the implementation of Ucwalmicw protocols and pedagogies made manifest a Tákem Nsnekwnúkw7a (All my relations) pedagogy that provides a gentle and caring way in which to expand upon current approaches to making change for Indigenous students. I close the chapter with

Figure 10 Completed Blanket

some discussion on the practice of gifting in Ucwalmicw ways and current thoughts on what the next blanket will cover.
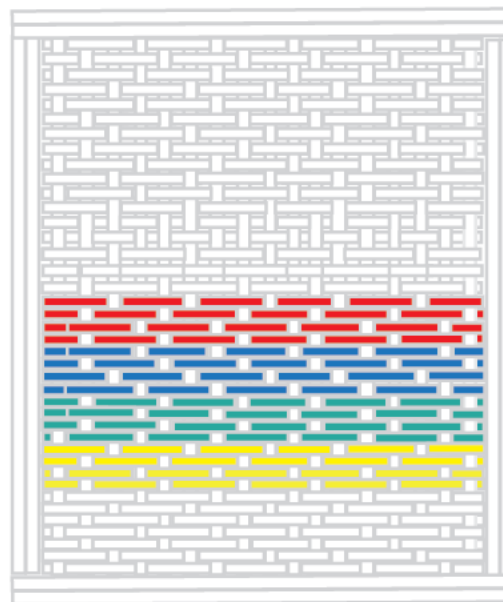
Chapter Summary

In the initial drafts of this writing process I sought to present an entirely Indigenous perspective, an Ucwalmicw centered viewpoint of this weaving framework and dissertation. However, through accepting the gifts of feedback from my committee I find myself now viewing this project from the wholistic perspective that my community members were also pointing me towards in our Sharing Circles and survey sessions. I cannot consider Ucwalmicw education outside of or without the Aboriginal education framework that it is inevitably weaving into, just as I cannot consider transforming education outside of or without the entire student population. Focusing on Indigenous students is important work that must continue on. However, that is but one small piece of what needs to be done. While the deeply meaningful and spiritually centered two-bar loom frames the blanket I am weaving for Samahquam, the tightly woven border of the

blanket itself represents the boundaries and constrictions from within which Indigenous education is emerging. The tapestry that is framed by that border represents Indigenous Peoples' ongoing resistance to Aboriginal education systems and the Indigenous education policies and Ucwalmicw protocols and practices that operate within and challenge these systems. The designs, textures and colors of the dissertation blanket weaving represent the vibrancy and possibilities of honoring Indigenous voices and local ways in this ever-emerging tapestry of Indigenous education.

Having articulated the top roller bar that represents the introduction to the people, the project and its intentions, we proceed on to the second chapter of this dissertation. In chapter two, embodied by the horizontal, bottom roller bar of the dissertation loom, I review a diversity of approaches to and contexts of Indigenous coming to know pre-and post-contact to make visible the reflections of Aboriginal education present in this dissertation loom.

Chapter 2 Indigenous Education: The Ever-Emerging Tapestry

This practical framework for weaving is, as we will explore, also a framework for refocusing our awareness in order to transform how we envision our lives (Merrill & Estell, 2007, p. 14).

Chapter Overview

The Warp and Weft of it All: Ucwalmicw Education emerging from the Aboriginal education tapestry

Indigenous Education: The ever-changing tapestry
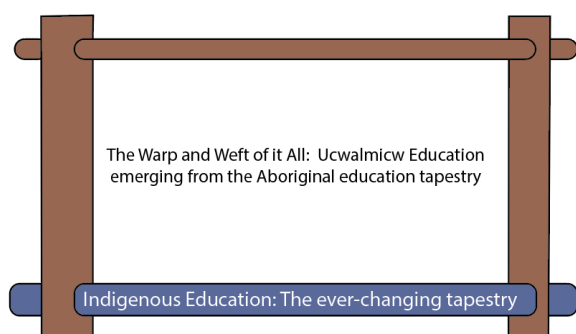
Figure 11 Indigenous Education: The ever-emerging tapestry

The dissertation loom provides the framework, or contextual information, that informed the design and textures of the PhD tapestry woven in to it and presented here. Chapter one, which represents the top roller bar of the loom, honors Indigenous protocols around beginning in a good way through making introductions. Beginning and being in a good way is all about knowing and honoring protocols. Protocols are actions that remind us of who we are and what our responsibilities are in the building and sustaining of respectful relationships with all beings. Weaving on the loom reminds me to refocus my attention to center on Ucwalmicw ways, to reflect, to smudge, and to approach the dissertation writing process in the same way so that visions for transforming Aboriginal education remain clear and strong.

In this second chapter, represented by the bottom roller bar, Figure 11 *Indigenous Education: The ever-emerging tapestry*, I untangle an array of purposes, protocols, policies, practices and learning environments that provide important contextual information for this project. I invoke Indigenous pedagogy by beginning with a story of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKSs) that offers one example of the thousands of years of IKSs that thrived before the imposition of foreign institutions.

I then tease out the central tenets and vigors of these complex and wholistic approaches to coming to know and understand by weaving in a diversity of teachings as shared by Indigenous Knowledge carriers/practitioners; Barman, Hebert and McCaskill (1987); Cajete (1994); Battiste and Henderson (2000); Castellano (2000); Castellano, Davis and Lahache (2000); LaFrance (2009); Aluli-Myers (2003 & 2008); McGregor (2004 & 2009); Little Bear (2009); Anuik,

Battiste and George, (2010); Simpson, (2011) and Wilson, (2013). I do so to demonstrate that IKSs are alive and well with much to weave in to the tapestries of Indigenous Education.

A synopsis of post-contact state education policies, practices and purposes is provided before presenting a sampling of Indigenous responses that follow up on the National Indian Brotherhood's (NIB) publication of *Indian Control of Indian Education* Policy Paper (ICIE) (1972). I reference the many and substantial contributions of Indigenous scholars/practitioners; Marie Battiste (2002; 2005; 2010), Jo-Ann Archibald (2016), Jan Hare (2002; 2011), Hare and Sarah Davidson (2016), Jeannette Armstrong (2000), Angelina Castagno and Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy (2008), Leanne Simpson (2011), Seth Agbo (2002), and Deborah McGregor (2004; 2009).

To narrow the scope of this potentially unmanageable project, I summarize key aspects of the Wilson and Battiste (2011) environmental scan of models that support Aboriginal post-secondary education. I then situate the contributions that this study has to make to the ongoing transformation of Indigenous post-secondary education through making explicit how Q'aLaTKú7eMicw offerings connect with the models outlined by Wilson and Battiste.

First Peoples' Knowledge systems

To honor Indigenous voice and to keep us mindful of the thousands of years of spiritual, social, governance, economic, health, environmental and educational systems that existed on Turtle Island[15] prior to the arrival of the first wave of settlers, I begin this contextual chapter with a presentation of the underlying protocols, pedagogies and purposes behind Original Peoples' coming to know and understand. To answer Rigney's (1999) call for political integrity in the dissemination process, and ever mindful of the fact that if I am not resisting, I risk succumbing (West, 2000), I honor Indigenist protocols and practices by first presenting this overview of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKSs) through story. "Storytelling… is a lens through which we can envision our way out of cognitive imperialism…where we can experience the spaces of freedom and justice" (Simpson, 2011, p. 33). Ucwalmicw pedagogies enacted through story telling in this PhD dissertation writing are more than acts of resistance, they represent and ARE

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[15] Indigenous term often used in reference to what has come to be known as North America.

the resurgence of Ucwalmicw ways of knowledge seeking and sharing within my coming to understand processes.

Non-Interference Story

She was only 10 years old but already she knew much about the world. She knew she was loved, safe, that there was a place for her and that she had much to contribute. All the wisdom of her ancestors was being passed on to her through stories, dreams and ceremonies that engaged her mind, body and spirit. She spent her winter days listening to the stories of her Ucwalmicw people and with each telling she understood more of what they had to impart. Many hours of the day were spent watching her skícza7[16] and sta7[17] do the work she herself would practice through play and she had responsibilities that were fitting for a ten-year-old, such as returning to the river the buckets of zúmak[18] insides collected by the women who so expertly cleaned this main source of life. She took pride in knowing what was expected of her and why it was important that she fulfill those responsibilities. She enjoyed the singing, drumming and dancing that taught her about the connections between the families, communities and Nations – about honor, respect and about sharing as well as the importance of laughter and enjoying the company of others. She participated in the rituals that built, amongst other things, discipline and gratitude, routines like rising on each new day to give thanks to the four directions for another day of life and then proceeding to honor that gift through the entire day.

She was exposed from a very young age to the importance of the land, the plants, air, animals and waters that gave and sustained her and her family's and community's health and well-being. She knew which plant life was to be picked and which would make her sick if touched or ingested. She had a sound understanding of what to harvest when and how and she enjoyed digging roots with the sta7 in the early spring. She watched the more-than-humans for signs of impending danger or inclement weather and she valued the wisdom and strengths of each of these relatives as they informed how she and her community would live off the land and with each other. For this reason, she and her people gave thanks to each plant and animal that gave itself for the life of her community, reciprocating for each through the offering of gifts, by using every part of the plant or animal and by returning to the earth those small portions that could not be utilized. No part of any gift was ever wasted.

Her connections to the territory were woven into the story of the sacred sqwem[19] – the story that told her where she came from, what her connections to ancestors, territory and neighboring peoples was while it taught how to walk a good path in harmony with all. She understood and honored the responsibilities and history that came with carrying the name the

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[16] Ucwalmicts word for mother.
[17] Ucwalmicts word for aunt.
[18] Ucwalmicts word for salmon.
[19] Ucwalmicts word for mountain.

Elders gave her not long ago and with speaking the Language that carried the wisdom of ancestors from time out of memory.

Knowledge was a gift left at her feet for her to take up[20] and carry with her and she knew that understandings would come when they were needed for she had experienced this several times already in her young life.

From the first stories she had ever heard she came to know the importance of valuing others regardless of their age, gender or personality. She truly valued the little ones who looked up to her, the older youth from whom she learned much about what was to come, the adults who modeled the roles she would fill in her own adult life and the Elders whose soft and loving eyes warmly welcomed her whenever they saw her. She learned that all beings and things had smáwal[21] – and all had responsibilities and equal rights to be, none more important than the other. This teaching was the foundation of the respect that she held for herself, for everyone and everything.

At this tender age, she was also fully aware of the protocols around death and how to behave during feasts and ceremonies. She participated in the drumming and singing that carried the families through the grief of their great loss so that they would not trap their loved one here by getting stuck in this great pain. She further participated in the drumming, songs and dances that gave thanks for and celebrated the many gifts of life.

She prepared for the fast approaching puberty ritual that would mark her transition into the next stage of her life in the community- where she would join the women and take on the same roles and responsibilities that they lovingly carried and fulfilled. Responsibilities that would one day require her, as an Elder, to share her own life stories and experiences — such as the story about the day she opened the shiny metal box she found on the riverside just last fall. She would always remember how it had washed up onto the sísxets[22] right in front of her as she stood watching the sun dip slowly behind the sacred sqwem and how the sounds of motion coming from inside had enticed her to carefully slide open one corner of the box to see what was making the strange noise. She was amazed to find within the confines of this tiny package a complete and different world—a world that revolved around a tiny, slowly turning mechanical wheel. She wondered at the persistence of the little beings inside that pushed and struggled and strived to stay in sync with the revolving wheel. Those who were not kept busy by this task appeared to be intent on convincing others to get in time with the wheel – some pushed – some taunted or made promises of a better life while others used belittling remarks and gestures to coax the beings that fell away to get back in line. Unlike the cajolers who stood straight and tall, overarching and sure, she noticed the slumping, shriveled appearance of those being forced to take a path not chosen by them and she sang a song of healing and encouragement for them all.

In each corner of the metal box was another slowly turning mechanical wheel. Each was smaller than the other – and all four together were smaller than the main central wheel. She

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[20] Elder Gerry Oleman, Ucwalmicw.
[21] Ucwalmicts word for spirit.
[22] Ucwalmicts word for shore.

noticed that the center of each of the smaller wheels was also surrounded by strong and confident beings that strived to run in time with the motion emanating from the center. Each of the four corner wheels also had its own groups of cajolers and sullen, spirit-broken beings resisting less and less the push into the center. The only difference that she noticed with the smaller wheels was found in that they also had an outer ring of beings that were being swept into the outer orbits of the large, central wheel. She wondered if perhaps these beings had simply given up to float spiritless to whichever corner of these worlds they ended up in… and she worried that they might never find their way back home. She wondered why being in sync with the center was so important that some of the tiny beings felt inclined to hurt and force others to follow this path that they had chosen for themselves. And she wondered where this strange little package came from and suspected it was likely a trick sent by nkyap[23] to teach her something important.

Although she found the tiny world trapped inside that little metal box beautiful, interesting and very, very curious she worried about what might happen should the lid stay off through the night and, honoring the teachings of non-interference, she placed the lid securely back on the box and set it gently upon the water to continue its travels down the river as she turned to the scent of zúmak roasting over the fire[24].

Indigenous Knowledge Systems, the rigors of which are embedded throughout the preceding story/metaphor, were well established and functioning before the arrival of the first wave of Settlers. "First Nations people have long understood that education is a lifelong continuum of experience gleaned from interaction with one another, with all of nature (seen and unseen), as well as with all of the cosmos" (LaFrance, 2000, p. 101). Central to First Peoples' knowledge systems is the need to maintain harmonious and reciprocating relationships between humans, more-than-humans, and with the environments (McGregor, 2004) that sustain all:

> It is important to understand that in the Aboriginal worldview, knowledge comes from the Creator and from Creation itself. Many stories and teachings are gained from animals, plants, the moon, the stars, water, wind, and the spirit world. Knowledge is also gained from vision, ceremony, prayer, intuitions, dreams, and personal experience. (p. 388)

McGregor is sharing that when we are observant, mindful of and connected to our surroundings, when we respect and honor the fact that everything is interrelated and that "…all

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[23] Ucwalmicts word for Coyote.
[24] Schneider, J. (2014). Taking an Indigenist approach to research: Engaging wise ways of knowing toward a vision of Stl'atl'imicw education. *Indigenous concepts of education: Toward elevating humanity for all learners. (Ed.) van Wyk, B. & Adenjii-Neill, D.* Palgrave Macmillan, New York, Pp. 125-137.

are energy and spirit" (Little Bear, 2009, p. 9), we become receptive to learning from plants, animals and the stars. Ancestors come to us when needed and, interestingly, they have visited me in my dreams during the writing phases of both my MA thesis and PhD dissertation. The title of my master's thesis was whispered to me in a dream about painting my hand drum and an ancestor showed me how to warp my dissertation loom when I was struggling with getting it right. Castellano refers to this as "revealed knowledge" which is a gift of spiritual origins (Castellano, 2000, p. 24). To be open to learning from ancestors, and all living things is to be connected to *all my relations* (McGregor, 2009).

Indigenous knowledges are "…the expression of the vibrant relationships between people, their ecosystems, and other living beings and spirits that share their lands…" (Battiste & Henderson, 2000, p. 42). Knowledge comes to us "…through the quality of our relationships, and the personalized contexts we collectively create. The meaning comes from the context and the process, not the content" (Simpson, 2011, p. 42). It is through being in relation to all things that we come to understand the intentions behind knowledge seeking, making and sharing. All of Creation is of value and deserving of respect as is demonstrated in a diversity of Origin Stories in which even the tiniest of Helper Beings makes human life and survivance possible. It is the muskrat, "…the most humble of the water creatures…" (McGregor, 2004, p. 387) who is able to bring up a paw full of mud, making it possible for the world to come into being upon the great Turtle's back in the Anishinaabe Re-Creation Story. It is the little black water spider that retrieves fire from the Sycamore tree in the Origin Story of the Cherokee Fire People as shared by Crit Callebs (Nivi, 2013). *All my relations* are helpers and teachers in Indigenous systems of coming to know. Building and sustaining harmonious relationships with all beings requires reciprocity, meaning we too must be humble and giving. *All my relations*, meaning "…the broadest sense of kinship with all life" (Cajete, 1994, p. 91) is rooted in the understanding that everything is animate and has spirit and "…knowledge, from an Indigenous perspective, is the relationships one has with 'all my relations'" (Little Bear, 2009, p. 7). These are the understandings to which Indigenous Knowledge seeking, making and implementing are twined.

Local in nature, Indigenous Knowledge Systems are concerned with the surviving and thriving in good and balanced ways of individuals, communities and nations in specific environments:

Indigenous Knowledge (IK) is part of the collective genius of humanity. It represents the accumulated experience, wisdom and know-how unique to nations, societies, and or communities of people, living in specific ecosystems of America, Africa, Asia and Oceania. It represents the accumulated knowledge of the earth's people that represent over 5000 languages and cultures contained in more than 70 nation-states…this knowledge has to be understood from an Indigenous context. (Little Bear, 2009, p. 7)

Information, histories and values are recorded on the landscapes of our territories. The *Ucwalmicw Flood Story,* for example, comes to mind every time I cross Kicya7 Bridge. "Our Elders tell us that everything we need to know is encoded in the structure, content and context of these stories…" (Simpson, 2011, p. 33) and the *Flood Story* that is tied to the sacred N'Skets Mountain which sits at the end of Kicya7 Bridge, reminds me of my connections and responsibilities to place, peoples and more-than-humans throughout the ancestral lands of my Nation. Barman, Hebert, and McCaskill (1987) concur, noting that the importance of acquiring skills that lead to the learner's survival within a particular environment greatly informs the diversity of content and context-specific knowledge sharing that occurs in diverse systems of Indigenous coming to know.

Barman et al (1987) write that in Indigenous Knowledge systems children observe ways of being that promote good attitudes and the knowledge needed "…to function in everyday life within the context of the spiritual worldview…inculcating awareness of the proper conduct within a person's family, clan, community and nation" (p. 3). The intentions behind coming to know and understand center on becoming fully human (Cajete, 1994) and do not stop at the honing of intellectual skills. The integration of place, product, person and process is achieved in ceremony and prayer (Colorado, 1988). Experiential understandings lead me to agree with McGregor, who states that "IK is also the process of learning this knowledge and the personal development that occurs along with this process" (2004, p. 392). It is in the doing that we find the intentions and meaning behind teachings that are shared with us and it is through experiential learning that we are transformed.

Indigenous knowledge systems are perpetuated through observation, experience and knowledge mobilization and shared via the oral tradition (Hare & Davidson, 2016). Knowledge comes to us in wholistic and cyclical ways through lifelong learning processes and practices (Barman, Hebert, & McCaskill, 1987; Castellano, Davis & Lahache, 2000; Little Bear, 2009).

Histories, values, laws and experiential stories of how to be are embedded within our languages, (Burrows, 2008) metaphors, written on the constellations and the land and transcribed in our rituals, on our hearts and in our weaving patterns and choices of yarn colors. As Hare explains, "Our dance, music and ceremonies are 'text' that spell out meanings with each beat and step about who we are, and our place in this world" (2002, p. 261). These systems of meaning-making and transmitting knowledge, worldviews and ethics are validated "… through actual experience, stories, songs, ceremonies, dreams, and observation" (Little Bear, 2009, p. 10). An example of these Indigenous forms of literacy, including the use of metaphors, that I share with my students, involves the teachings of the four foundational Helper Beings; Earth, Water, Air and Fire. It is in being raised with the understanding that the Earth is our Mother that we grow up seeing her as a very dear relative, she who gives and sustains our lives. Viewing Mother Earth in this way establishes an interrelational connection that is built on love and respect. When explaining how wind is seen as the "…intermediary plane which connects the spirit world to our own" (AFN, N.D. Para. 1), I share how every time I feel the wind on my face I am reminded that I am also a spiritual being. I am connected to and must be ever mindful of the spirit world. Indigenous teachings are 'written' upon those beings and things that surround us in our everyday lives. We are immersed in the teachings and this is how we come to be IN relation with knowledge and *all my relations*. McGregor expands on this idea when she shares that "IK is not just about knowledge about relationships with Creation or the natural world; it is the relationship itself. It is about being in the relationships with Creation; it is about realizing one's vision and purpose and assuming responsibilities accordingly" (2004, p. 391). Viewing the Earth as Mother leads me to respect and honor her and that in turn stimulates a sense of responsibility for her in me. I must reciprocate for the life that she gives. Respect is a key guiding principle alongside knowing one's responsibilities, which are internalized and manifest in our lives by Indigenous Knowledge Systems that teach us to see our Mother every time we set foot on the ground and to connect with our spirituality whenever we feel the wind upon our face.

Indigenous Knowledge systems are wholistic in nature, concerned with the spiritual, intellectual, emotional and physical nurturing and growth of the learner to the benefit of all life. Indigenous Elders, practitioners and scholars believe that to identify, comprehend, and nourish the learning spirit requires educators to recognize that all learners are "spirit, heart, mind, and body" (Anuik, Battiste, & George, 2010, p. 65). All are a part of creation, and have a purpose

that is, most importantly, driven by their spirit. And, "…just as spiritual life [is] part of daily activity rather than confined to a church, education [is] woven into everyday activities…living and learning [are] integrated" (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2012, p. 8). This approach to practical learning facilitates and models having a good attitude and aptitude for right action[25] (Southam, 2013) in our daily lives. All aspects of our humanity and our learning are inter-related and interdependent. Coming to understand has everything to do with 'becoming fully human' and knowing our responsibilities to everyone and everything. This establishes and maintains the *all my relations* intentions and protocols behind coming to know and understand. We honor Knowledge as a gift from the Creator (McGregor, 2009) through mobilizing teachings in our lives so that we may be transformed by the spiritually centered processes of coming to understand. We are immersed in the 'documentations' of IK that are transcribed on the land (Hare, 2002) and we are woven into the teachings as they are woven into us. These are the systems that First Peoples continue to carry within and perpetuate and these are the systems that have much to contribute to the emerging tapestries of Indigenous education.

To distinguish between the systems that I am referring to in this dissertation, I use *Indigenous Knowledge Systems* when referencing the diversity of ways of coming to know that are reflected in the pre-contact systems briefly described above. These structures are as diverse as the Nations from which they come, and this is due to the role that land and environment play in the development of Indigenous systems. The land is diverse across Turtle Island, therefore the languages, cultures and systems that grow out of them are equally diverse. Though state designed and operated *Aboriginal education* seeks to erase and replace these systems of coming to understand, Indigenous Knowledge continues to grow from the "…accumulated body of knowledge of the remaining Indigenous groups in the world which represent a body of ancient thought, experience and action that must be honored…" (Cajete, 1994, p. 78). IK systems are lived and practiced. They offer a diversity of ways in which learners might be immersed in the protocols and processes of coming to know that honor and respect all life.

I turn now to provide contextual information on what I see as *Aboriginal education* for the purposes of disseminating this project. I use this term to indicate that I am referring to the

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[25] Dr. Shawn Wilson teaches that right actions are about mobilizing knowledge so that it might become wisdom and of benefit to the collective- behaving properly when gaining knowledge is not about individual prosperity, but the collective well-being of the current and seven generations to come.

systems of education imposed upon First Peoples with the clear intentions of supplanting Indigenous Knowledge Systems as a key tool in the colonizing project. I do so because the term and concept *Aboriginal*, like Western education systems in the homelands of First Peoples, is a state executed construct. The next section of this chapter provides an overview of the policies, practices and intentions behind *Aboriginal education*.

Aboriginal Education: State approaches to solving the "Indian Problem"

Interference Story

.... Although she found the tiny world trapped inside that little metal box beautiful, interesting and very, very curious she worried about what might happen should the lid stay off through the night and honoring the teachings of non-interference she slowly lowered the lid to cover the box when a flash of lightning struck a tree in the forest behind her and the following clash of rolling thunder startled her. Losing grip of the tiny world in her hands, it fell onto the water as she turned to run to the warmth and safety of the [s7ístken](#)[26] *fire. Little did she know that the tiny beings that toppled out were scrambling on to the shore of her community and as their feet touched the sacred waters the beings began to grow in size and determination as they wondered at the beauty of this strange, uninhabited and new world, each rushing to stake his claim…*

Staking one's claim in this 'empty and vacant new world'[27] soon proved to be a far more arduous task then what the newcomers might have anticipated. The Nations of Original Peoples that held strong and spiritual connections to their ancestral lands and resources (or relatives from an Indigenous perspective) of Turtle Island soon became the "Indian problem"[28] that stood between settlers and their hunger for land, wealth and power (York, 1992). Contrary to commonly held beliefs, control over Indigenous territories was not acquired as the spoils of some great war, because "…Canada could not afford an Indian [sic] war…" (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2012, p. 7). For this reason, access to land and resources was assumed through the assertion of

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[26] Ucwalmicts word for pit house.

[27] This concept of *Terra Nullius* was and continues to be utilized as a form of self-justification for settler encroachment upon very much inhabited and wholistically cared for territories. Foundational to this concept is the belief in one superior way of being, doing and knowing which made invisible the highly functioning, well-established systems of governance, spirituality, education, economics, etc. that flourished in pre-contact Turtle Island. *Manifest Destiny* lured settlers here by appealing to their sense of a God-given right and duty to 'civilize' the 'savage' and bring 'progress' and 'development' to the entire continent (Miller R. , 2011).

[28] This term is placed in scare quotes because it represents a single story, superior/inferior perspective of First Peoples based on stereotypes and ignorance.

foreign British declarations and legislation and through the imposition of policies and practices that protected colonial interests in land by declaring that only the Crown could negotiate with First Peoples for title[29] to their ancestral territories. With the transfer of the British North America Act of 1867,[30] Canada assumed fiduciary responsibility for First Peoples while simultaneously adopting policies of assimilation (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003; Wilson & Battiste, 2011) as the most efficient route to erasing the connections between First Nations and their territories. The main instrument for this undertaking of forced absorption into Canada came to be the *Indian Residential School System*, which, as legislated by the Indian Act 1876, was implemented for the express purpose of enfranchising its Indigenous students. To attain a grade eight or higher level of education meant the "Indian" had been 'civilized' into Canadian society and therefore, as a citizen, no longer the responsibility of the federal government (Wilson & Battiste, 2011).

Indian Residential Schools: Segregate to Assimilate and Dominate

The first institutions of Aboriginal education operated near Quebec City between 1620-1629. Administered by the Recollects (Miller, 1996) and the Jesuits (Milloy, 1999) Indigenous children were taught "…religion and the French language, so that they 'would be made French in heart and mind'" (p. 14). By 1820, the Governor of Upper Canada, Sir Peregrine Maitland, proposed 'civilizing' all First Peoples through "instruction and industry" (Milloy, 1999). Maitland's recommendations for doing so were implemented over the next 30 years in schools created specifically for Aboriginal children (Milloy, 1999).

In 1842, the Bagot Report proposed the establishment of as many labor and industrial schools as possible marking the official starting point of the residential school system in Canada (Ryerson University's Aboriginal Education Council, 2010, p. 2). Five years after the Bagot Report was published, the Department of Indian Affairs asked Egerton Ryerson for suggestions on how to implement residential schooling for Aboriginal children (Ryerson, 1847, p. 73). Ryerson's response is telling:

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[29] See Royal Proclamation 1763 http://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/home/government-policy/royal-proclamation-1763.html
[30] http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/csj-sjc/constitution/lawreg-loireg/p1t13.html Section 91(24).

It is a fact established by numerous experiments, that the North American Indian cannot be civilized or preserved in a state of civilization (including habits of industry and sobriety) except in connection with, if not by the influence of, not only religious instruction and sentiment but of religious feelings (1847, p. 73).

Due to his influential status, Ryerson "…was taken seriously by the Department of Indian Affairs and most of his suggestions were implemented in the educational system for Aboriginal children" (Ryerson University's Aboriginal Education Council, 2010, p. 3).

Established across this country, Indian residential schools were designed for the sole purpose of separating Indigenous children from "…the influences of their parents and their community, so as to destroy their culture" (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2012, p. 1). In the words of Captain Pratt in 1891, "[t]he solution of the Indian problem hinges upon the destruction of the present systems and in the devising of means that will disintegrate the tribes [sic] and bring them into association with the best of our civilization" (Lajimodiere, 2012, p. 8). Church and state worked hand-in-glove to implement mutually beneficial policies of "… eradicating Indian [sic] cultures through their children's schooling into the dominant society" (Barman, Hebert, & McCaskill, 1987, p. 1). It was believed that this approach to Aboriginal education would make light the work of transitioning Indigenous Peoples into Western ways when applied early in the child's development.

Between the late 1880's and the early 1900's, when the system came into full force, almost 70% of First Nations' children were removed from their loving families and communities, from their childhood homes and territories as colonial law required First Peoples to send their children to Indian Residential and day schools[31] (Hare & Barman, 2000). The First Nations' child in these institutions of indoctrination was always hungry, lonely and bereft of parental/familial love, nurturance and guidance (Hare & Barman, 2000). A stark contrast to the Indigenous Knowledge Systems that prevailed pre-interference, these children were expected to learn in often hostile environments from, typically, sub-standard teachers who had no instructional training and who were generally more concerned with saving souls than with the tutelage of their wards (Hare & Barman, 2000; Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003).

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[31] These were local schools located on the reserve. Teachers were usually the local minister, priest or nun. These schools were usually segregated, even if the children were near a public school (http://www.fnesc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/IRSR10-Part1.pdf).

Many would not survive what Wilson and Battiste (2011) refer to as the "assimilation and enfranchisement model" (p.11) of Aboriginal education with "[f]ifty per cent of the children who passed through these schools… not liv[ing]to benefit from the education which they had received therein" (Quoting Deputy Minister of Indian Affairs, Duncan Campbell Scott, 1913) (Truth and Reconciliation, 2012, p. 29). Furthermore, because children were often punished severely if caught speaking their ancestral languages or practicing traditional ceremonies, those who 'survived' did so at the expense of their very identities and the relationships so vital to their own Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

Even under these all-too-often traumatizing conditions, reports of the oblates who worked with them indicate those First Nations' children who endured did academically well in these schools and sometimes better than their non-Indigenous counterparts.[32]This prompted a hasty change in policy and practice when settler society felt threatened by the possible employment competition of First Peoples' graduates (Truth and Reconciliation, 2012, p. 29). In 1897, the Minister of the Interior and Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, reported that, "We are educating these Indians to compete industrially with our own people, which seems to me a very undesirable use of public money" (Barman, 1986, p. 120). Aboriginal education policy and purpose then shifted to that which ensured the assimilation of the Indian child but only to the extent that he/she would not rise above the bottom rung of the socio-economic ladder (Barman, 1986; Schissel& Wotherspoon, 2003). The new "half-day system" that ensued (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003; Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2012) led to instructional hours and activities for First Peoples' children being cut in half. More emphasis was placed on building the skills required for the station in, preferably on-reserve, life (Hawthorn, 1967) deemed appropriate by the colonial mindset. The bulk of the Indigenous child's oft-long school day came to be devoted to prayers and to chores that ensured the upkeep of the school (Hare & Barman, 2000). This shift in policy and practice guaranteed that most "… would receive an inferior education" (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2012, p. 16). By 1930, 97% of residential school students had not achieved an education beyond Grade 6 compared to 67% in the broader

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[32] Non-Indigenous orphans, deviant and/or neglected "immigrant" children of poor settlers were enrolled in Industrial Schools premised on the Residential School model with the intentions of training these students so that they might become contributors to Canadian society (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2012).

general student population (Truth and Reconciliation, 2012, p.16*)*. This 'gap' in Aboriginal education persists to this day.

Further, due to the free labor potential that the wards of these schools provided, students spent more time outside the classroom than they did learning. Under the pretext of work experience, First Nations children and youth did everything from hauling wood, picking rocks from farmers' fields, and harvesting the crops of local, non-Indigenous communities (Miller, 1996). These schools soon came to be seen as a source of revenue for the growing settler populations and this system of free child labor led to residential schools being highly sought after by newcomer communities (Miller*, 1996)*.

This first imposition of Aboriginal education functioned as "…social laboratories in which a people's beliefs and ways could be refashioned…" (Miller, 1996, p. 119) and represents a key mechanism for the "...economic and cultural absorption..."of the Original Peoples of Turtle Island (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003, p. 44). The Residential School policy of segregation sought to, as Pratt is well known for saying, "kill the Indian and save the man" (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2012) through spatial and ideological diaspora (McLeod, 2001). The schools' focus "… on replacing the spiritual understandings of place with versions of Christianity and modernity" were an overt attempt to "…replace tribal [sic] identities with modern nation-state identities and erase the traditional territorial maps from the minds of Aboriginal students" (Marker, 2015, p. 484). The central motivating factor was to exile First Peoples from their/our territories, languages, stories and cultures to disconnect us from our inherent relationships with and responsibilities to *all our relations*, land, family, community and nation to the extent that we were fully assimilated out of our rights and titles (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003; Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2012).

It is important to situate the origins of Settler state ideas of Aboriginal education and the role that it plays in the "…subjugation …and cultural genocide…" (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003, p. 35) of First Peoples when considering what education was, is, and what it seeks to do. I argue this because I continue to see that remnants of these intentions remain willfully intertwined within the foundational yarns of Indigenous and non-Indigenous schooling. These first impositions of state philosophies of 'educating' First Peoples were facilitated through practices of segregation; that is separating children from not only Settler society, but also from family, love, nurturance, and ancestral Nation identity. The goal of these first attempts at Aboriginal

education was seeing, as Duncan Campbell Scott envisioned in 1920, every "…single Indian [sic] in Canada…absorbed into the body politic" (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2012, p. 12). We can see that Indian residential schools were not about 'becoming fully human'. Aboriginal education was not about relationships centered in spirituality and harmony. These institutions of education were most concerned with molding the "Indian" into a broken Canadian citizen, floating spiritlessly and unattached to the lands and Helper Beings of our ancestors. Aboriginal education, from the start, has been about erasing the "Indian problem" by erasing all of the relationships that sustain our spiritual, emotional, physical and intellectual wellbeing.

Provincial/Public School Systems: Integrate to assimilate

The next phase of Aboriginal education was well under way by 1960, as the government of Canada grew weary of administering (Hawthorn, 1967) and funding the costly residential school system that was not achieving the desired results. After a century of working with and funding churches of all denominations to impose the Indian residential and/or day school systems on First Nations, it became clear to the government of Canada that the First Peoples of this continent were proving extremely resilient to these costly attempts at forced assimilation. This realization, coupled with the landmark report, *A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada - Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies,* more commonly known as the *Hawthorn Report of 1967*, led to the Liberal government's attempt to pass the *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy,[33]* more commonly known as *the 1969 White Paper*.

Hawthorn's report cited the need to move away from the segregation of First Peoples to their integration within provincial public schools (1967). Canada used this recommendation to further justify its policies of full assimilation as proposed in the *White Paper* (Agbo, 2002; Assembly of First Nations, 2009). This legislative maneuver detailed, among other things, the disintegration of the Indian Act[34] within five years to transfer the federal government's fiduciary responsibilities for First Nations' programs and services, including education, to the provinces (Battiste, 1995; Carr-Stewart, 2009; Paquette & Fallon, 2010). Hawthorn's recommendations to integrate First Nations' children into provincial schools aligned nicely with the federal

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[33] The document is accessible at: http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100010189/1100100010191
[34] http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/I-5/ Retrieved July 26, 2015.

government's desire to get out from under the administrative burden of, and the expenses attached to, the building and upkeep of separate systems of education for First Peoples. Again, in the interests of economy, Indian Affairs sought to collaborate with Boards of School Trustees to build and operate schools that would serve both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (Raptis, 2008). Amalgamation of mainstream and Aboriginal education systems would be less financially draining on federal coffers while speeding up the process of assimilation by immersing First Nations children within the Canadian student body.

Due to the Depression and World War II, this move was of great interest to the economies of the provinces that were in dire need of financial support. Building public schools became more likely when the province was open to supporting the integration of Indigenous students which, due to its fiduciary obligations to First Peoples, required funding support from the federal government (Raptis, 2008). This offloading of responsibilities was made possible through an amendment to the *Indian Act* that allowed the federal government to legally transfer the schooling, including some post-secondary education, of Indigenous peoples to the provinces. British Columbia (BC) "…amended the *School Act* to allow school boards and the province to enter into cost-sharing agreements with Indian Affairs for both tuition and capital costs for educating Aboriginal children" (Raptis, 2008, p. 121). Fifty-seven integrated school agreements were endorsed across the country, twenty-two of which were in the province of BC (Raptis, 2008).

As the intentions behind this new approach to Aboriginal education continued to be the "…progressive integration of the Indians [sic] within the entire Canadian family from sea to sea…" (Hawthorn, 1967, p. 41) no serious steps were taken (or necessary from the colonizing perspective) to prepare provincial teachers for the influx of First Nations' students into their classrooms. No inclusions or enhancements were made to the curricula and/or pedagogies of these public-school systems that were now responsible for the absorption of Indigenous students into Canadian ways of knowing, being, doing and valuing. While this new tactic was "…termed 'integration', as opposed to 'assimilation'…the old goals of enfranchisement remained" (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2012, p. 19). An absence of discussions and/or inclusions of Indigenous languages and cultures in the processes of integration led Hawthorn to conclude that the aim was to allow the diversity of Indigenous languages to disappear (1967). Enfranchisement, in the case of First Peoples, thereby meant full assimilation into everything

Canadian. Full integration was the only path to First Peoples becoming 'full citizens' (Raptis, 2008, p. 119) with equal, not unique, rights and status.

This approach to Aboriginal education continued to center on the social engineering of First Peoples, and it is not surprising to learn that, "BC Aboriginal children's truancy and drop-out rates were … as high as fifty-five percent and their achievement rates very low" (Raptis, 2008, p. 124). Educators and school staff attributed these 'failures' to the Aboriginal learner and their families, citing traditional lifestyles that only required hard work in "fits and starts", parental indifference to schooling and/or lack of at-home support for learning as being the main contributing factors (Raptis, 2008). Others, however, saw the bias in curricula and teachers, alongside a lack of Indigenous teachers and representation on local school boards as equally to blame (Raptis, 2008).

In the 1960s, "textbook revision was under way and [Indian Affairs Education] branch officials negotiated with the provinces to purge public school curricula and texts of negative images and stereotypes" (Raptis, 2008, p. 128). By 1970, the Department of Education was developing teaching materials that better represented the lives of First Nations students for use in the education of Indigenous students (Raptis, 2008). These changes to curricula appeared to have little effect on the success rates of First Peoples' and many felt it was because, "…the Aboriginal child faced two conflicting pressures: 'one to ignore non-Indian [sic] society, the other to accept it,' resulting in an impossible learning situation" (Raptis, 2008, p. 129). This type of pressure was inevitable in classrooms that privileged Western methods, values and perspectives:

> Integration viewed as a one-way process is not integration and will fail. In the past, it
> has been the Indian [sic] student who was asked to integrate: to give up his identity,
> to adopt new values and a new way of life. This restricted interpretation of
> integration must be radically altered if future education programs are to benefit
> Indian [sic] children. (National Indian Brotherhood, 1972, p. 25)

This attempt at Aboriginal education in Canada is also failing miserably in a number of ways because it is, "… nothing more than co-education that lends support to the contention that integration efforts were synonymous with the federal government's earlier assimilationist schooling agenda" (Titley, 1981, p. 20). The degree to which adaptations were/were not made to

curricula and teacher preparedness resulted in the Indigenous students suffering identity crises and exposure to racist discrimination in these environments that made invisible the histories, strengths, beauty, cultures, languages and contributions of First Peoples' ancestries and contemporary lives. Failure to acknowledge and honor Indigenous Peoples and their ancestral connections to the territories on which these schools continue to perpetuate colonial mindsets, further exposes First Peoples to "…processes of cultural assimilation" (Hare & Barman, 2000, p. 349) that constitute "both epistemological racism and cultural genocide" (Cole, 2000, p. iii).

Raptis (2008) speaks to the growing sentiment that sought to change the tapestry of formal Aboriginal education and notes that as, "…Canada's [post-war] 'equality revolution' unfolded, provincial authorities increasingly affirmed their support for achieving educational parity for Aboriginal children by adopting much broader notions of schooling to include linguistic, cultural, psychological and social services" (p. 137). While understandings like these may appear to be good-intentioned, the fact is they originate in and foster a "cultural deficit" perspective (Raptis, 2008) that continues to measure success by students' abilities to achieve in Western/monocultural institutes of learning for the purposes of becoming full and contributing Canadian citizens.

Aboriginal education is woven into this dissertation blanket using policy and practice strands that demonstrate the questionable intentions behind these models of absorption. These approaches to erasing First Peoples' relationships with Turtle Island in the ideological, spiritual and spatial sense have caused intergenerational damage that continues to influence the social and cultural lives (Little Bear, 2009) and futurity of First Peoples in Canada. These projects of assimilation have, from the start, severely eroded Indigenous family and knowledge systems (Hare, 2002), consistently elicited protest from Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and entrenched a lingering "…distrust of formal education…" (Wilson & Battiste, 2011, p. 13). Aboriginal education has fostered "…multi-generational suspicion of schools as instruments of assimilation" (Bell, 2004, p. 12) in many First Peoples and our communities.

All forms of state designed and facilitated Aboriginal education have negatively impacted the Indigenous Knowledge Systems that flourished for thousands of years prior to the interference of the colonizing project. For this reason, First Peoples' scholars and practitioners have consistently put forward Indigenous theoretical and pedagogical alternatives to ensure that IKSs are not further disrupted by Aboriginal education. The next segment of this chapter

references some of these ideas that are being woven into Aboriginal education to counter assimilationist outcomes.

Indigenous education: Weaving Indigenous Knowledge Systems into Aboriginal education

Having articulated the understandings of *Indigenous Knowledge Systems* and *Aboriginal education* that I am working from in this dissemination process, I consider the ongoing responses and practices put forward and implemented by Indigenous knowledge carriers and practitioners. I refer to this next shift in educational patterns that involve Indigenous Peoples as *Indigenous education*. Wilson and Battiste (2011) refer to this as the *Systemic Change Model* approach specifying that it "… seeks to generate a more comprehensive inclusion of Aboriginal content throughout the post-secondary institutions that have adopted it…" towards, "… affecting Aboriginal student outcomes" (p. 16). Changing Aboriginal education into Indigenous education through including Indigenous content, pedagogies and the hiring of Indigenous teaching and administrative staff is occurring, to various degrees, across the K-12 and post-secondary landscape in Canada. I provide a brief overview of Indigenous calls for transformation and the great strides being made across all levels of education to illustrate the ever-changing patterns emerging across the tapestry of Indigenous schooling. However, due to the urgent need for post-secondary education that was made clear in Samahquam community skills inventories, this PhD project focuses on the contributions that Ucwalmicw protocols and practices have to make in the university setting.

Indigenous responses to Aboriginal education policies

It is not surprising to arrive at the realization that education that seeks to assimilate is problematic. As Castellano, Davis and Lahache (2000) state,

> Education extended by colonial society was designed to lift Aboriginal peoples from their savage state and introduce them to the benefits of civilization. The error of these ethnocentric views and the invasions of Aboriginal societies that they supported have been successfully challenged only in the present generation. (p. xi)

While Indigenous scholars and practitioners have always turned to "…ancient knowledge and teachings to restore control over Indigenous development and capacity building" (Battiste, 2005, p. 2), Castellano et al note that the inclusion of Indigenous knowledges in the schooling of Indigenous Peoples only began to receive recognition in the 1970s (2000). Prior to that, "…school textbooks across the country depicted Aboriginal peoples as being either savage warriors or onlookers who were irrelevant to the more important history of Canada: the story of European settlement" (Truth and Reconciliation Canada (a), 2015, p. 286). We see the beginnings of First Peoples being presented in more positive ways in school curricula in the 1980s, however those representations were few and far between and were often overshadowed by the fact that more space was made to focus on First Peoples' as being riddled with problems. By centering on the social, spiritual and economic 'challenges' that ail First Nations, this new take on the "Indian problem" was/is provided with no reference to the historical and contemporary forms of colonization that create and perpetuate this plethora of so-called dysfunctions. Moreover, only one definition of success in education and mainstream society is considered valid within these schooling systems that do not prioritize humility, collaborations and/or respectful relationship building that centers on spirituality and maintaining harmony (Little Bear, 2009). TRC Canada (2015(a)) states that this approach leads to First Peoples being, "…characterized as a social and economic problem that must be solved" (p. 287). Inserting Indigenous peoples into the curriculum in this manner endorses the *single story* perspective that too many non-Indigenous students carry with them into mainstream classrooms.

The next decade in Aboriginal education takes up the 'protestor, militant' representations (TRC, 2015(a)) of First Peoples, again, without providing need-to-know contextual information about Indigenous rights and Title. Canadians who continue to assume that they won Turtle Island in some great war, would have very little patience for Peoples who are blocking roadways and impeding the daily lives of Canadians for 'no good reason'. What is absent in the curriculum serves to corroborate the *single story* and perpetuates, at the very least, an ongoing sense of resentment towards Indigenous peoples and communities that stand up for their rights and territories. These half-truth approaches to representing Indigenous Peoples in the curricula do more than impede relationship building, they cause harm.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *94 Calls to Action* reports that, "[a]lthough textbooks have become more inclusive of Aboriginal perspectives over the past three decades,

the role of Aboriginal people in Canadian history during much of the twentieth century remains invisible" (TRC, 2015, p. 286). Also absent over these decades of schooling are the many protocols, pedagogies and purposes of Indigenous Knowledge systems. Participation in these formal institutions sees Indigenous learners undergo processes of spiritual, intellectual and emotional unraveling as these school environments detach coming to know processes "… from living: so, the experience alienates us from our surroundings and, therefore, our culture" (LaFrance, 2000, p. 101). Becoming fully human in relation to all beings around us is not the central concern of education systems that promote individualistic and capitalistic understandings of success. Wholistic and experiential learning of how to build and sustain harmonious relationships within our environments is not of concern in Aboriginal education and LaFrance's (2000) critique expands upon this idea of alienation,

> in many instances, the learning is not related to the students' everyday lives or culture. Students are taught to individualize their understanding. Our Thanksgiving Address and our culture says that "we come to one mind." However, Western education says, "come to my mind" (Western expert in any given field); "to his mind" (Darwin's theory); "to their mind" (any given theory accepted by a collection of Western experts). There is no "our mind." Consequently, we cannot, culturally, be educated in a Western way and remain who we are…" (p. 101)

Aboriginal education disconnects; it erases the importance of the collective and the beauty of diversity. Indigenous education reconnects, values and promotes all our relations and the magnificence of multiplicity that exists within them. Simpson (2011) recognizes the need for Canada to "engage in a decolonization … and a re-education project that would enable its government and its citizens to engage with Indigenous Peoples in a just and honorable way …" (Simpson, 2011, p. 23). Further to this point, Castellano et al (2000) note that "…aggressive gate-keeping of 'standards'…" (p. 251) continues to interrogate the validity of IKSs, Indigenous pedagogies and the intentions behind Indigenous coming to know processes. For this reason, the "…worldviews that govern the thinking of society…" (p. 251) need to be decolonized so that diverse understandings of knowledge seeking, making and sharing can contribute to the wholistic development of the student and mainstream society. It is time to interrogate the unquestioning majority (Castellano et al, 2000) in relation to the significant roles that they play in the perpetuation of the colonizing project. This can be done through the inclusion of Indigenous

Knowledge Systems "…in the country's overall educational agenda [which] will broaden the learning experience for all students" (Hare, 2011, p. 107). Indigenous education centers on and mobilizes Indigenous pedagogies, protocols, knowledges and peoples as key contributors to the transformation of Aboriginal education. As Battiste argues:

> the task for Indigenous academics has been to affirm and activate the holistic paradigm of Indigenous knowledge to reveal the wealth and richness of Indigenous languages, worldviews, teachings, and experiences, all of which have been systematically excluded from contemporary educational institutions and from Eurocentric knowledge systems. (2005, p. 1)

The greatest challenge we face in doing this work is consistently designing an "…educational context that respects and builds on both Indigenous and Eurocentric knowledge systems" (Battiste, 2005, p. 1). Nonetheless, as can be seen in the upcoming examples, this work is being done and Castellano et al (2000) remind us of the need to sustain ongoing conversations in regard to "…rethink[ing] Aboriginal education…" towards articulating what "…is 'Aboriginal' about Aboriginal education…" (p. 97) while deeply considering what is and is not being taught to whom and why.

Transforming Aboriginal education

Before taking a closer look at the tapestries of transforming the above referenced projects of *Aboriginal education*, I pause here to highlight the diversity of Indigenous student and community populations that these systems serve. While I include and discuss some nation-wide policy-making events in chapter five of this dissertation, in keeping with the rigors of Indigenous knowledge seeking, making and intentions, I offer more detailed information at the local level, in this case, the province of British Columbia. That said, narrowing in on BC also presents its challenges, as there are 198, some say 203, distinct First Nations in the province alone, all of which have their own approaches to and aspirations for education. Further, due to the imposed diaspora that all First Nations have experienced, there are the additional circumstances of on-reserve/off-reserve communities, displaced First Peoples who, for various reasons, live away from their communities, as well as Métis and Inuit populations residing and attending

educational institutions in BC that require thoughtful consideration in the articulations and practices of Indigenous education.

The 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) and the 2012 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS) report that 232,290, or 17%, of persons who identify as Aboriginal in Canada lived in British Columbia in 2011, comprising 5% of the total population of that province (Stats Canada, 2014). One quarter of the BC Aboriginal population resides in the city of Vancouver. Of the BC Aboriginal population, 66% identify as First Nations, 29% as Métis, less than 1% as Inuit and the remaining 4% identify as other Aboriginal and/or having more than one Aboriginal identity. It is reported that 66% of all First Nations Peoples lives off reserve. Also, important to note is the fact that 45% of Aboriginal peoples residing in British Columbia are under the age of 25, compared with 27% of the non-Aboriginal population (Stats Canada, 2014).

In 2011, 50% of Aboriginal people between the ages of 25 and 64 had a certificate, diploma or degree from a trade school, college or university: 46% were First Nations, 57% Métis and 49% were Inuit compared to 66% of the non-Aboriginal BC population (Stats Canada, 2014). Stats Canada also reports that 29% of First Nations, 17% of Métis and 31% of Inuit people in this age group, did not have any certifications, diplomas or degrees in comparison to 9% of the non-Aboriginal population in British Columbia. Because 2/3 of the Aboriginal population lives off-reserve, most learners attend public schools and universities in urban and off-reserve locations. A small portion of those who reside on-reserve have the option to attend locally controlled or band-operated elementary and secondary schools located in their communities. Not all First Nations communities have schools and very few have locally controlled post-secondary institutions, so, it is not uncommon for on-reserve students to travel on a daily basis to attend public schools or to re-locate to attend a university.

It is statistics like these that motivate me to apply Samahquamicw contributions to public systems of education that serve the larger segments of Indigenous populations. While the diversity of ancestries and circumstances can make weaving Indigenous Knowledges into Aboriginal education more difficult, a variety of approaches to mitigate these challenges is being implemented across all levels of education. I present a small sampling of them here to set the context for the contributions that this PhD has to offer.

Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements

Initially administered by the *Ministry of Education Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch* to support BC school districts and Indigenous communities, the Branch sought to develop these agreements (AEEAs) in all 60 of BC's school districts. AEEAs were designed to ensure the effectiveness of Aboriginal education funding policies, to develop a policy framework to support Aboriginal student achievement, and to analyze and report on data (Bell, 2004, p. 24). AEEAs are unique to each school district and developed in collaboration with local Aboriginal communities and the Ministry of Education. However, "…commencing in the fall of 2016, the Ministry will no longer be involved in the development of EAs, believing that school districts and Aboriginal communities understand their value and no longer need Ministry support" (British Columbia, N.D., Para. 1). These agreements guide how key stakeholders will work together to,

> …highlight the importance of academic performance and more importantly, stress the integral nature of Aboriginal traditional culture and languages to Aboriginal student development and success. Fundamental to AEEAs is the requirement that school districts provide strong programs on the culture of local Aboriginal peoples on whose traditional territories the districts are located. (British Columbia, N.D., para.3)

This approach to improving the environments in which First Peoples learn relies on the contributions of local Indigenous communities and resource persons to respectfully include and implement First Peoples' voices and aspirations. AEEAs further require each school district to provide strong local culture programming and this mechanism provides schools with a starting point to addressing the diversity of Nations that may be present in their classrooms. It is an ancestral protocol common amongst First Peoples to acknowledge, honor and respect the ways of the Peoples and territories in which they live, learn and work. Collaborating on and implementing AEEAs represents a respectful way to activate Indigenous education in local ways. Indigenous Knowledge Systems center on the significance of local knowledge.

In 2017, 93% of BCs sixty school districts had signed AEEAs,[35] through which "…new relationships and commitments were made to improve the educational success of Aboriginal students."[36] Working with local First Peoples to define success and outline pathways to it, provides the space for Indigenous education to interrogate and counter the prevalence of monocultural curriculum and pedagogy that can foster a sense of exclusion for many students. Implementation of AEEAs can create settings in which students can relate to curriculum, community and Nation in a formal learning environment while maintaining their sense of identity and pride. These in turn are foundational to success in all areas of the student's life.

In 2016, Kitchenham, Fraser, Pidgeon, and Ragoonaden facilitated an inquiry for the BC Ministry of Education, investigating the outcomes of 22 BC school districts' AEEAs. Their findings include the need to ensure that time and attention are provided to establish trust and relationship building. Archibald and Hare (2016) agree, noting that inclusion leads to academic success and that forming alliances further affects positive outcomes for Indigenous students. Kitchenham et al encourage enhanced professional development for all school employees, the broad communication of the school's AEEA and making explicit how the Agreements connect with employee duties and Ministry goals. As Archibald and Hare (2016) make clear, "British Columbia's school district Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements and Local Education Agreements … appear to have consistent but small growth patterns when there is a vibrant relationship between Aboriginal people (families, communities, organizations) and school/district staff and leadership" (p. 19). This finding demonstrates the significant role that relationship building and maintenance continues to hold in Indigenous perspectives of coming to know.

Culturally-based education or Culturally-responsive schooling

A second course of action taken to increase Indigenous student retention and success rates in public education systems is the *culturally-based education* (CBE) or *culturally-responsive schooling* (CRS) orientation. This strategy is designed to "… foster learning environments that honor the cultures and languages of Aboriginal students [to] not only augment their sense of

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[35] https://news.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/factsheet-reconciliation-at-the-heart-of-relationship-with-aboriginal-peoples
[36] http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/aboriginal-education/aboriginal-education-enhancement-agreements/school-districts-with-an-enhancement-agreement

identity but improve their chances to be academically successful" (Cherubini & Hodson, 2008, p. 1). This modification of the educational tapestry hinges on decades of research conducted to define the role that culture plays in academic outcomes for First Peoples. Attributing poor academic results to the lack of a sense of belonging in mainstream systems that do not reflect or validate the students' lives, CBE and/or CRS are widely viewed as a promising approach to addressing the inherent issues of Aboriginal education (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). Raham (2009) illustrates how "(o)ne body of research suggests that a strong cultural identity is the most consistent promoter of success for Aboriginal students" (p. 25) and this adapted approach to Indigenous education supports the strengthening, as opposed to suppression, of students' cultural identities as a pathway towards academic success (Kanu, 2006). Reinforcing the ancestral identities of Indigenous learners requires adjustments in pedagogical practices, curricula, teacher worldviews, and the prioritization of school-community relationships (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008).

According to Demmert and Towner (2003), culturally-based education programs promote and facilitate the inclusion of six crucial features:

1) recognition and use of Native [sic] languages;
2) pedagogy that stresses traditional cultural characteristics and adult-child interactions;
3) teaching strategies that are congruent with traditional culture and contemporary ways of knowing and learning (opportunities to observe, practice, and demonstrate skills);
4) curriculum based on traditional culture that recognizes the importance of Native [sic] spirituality and uses the visual arts, legends, oral histories of the community;
5) strong Native [sic] community participation, including parents, elders and others in the planning and operation of the school; and,
6) knowledge and use of the social and political mores of the community. (pp. 9-10)

These qualities of a culturally-based or responsive method of education seek to fill in the gaps caused by Aboriginal education that disconnect First Peoples from the Indigenous Knowledge systems that sustain our communities. It is evident how the AEEAs explored in the previous section of this chapter align with and facilitate CBE/CRS through making important connections with local First Nations' communities. Kanu's 2006 inquiry into how CBE/CRS is being implemented reports a range of applications that fall across a spectrum of building upon the student's culture as a teaching/learning strategy, to the infusion of culture across entire curricula. Battiste (2002) maintains the "central purpose of integrating Indigenous knowledge

into Canadian schools is to balance the educational system to make it a transforming and capacity building place for First Nation students" (p. 29). Raham's study of best practices in Indigenous education compiled in 2009 for the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (now Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada) (INAC) reports that "…the majority of provinces have committed to measures to 'integrate content that reflects FNMI [First Nations, Métis, Inuit] histories, cultures and perspectives throughout the provincial curriculum and related resources'" (p. 26). Raham further reports that the six features referenced above are being infused into more First Nations' run schools then in public systems. There is a growing acceptance of CBE in Canada, however the fact that only some provinces and school districts have mandated its implementation (Raham, 2009) demonstrates that the trend to include such elements unevenly across provincial and territorial systems continues (Battiste, 2002).

The challenges of working in the urban context, where schools serve students from many ancestral backgrounds, also continue to present themselves. In response to this diversity, a variety of initiatives are being implemented to respect distinct cultures and to support relationship building between First Peoples and non-Indigenous peoples (Castellano, Davis, & Lahache, 2000). Examples of how culturally-based education is being put into practice include variations of the following: the observance of traditional celebrations and ceremonies, the delivery of land-based experiential learning activities, the provision of weekly language or culture classes, a growing incorporation of cultural supplements in standard curricula, the infusion of cultural components across entire curricula, the establishment of credit courses, and the hiring of Indigenous teaching and support staff (Raham, 2009):

> In 2015-16, the BC Ministry of Education completed a K-9 curriculum redesign that has Aboriginal perspectives and resources embedded in each subject area and each grade level from kindergarten to grade nine. The grades 10-12 graduation program is still in development stages but there are hopes that Aboriginal perspectives will be included in these grades as well. Already, there are provincial high school Aboriginal courses or resources for Math 8,9; English First Peoples 10, 11, and 12; and BC First Nations Studies 12. (Archibald & Hare, 2016, p. 13)

These substantial shifts across mainstream education demonstrate that the central tenets of ICIE (1972) are slowly but surely coming to life. Indigenous education patterns are emerging across larger segments of the Aboriginal education tapestry and they are doing so from within the still colonizing framework of education. The application of Indigenous knowledges and

resources across curricula can benefit the non-Indigenous learner as well through cross-curriculum exposure to the idea that there is more than one way of being, doing, knowing and valuing. Coming to understand and appreciate diversity can expand on the limitations and erasures that accompany striving to belong to a system that promotes and values the rights of the individual over building and sustaining harmonious relationships.

Band-Operated Schools

Before focussing on Wilson and Battiste's 2011 environmental scan of Aboriginal education at the post-secondary level, I provide an overview of the work being done in locally-controlled or band-operated schools that also serve Indigenous learners. While the focus of this project is on mainstream systems that serve Indigenous students at the university level, to provide an overview of the emerging patterns of Indigenous education, it is important to include the work being done in on-reserve schooling as well. As will be seen in chapter six, some of the practices outlined in Bell's 2004 scan of best practices apply equally to the environments of concern in this study.

Locally-controlled/band-operated education

While implementation of local control following the Liberal government's 1973 endorsement of the NIB *Indian Control of Indian Education* policy paper (ICIE) has been slow and uneven, positive changes are also being realized in First Nations' locally-controlled/band-operated schools. Initial issues with legislative barriers in the Indian Act that restricted federal transfer of educational control to anything other than public school boards, provincial/territorial governments or religious or charitable organizations, have since been overcome. Through the negotiation of numerous agreements, the provinces of Nova Scotia (1997), New Brunswick (2008), Manitoba (2009), Alberta (2010), Prince Edward Island (2010) and Saskatchewan (2010) now have the legal foundations in place to strengthen "…the framework for the provision of high quality, relevant education for First Nations students..." (Carr-Stewart, 2009, p. 10). Each of these jurisdictional agreements replaces the education provisions of the Indian Act and provides legal recognition of First Peoples' authority over their own education. In British Columbia, we have the *Tripartite Educational Jurisdiction Framework Agreement* signed by Canada, BC and

the First Nations Education Steering Committee in 2006. The purpose of this agreement is "…to identify the roles, responsibilities and commitments of the Parties relating to the improvement of educational outcomes for students in First Nation Schools in British Columbia…" (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2012, para.15). All such collaborations represent substantial examples of First Peoples-initiated reform to improve Aboriginal schooling.

This next section highlights the many best practices being implemented in a diversity of pre-kindergarten, elementary and secondary school situations in Western and Northern Canada as outlined in Bell's 2004, *Sharing Our Success: Ten Case Studies in Aboriginal Education*. Cognizant of the "…multiple overlapping contexts…" (p.12) of Indigenous education, the report "…covers a broad range of issues and highlights strategies and conditions that help Aboriginal students to succeed" (Bell, 2004, p. 12). The schools, located in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and the Yukon, fall under the following categories: three were under the authority of school districts, one under the Yukon Department of Education and six were band-operated (Bell, 2004). While the results of this case study extend beyond the band-controlled schools, the findings presented in the report and summarized here were common across all ten schools.

The author disseminates insights that were gathered through connecting with Elders, parents, students, community members, teachers, principals, and school board or education authorities. Bell's findings illustrate that while there was a diversity of approaches and circumstances found between the schools studied, six common features that facilitate success emerged across the study participants. The six domains include: leadership, school climate, staff, funding and resources, and community and programs. A brief overview of this information is provided here to illustrate how Indigenous perspectives and approaches are contributing much to the ever-emerging patterns of Indigenous education tapestries in multiple contexts.

Leadership: From Indigenous perspectives, leaders are those who "… lead by example, and when speaking… express the thoughts of their people… leadership was seen as a skill employed to meet a specific need rather than general authority to command others" (Wilson & Battiste, 2011, p. 297). This was the most frequently referenced characteristic across the ten schools that contributed to the study and factors of it include the creation of a shared vision and purpose rooted in a pursuit of continuously improving and "…building a culture of success" (Bell, 2004,

p. 312). It was also noted that local ownership and control of the school, alongside long-term strategic planning, are paramount to school success.

The actions taken by leaders are critical because they can persuade, "…others to set aside their individual concerns and to pursue a common goal that is important for the welfare of a group" (Bell, 2004, p. 297). When concern for the collective is central it guides leadership to be and do in good ways with good intentions.

School climate: This feature requires high levels of trust and expectations. Considering the lingering distrust referred to in preceding sections of this thesis, it is not surprising to hear that a welcoming, hospitable and generous climate goes a long way with community Elders, parents and students no matter where the schools are located. Nurturing relationships inside and outside of the classroom is key. Bell reports that having high expectations of students further contributed to the building of a successful school climate and the example shared is the setting and maintaining of an 85% attendance rate. It was noted that this led to retention and enhanced credits achievements. I would argue that the establishment of comfortable and safe environments that attract students and foster a sense of belonging leads to higher attendance rates which contributes to a decrease in knowledge/learning gaps which is conducive to achieving higher grades. Students who do not feel socially exiled are better positioned to succeed in the academic aspect of their education.

Staff: Schools that employ caring, dedicated, and/or Indigenous teachers and staff who *stayed* long term were cited as playing significant roles in the well-being of the school. Furthermore, those who support and facilitate professional development enjoy further success.

Funding and Resources: Bell references the need for parent and community partnerships in this determining factor of success indicating that they are a critical means of "…increasing the available educational resources for students" (2004, p. 313). While this domain highlights the significance of funding, the importance of community resources cannot be stressed enough due to the reality of consistent underfunding endured by locally-controlled education. It is the contributions of families and communities that make up for these ongoing shortfalls.

Community: Community engagement, local ownership and excellent communication between the school and community were cited as being critical to the success of the school. As indicated above, public schools are engaged with this process through their participation in AEEAs in the province of British Columbia. As will be presented in chapter five of this dissertation, sixty post-

secondary institutions are signatories to the *Accord on Indigenous Education* (2010), meaning all have committed to implementing these same types of connections with local communities towards improving Aboriginal student success.

Programs: The most common denominators found in programs that contributed to the success of the school are the inclusions of Indigenous content and a focus on literacy and early literacy interventions. Programs that take up wholistic approaches, are respectful of local culture, and meet individual learning requirements while providing "…a 'seamless' or full-service delivery system" (Bell, 2004, p. 313) are examples of success in band-operated schooling.

Bell notes that while the degree to which each of the six domains was evidenced across all ten schools was not equal, "…the potency of each of the above categories appeared to be an important element of the school's success and the presence of each success factor was significant to the whole" (2004, p. 313). One of the factors common between all the schools in this case study was the fact that all provided positive environments that were founded on attributes of acceptance and respect. The practice of supporting student success through wholistic approaches plays a key role in the success of the schools (Bell, 2004). These enhancements that lead to successes in elementary and high school experiences for Indigenous students translates into increased interests in and engagement with post-secondary education for First Peoples.

Post-secondary institutions

Status Indians were first funded to attend post-secondary institutions in 1968, with budgets allocated for "…technical, vocational, college and university training and in the 1970s, [Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada] AANDC began to fund Indian [sic] students for post-secondary education in the provinces" (Wilson & Battiste, 2011, p. 13). State thinking at the time was that university education for First Peoples was a privilege and not a legal obligation to be fulfilled by Canada (Pidgeon, 2014). For this reason, post-secondary funding for First Nations has always been viewed as a policy issue, which has been "…persistently contested by First Nations leadership" (Wilson & Battiste, 2011, p. 13). By the middle of 1960 approximately 200 Status Indians were enrolled at Canadian colleges and universities and by the mid-1970s, this number had risen dramatically. After endorsing the ICIE policy paper in 1973, the federal government began making grants available to universities for

the delivery of programming that enhanced Indigenous students' abilities to succeed in select programs such as teacher training, social work, and law;

> With money flowing, many universities were quick to pick up on these programs and to make them run parallel to their own…[and] at the same time, First Nation leaders and educators recognized the need to act quickly to gain control of post-secondary education for First Nation students. (Wilson & Battiste, 2011, p. 14)

During this same time period, Canadian universities were also developing and implementing Native teacher education and First Nations Studies programs in response to the changing perspectives on Aboriginal education (Pidgeon, 2014). The first Indigenous community-controlled institution of higher learning, the Blue Quills First Nations College, was opened in 1971 in Alberta (Wilson & Battiste, 2011).

Wilson and Battiste's, *Environmental scan of educational models supporting Aboriginal post-secondary education* demonstrates that *s*ubstantial changes are also occurring across university learning environments. However, "while most post-secondary institutions are increasingly committed to finding ways of helping Aboriginal students succeed, they have not kept pace with First Nations community-based programming or institutions in terms of how Aboriginal successes have been achieved" (Wilson & Battiste, 2011, p. 10). While there is much policy and recommendation making in this regard, the degree to which each university and/or program incorporates these guiding principles is dependent upon individual staff and faculty member preferences and capacities. Pidgeon's inquiry into institutional responsibilities and accountabilities to post-secondary Indigenous education reveals there is an implementation gap when it comes to these policies and guiding principles, a need to mobilize "words into actions" (2014, p. 17).

Wilson and Battiste's (2011) analysis identifies and articulates six models of Aboriginal education, four of which seek, to varying degrees, to increase the retention and success rates of Indigenous students. Pidgeon (2014) indicates that "higher education is one of the keys for Indigenous peoples' capacity-building, empowerment, and self-determination" (p.7) and as Samahquamicw looks to formal education to fill the capacity needs of our pre-treaty ratification community, I summarize below the three models that relate specifically to public post-secondary

institutes. The three models that apply directly to this study are the *First Nations Student Support Model*, the *Dual Programming Model* and, the *Systemic Change Model*.

First Nations Student Support Model This first approach to making university environments more conducive to the success of Indigenous students centers on the unique needs of First Nations that must be addressed to improve academic outcomes. Strategies include connecting students with their cultures, "…to the extent that institutions were willing to accommodate" (Wilson & Battiste, 2011, p. 14) and, typically, from within the margins of the monocultural educational models that are prevalent in post-secondary institutes. The expected outcome of this student support model is the transformation of "…students' deficiencies into competencies and successful completion" (Wilson & Battiste, 2011, p. 14). Meeting the students' cultural needs is facilitated through providing access to Indigenous Elders, as well as ceremonies, rituals, and cultural activities.

Some universities have introduced skill building supports as well as counseling, tutoring and/or literacy- training type services that meet the criteria as established by Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC, previously AANC) funding. Pidgeon (2014) argues that institutional responsibilities to Indigenous education requires universities to take on leadership roles that extend beyond and "…supersede current federal agendas" and funding criteria (p. 14). In other cases, institutional attention focusses on the recruitment of Indigenous faculty and staff, Indigenous student centers, houses or labs, childcare services, Elders in residence, peer mentoring and/or scholarship/bursary programs for Indigenous students with financial needs (Wilson & Battiste, 2011).

Wilson and Battiste note that this "… 'add-and-stir' variety of programming predominates in post-secondary institutions in Canada. In this model, Aboriginal content and programming are added, leaving all other aspects of the institution the same" (2011, p. 14). This failure to acknowledge and address the need to attend to structural issues is an example of what Smith calls "watching the wrong door" (Smith, 2003, p. 2). While this approach provides much needed spaces of familiarity and belonging for Indigenous students, it simultaneously hinders the likelihood of facilitating institutional change (Pidgeon, 2014). Furthermore, this rather narrow approach can lead to the marginalization of Indigenous students who might opt to remain within specific areas of study within Indigenous faculties and/or within the limited availability of

courses and programs where Indigenous content, experiences and/or contributions are respectfully infused (Wilson & Battiste, 2011). This might be construed as the streaming of Indigenous students away from disciplines that are less-inclined to incorporate Indigenous content and pedagogies.

While the *First Nations Student Support Model* goes a long way in providing access, support and creating spaces that are welcoming to Indigenous students, the main issue with this model is that "…it does not address systemic issues…" (Wilson & Battiste, 2011, p. 15) that are key contributing factors in the 'success' rates of First Peoples' students. While there may be spaces that welcome and honor Indigenous ways of being, doing and knowing in the universities that access these funding programs, the truth is these spaces are few and far between. The rest of the institution, for the most part, continues to ignore, marginalize and/or perpetuate single story perspectives of Indigenous histories and contemporary experiences within its curriculum, pedagogy and classroom environments (Pidgeon, 2014). This focus on the deficiencies of, and the necessary accommodations needed by, Indigenous students makes invisible the need to transform the institution itself, which fails to acknowledge the need to rectify the larger student body's,

> preconceived beliefs, values, and attitudes that foster an unsafe classroom environment for Aboriginal students in them or address the privileging of Western and colonial knowledges and languages, instructors limited knowledge of Aboriginal histories and contexts, and insensitivities that may arise in classrooms about Aboriginal peoples' contemporary contexts (developed within colonialism and Eurocentric superiority). (Wilson & Battiste, 2011, p. 15)

Dual Programming Model   While similar to the student support approach, this model differs in that it further considers the effects that systemic barriers and institutionalized racial discrimination can have on student experience. In keeping with its endorsement of the ICIE policies, the federal government makes funding available to support participation in certain disciplines. This is done through the creation of cohort-type programming within First Nations Studies, education, law, nursing, social work and other faculties that are open to change. "Aboriginal content is integrated … providing a conceived program that transitions students into the university, introduces a cultural component into the academic program, offers support services…" to produce graduates "…who may or may not have had classes with other non-

Aboriginal students" (Wilson & Battiste, 2011, p. 15). For the most part, these cohorts are made up of Indigenous students, typically capped at 12-18 learners, with all navigating the same coursework together. In the cohort transition program that I have taught in for the past ten years, students are provided the opportunity to attend mainstream lectures for their FNST 101 course and their Health Sciences 100 level class. In this model students experience the larger class sizes prior to leaving the smaller, close-knit courses of their transition programs. The cohort model has been particularly successful in training Aboriginal teachers and social workers in Canada. For example, more than 1500 Aboriginal teachers have been trained in Saskatchewan using this approach (Wilson & Battiste, 2011).

While limiting student exposure to it, this model also fails to address the systemic issues that continue to impede First Peoples' engagement in post-secondary institutions. I have seen how students who take part in such cohort models are often stigmatized based on a belief that programs are adapted or "dumbed down" so that Indigenous students can complete them. The reality is the curriculum is in fact more wholistic in nature, delivering the same content with the additions of cultural content and/or connections with Indigenous communities. Sadly, the misconceptions continue to stigmatize program participants as receiving an easy pathway to their post-secondary degree (Wilson & Battiste, 2010).

Opting to Indigenize courses for Indigenous cohort programs alone severely limits transformation and Pidgeon (2014) challenges institutions to mobilize policy and practice "…such that Indigenous knowledges become part of the institutional fabric and culture" (p. 25).

Systemic Change Model   Inclusion of Indigenous content across the universities that are implementing it, is central to the Systemic Change Model. Indigenous knowledges, languages, perspectives, content and curricula are introduced to varying degrees across a diversity of programs and disciplines. Wilson and Battiste indicate that this model is "…still in its infancy of development …[and] has been evolving as a response to constitutional reform in 1982, and the transforming relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian government" (2011, p. 16). Section 35 of the 1982 Constitution Act,[37] the highest law of Canada, affirms and recognizes the rights of First Peoples to maintain their/our languages, cultures, title, and treaty rights. This problematizes the assimilative approaches of education systems that do not even acknowledge

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[37] See: http://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/constitution_act_1982_section_35/

the ancestral territories on which they sit let alone implement the ways of being, doing, knowing and valuing Indigenous to them. Federal and provincial statutes regarding education had blatantly ignored these Indigenous rights prior to 1982.

In 1988, working to meet its fiduciary responsibilities for Indigenous education in a manner that aligns with Section 35 of the Constitution, the *Indian Students Support Program* (ISSP) was established. Now known as the *Post-Secondary Student Support Program* (PSSSP), this source of funding continues to be provided to this day (Pidgeon, 2014) and is available

> for all levels of post-secondary education to Status Indians and Inuit students… [to contribute to] tuition support, travel support (for students who must leave their home communities to attend post-secondary programs), book allowance, and support for living expenses. AANDC also provides financial support to Status Indian and Inuit students enrolled in University and College Entrance Preparation (UCEP) programs, designed to enable students to attain academic levels required for other degree and diploma programs. (Wilson & Battiste, 2011, p. 17)

While few universities have committed to a model of systemic change, Wilson and Battiste make note of the growing interest in transforming the system at the time the environmental scan was completed. Increasing awareness of the importance of knowing and valuing a diversity of knowledge systems is advancing understandings around the inadequacies of tokenistic approaches that incorporate IKSs within Indigenous only learning environments. University-wide acknowledgment and taking up of responsibilities and being accountable for facilitating meaningful change across the institution is required for transformation to occur (Pidgeon, 2014). "By doing so, post-secondary institutions become accessible to – and capable of meeting the needs of – an increasingly diverse student body" (Wilson & Battiste, 2011, p. 17). From a Tákem Nsnekwnúkw7a perspective that last point reminds me of my Ucwalmicw responsibilities to *all my relations* when promoting, designing and/or implementing these transformative processes.

It is important to note that the *student support* and *dual programming* models can be and often are simultaneous components of changing the entire system. In fact, they play an important role because they do trigger interest and raise awareness around the systemic barriers and issues that can affect Indigenous students, faculty and staff. These models should, however, be seen as part of a much larger and ongoing process. All faculties and departments in universities that engage with the *systemic change model* are encouraged to alter their recruitment, scholarship and

other support policies and practices to better ensure Indigenous participation in disciplines across the university (Wilson & Battiste, 2011).

Another component of systemic change that is becoming more pronounced in academia is the advancement of anti-racist/anti-oppressive training and curriculum development. Building on the understandings of the *dual programming model* this approach considers the role that the institution and its non-Indigenous faculty, students and staff play in the outcomes of Indigenous student populations. Students are also telling me about courses that center on the processes of decolonizing self and of professors in non-FNST courses who are countering colonialism through acts like acknowledgement of the territories and requiring critical thought in regard to how course content presents and/or represents First Peoples. These types of actions,

> …engage the whole institution in rethinking white [sic] privileges and exploring ways to undo notions of Aboriginal deficiency and dependency. Going beyond simple changes to the ways in which the institutions interact with Aboriginal students and, instead, making significant systemic changes at all levels of the institution…" (Wilson & Battiste, 2011, p. 17)

The support and contributions of authentic allies are necessary to making change at all levels of the university. Pidgeon's (2014) inquiry discloses that her study participants' understandings of what authentic allies are and what they do as being those "non-Aboriginal people who have a critical consciousness about Aboriginal issues … and act by creating spaces for developing critical consciousness in others…" (p. 15). This is the work that needs to be done concurrent to student support and dual programming models. Addressing the systemic issues that continue to go unchecked in those classrooms and programs that exist outside of these model approaches is critical to substantially transforming the academy.

While institutional and curricula changes are increasingly recognizing the validity of IKSs, it is not clear that current reforms are addressing matters of relationships nor are they enacting a philosophy of *all my relations*. It goes beyond making changes for First Nations across the academy to include facilitating change for all students, faculty and staff. This line of thinking is almost non-existent in the Indigenous education literature and reports that I have reviewed. While many make cursory reference to the need to decolonize the institution, the bulk of discussion focuses on the adaptation of institutions and curriculum that serve Indigenous students

for the benefit of Indigenous students. The dissertation project shared here is the beginnings of my heeding Wilson and Battiste's call to facilitate change for all students.

Just as there are many waves of colonization, there are many waves of anti-colonizing actions happening and yet to come. The availability of digital resources that support the development and facilitation of AEEAs, culturally-based education and *systemic change* are becoming more commonplace and made available through a diversity of institutions and organizations. Some local BC examples include: Ministry of education websites (for example: http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/teach/teaching-tools/aboriginal-education), First Nations' School Associations' (like: www.fnsa.ca/resources), as well as university teacher education program links (for example: http://www.indigenouseducation.educ.ubc.ca). Teacher candidates and already in-service educators who choose to conduct even the briefest of inquiries will find that there are many more, making it increasingly possible for faculty and staff to begin the processes of accessing the information, support and Indigenous resource persons/practitioners they need to respectfully incorporate Indigenous content and pedagogies into the university setting.

Chapter Summary: Ever-changing tapestries

In this chapter, we consider the many emerging landscapes of Indigenous coming to know, beginning with our own ancestral systems of non-interference that are as diverse as the Nations and territories from which they grow. These Indigenous approaches to knowledge seeking, making and sharing are concerned with tending to the whole person in their journey towards *becoming fully human*. Indigenous methods of teaching and learning which are spiritually centred, refer to not only all aspects of the individual learner, but to all the relationships and environments of their lives. The significance of striving for harmony and balance in *all our relations* is a key rigor of, and central intention behind, Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

After thousands of years of practicing and honing these systems of respect and responsibility we begin to see a new image emerging in the tapestry as foreign ways of being, doing, knowing and valuing are forced upon our Nations. As made mandatory by federal law in the late 1880's, all Status "Indian" children were expected to relocate to their designated Indian Residential School. Indigenous families and communities were torn away from each other as

well as from themselves as they experienced ideological, spiritual and spatial diaspora as the direct result of this first attempt at forced assimilation. These once closely interwoven Indigenous families and communities became akin to, as described by the late Anishnaabe Elder Peter O'Chiese, "…someone dropping a complex and snugly fitting puzzle, causing it to shatter into a million pieces" (Anderson & Bell, 2016, p. 99).

Indigenous Knowledges, protocols, practices and values were not permitted within these institutions that sought to erase all signs of Indigenousness. This policy and practice of segregation from family, land, cultures, languages and Settler populations eventually morphed into policies and practices of cultural genocide through integration when the IRS system failed to disconnect First Peoples from their rights and titles to their ancestral homelands. In this new approach, the intentions continued to be the full and final assimilation of all Indigenous peoples through formal education. For this reason, integration into public schools was a one-way process with First Nations students expected to do all of the integrating. No attention to or implementation of Indigenous Knowledges and pedagogies was required in these schools that took over the reins of erasing Indigenous languages, cultures, values and identities. While neither of these approaches was fully funded and/or resourced, the outcomes, while not as comprehensive as desired by the state, inflicted serious damage upon the traditional knowledge seeking, making and sharing processes of the Original Peoples of Turtle Island. Our connections to ancestral knowledges, ways and values, as well as to our spirits and sense of ancestral pride, began to unravel under the pressures of the omnipresent teachings of Aboriginal education. However, as Hare and Davidson note (2016), it has been our Indigenous Knowledge systems', "… cultural traditions and values, and ancestral languages that have ensured the survival of Aboriginal people since time immemorial…" (p. 241).

The resiliency of Indigenous Peoples has ensured that education does not come at the complete annihilation of our Indigenous ways of being, doing and knowing (Hare & Davidson, 2016). This understanding continues to activate numerous Indigenous scholars and practitioners to steadfastly engage with and contribute to the transformation of Aboriginal education dialogue, policy making and practices. It is their ongoing determination and commitments to living and perpetuating ancestral teachings that weaves Indigenous education into this tapestry of First Peoples' experiences with coming to know and understand. It is at the behest of these scholars, practitioners and organizations like the Assembly of First Nations that transformative policies

and practices are increasingly implemented towards 'fulfilling the promise' of education. Castellano, Davis and Lahache (2000) concur noting that there have been many positive changes in all areas between administration, content and pedagogy in Aboriginal education. It is becoming increasingly common for First Nations communities to manage their own schools and more Indigenous teachers are graduating from Indigenous teacher education programs. Pidgeon acknowledges that, "[t]his diversity in Indigenous academic programs and curriculums continues to evolve today" (2014, p. 9).

The guiding principles and aspirations of the AEEAs, culturally-based education and *systemic change* models highlight the vigor with which "…the transformation of Aboriginal education is being pursued in practice. There is no question that the task is difficult… It is a testament to the commitment and vision of Aboriginal Elders, parents, educators, and community leaders that innovation persists…" (Castellano et al, 2000, p. 100). As this section of the dissertation begins to demonstrate, transforming Aboriginal education is an ongoing process that takes time and dedication and occurs to varying degrees, across a broad range of learning environments serving a diversity of Indigenous students.

Chapter 3: Guiding Principles: Indigenist Theories

...weaving is the art of making choices and integrating those choices into a whole fabric (Merrill & Estell, 2007, p. ii).

Chapter Overview
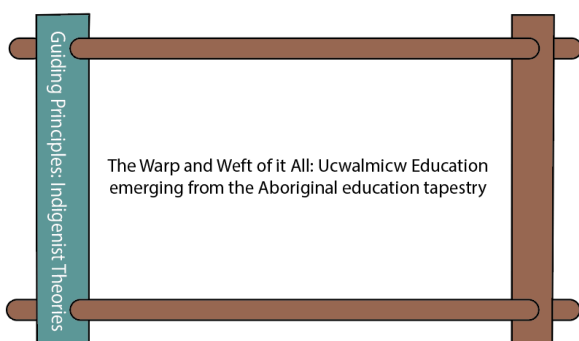
Figure 12 Guiding Principles

The selection of material used to build the vertical posts of the dissertation loom is critical to the weaving process to come. The left and right pillars work together to provide the integrity and strength on which to twine Q'aLaTKú7eMicw intentions into the ever-emerging tapestry of Indigenous education. These vertical posts must honor Ucwalmicw ways to maintain political integrity and facilitate self-determining approaches to contributing in beautiful and strengthening ways to the change that is happening. The left vertical post (Figure 15: Guiding Principles) contains the Indigenist paradigm teachings of Lester-Irabinna Rigney (1999). An Indigenist paradigm aligns succinctly with the protocols and practices local to the community that employs it.

In this third chapter, I demonstrate the applicability of Indigenist theories for this study and articulate the central tenets of an Indigenist paradigm as offered by Rigney in his 1999 work, *The Internationalization of an Indigenous anti-colonial critique of research methodologies: A Guide to Indigenist research methodologies and its principles.* I outline Rigney's three Indigenist principles: *resistance, political integrity, privileging Indigenous voice* (1999; 2006) and weave in two additional precepts for consideration, as per Rigney's call to contribute to the dialogue on Indigenist theory. Through implementing this paradigm in my studies and teaching, it became evident to me that *self-determination* is the critical motivator behind Rigney's three tenets, so I include that in my chapter three discussions. Furthermore, I came to realize that it is my *responsibilities* to Ucwalmicw, to all my relations, that kept me aligned with Indigenist ways, especially when it would have been easier and quicker to follow the templates of Western academia in this process. I, therefore, suggest these two additions to Rigney's principles and I

situate all five precepts in the literature through the incorporation of the contributions of various Indigenist scholars who write to and enact these principles in their work and lives. I conclude this third chapter with an overview of how these Indigenist theories inform my/our approach to the community contributions phase of this work by requiring the use of Ucwalmicw methods which are detailed in the right vertical post (chapter four) of the dissertation loom.

Why Indigenist Theories?

While Indigenous education consistently emerges from the tapestry of Aboriginal education, I am ever cognizant and cautious of the still- actively- seeking-to- colonize institutions that are rooted in and functioning on continued denials of our very existence (Smith, 2012). Many of our communities continue to weave across the gaps that assimilative models of education tore and continue to tear into our Indigenous identities and systems. Indigenist practices mobilized within my academic work enabled me to experience a deep and wholistic understanding that I likely would not have realized by utilizing a non-Indigenous research paradigm. By enacting an Indigenist approach, I weave my Ucwalmicw spirit into my dissertation writing and blanket weaving as they weave my Indigeneity into me. This is how weaving works. All yarns are engaged and changing/changed by the process. I mobilize the Indigenist paradigm and methodology with a strong sense of responsibility to my Ucwalmicw people and ancestors because, as Charleston (1994) writes,

> ...Our tribes [sic] are at a very critical point in our history again. We can stand by and wait for our children and grandchildren to be assimilated into mainstream [..] society as proud ethnic descendants of EXTINCT tribal [sic] peoples… or, we can protect our tribes [sic], as our ancestors did, and ensure a future for our children and grandchildren AS [my emphasis added] tribal [sic] people. (p. 28)

A quarter of a century later, this expression of urgency continues to hold true and numerous Indigenous scholars have critiqued Aboriginal education for the negative toll it is taking on Indigenous communities. Although his theorizing is situated within an Australian context, Rigney's articulations of Indigenist approaches to research provide principles that Indigenous Peoples around the world can apply to address the gaps and to ensure the futurity of

all Indigenous Nations. As he argues, "Indigenist research seeks to chart our own political and social agendas for liberation from the colonial domination of research and society" (Rigney, 2006, p. 39). Taking up the prevalent colonizing approaches to coming to know that are available to us in the academy serves to further widen the gaps in our IKSs. Choosing an Indigenist research paradigm for my/our work is a heart-felt and heart-led act of intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical survivance.

Indigenist Guiding Frameworks

Rigney (2006) notes that an Indigenist paradigm, "… has no one singular method for research transformation and/or praxis…it is a clear commitment to recognize the diversity of Indigenous ontology … while bringing reform to the process of knowledge production itself…" (p. 41). I appreciate the versatility of a framework that can respectfully honor and guide a multiplicity of Nations and the ways of being, doing and knowing that are specific to each. This in and of itself has the potential to reform knowledge seeking, making and sharing (research and education in Western academic terminology) because it is not a one-size-fits all approach to anti-colonial[38] research methods. Alfred (2009) agrees,

> Indigenism is an important means of confronting the state in that it provides a unifying vocabulary and basis for collective action. But it is entirely dependent on maintenance of the integrity of the traditional Indigenous cultures and communities from which it draws its strength. (p. 112)

It is in honoring the diversity of nations and ways of coming to know that an Indigenist framework makes space for my Ucwalmicw spirit to thrive within the research process. I have witnessed and experienced the bracketing out of vital aspects of the researcher and study contributors (for example spiritual, experiential and collective knowing) as major gaps in Western academia, gaps that can be mitigated through utilizing an Indigenist paradigm. Smith (2012) corroborates this idea when she argues that Indigenous paradigms, specifically Kaupapa Maori research, provide,

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[38] I follow Chinweizu's (2007) understanding that, "Anti-colonial education is about challenges to contemporary forms of (post-colonial) education as vestiges of neo-colonial brainwashing (as cited in Dei, 2008, p.11).

a focus through which Maori people, as communities of the researched and as new communities of the researchers, have been able to engage in a dialogue about setting new directions for the priorities, policies, and practices of research for, by and with Maori (p. 185).

It is the practices of Ucwalmicw knowledge seeking, making and sharing that are sought out in this study as valid and meaningful ways in which to contribute to the ever-expanding beauty of the Indigenous education tapestry that has been emerging out of Aboriginal education since the 1970s. The Indigenist paradigm principles of *political integrity*, *resistance* and *privileging Indigenous voice* are foundational to the ideas expressed by Rigney, Alfred and Smith.

There is some debate as to who can facilitate Indigenist research. Wilson (2007) writes that,

> an Indigenist paradigm can be used by anyone who chooses to follow its tenets. It cannot and should not be claimed to belong only to people with "Aboriginal" heritage… it is then the choice to follow this paradigm, philosophy, or world view that makes research Indigenist, not the ethnic or racial identity of the researcher. (Wilson, 2007, pp. 193-194)

Smith's (2012) writing reflects Rigney's discussion on this perspective, indicating that due to the political nature and import of Indigenous communities' self-determination in the research process, it is imperative that Indigenous Peoples conduct Indigenist research whenever possible:

> There must be a social link between research and the political struggle of our communities. This link needs to be in and through those Indigenous Australians who are simultaneously engaged in research and the Indigenous struggle. Only in this way can research responsibly serve and inform the political liberation struggle. (Rigney, 2006, p. 117)

Experiential understandings of Indigenous realities are seen by many as being foundational to one's ability to facilitate Indigenist research that, "…must lead to politics. The worth of a 'social theory' must not be measured simply in terms of its philosophical and ontological claims, but rather, in terms of the ability of theory to offer a social and political corrective" (Dei, 2008, p. 8). Due to the fact that this study seeks to contribute to the transformation of Aboriginal education, this Indigenist paradigm precept suggests that it is a promising approach. Martin

(2003) writes that as an Indigenist researcher she positions herself first as an Aboriginal person and then as a researcher. Through first making known who she is and how she is related to the research topic, she "…clearly presents the assumptions upon which [her] research is formulated and conducted…" and in doing so, begins by mobilizing the "…elements of Indigenist research" (p. 204).

Smith (2012) acknowledges the complexity around this question and suggests the response is equally complex, noting that when non-Indigenous researchers are involved in Indigenous research, "…they would have ways of positioning themselves as a non-Indigenous person" (p. 186). Rigney, agrees with Wilson (2007) noting that Indigenist research is that which is facilitated by those who self-identify as Indigenist. Rigney expands the discussion by noting the importance of context in promoting both perspectives depending on the circumstances. In some cases, Boyden's (2014) submission that Indigenist research is "…designed to be conducted by Indigenous people within their communities" (p. 429) must be adhered to in order to maintain the political integrity of the community contributing to the study. Due to the history of non-Indigenous scholars monopolizing research on Indigenous peoples in Australia, Rigney advocates for the privileging of Indigenous researchers when conducting Indigenous research to disrupt, "…the socially constructed identity of the 'archetypal Aborigine', as a controlled and oppressed being…" (2006, p. 36). While Original Peoples are not the only ones who can utilize an Indigenist framework, it is imperative that Indigenous Peoples facilitate the work being done with their/our communities whenever possible due to the historical and on-going colonizing nature of non-Indigenous research paradigms.

Agreement is evident among Rigney (2006), Martin (2003), Wilson (2007), and Boyden (2014) in that all acknowledge that Indigenist research with Indigenous communities must be facilitated by Indigenous researchers who have experiential understandings of Indigenous realities and aspirations. While I agree with this point, I also see great value in Rigney's and Wilson's perspectives that see Indigenist principles as also being an applicable and valuable tool that can be taken up by any researcher who adheres to the central tenets of Indigenist paradigms, working with any community. Non-Indigenous researchers can work from within the Indigenist paradigm when they, "…uphold its principles for Indigenous self-determination" (2006, p.41). Indigenist protocols and processes offer an approach to working respectfully with a diversity of communities be they Indigenous or non-Indigenous. I view five central tenets of *political*

integrity, *resistance*, *honoring Indigenous [i.e. community] voice*, *self-determination* and *responsibilities* as de-centering the agendas and priorities of the institution. Therefore, researchers following the Indigenist paradigm can effectively work with any marginalized or underprivileged community using this framework. I argue that any researcher could benefit (decolonize themselves) by utilizing the Indigenist paradigm with any group or community in which a power imbalance exists. An Indigenist pathway to coming to know and understand could alleviate the issues raised by Weber-Pillwax (2004),

> any research that is carried out with people is carried out within the context of an existing community. When a researcher assumes that the ethics guidelines of a hypothetical 'research community' can take precedence over those of a real community of people (real faces and real bodies) situated in space and time, this surely constitutes a breach of ethics and ought to raise serious questions about the research project itself. (p. 80)

Because Indigenist knowledge seeking, making and sharing de-centers the status quo, "…the inclusions of Indigenist ideas for methodological reform are functions that promote the redistribution of power" (Rigney, 2006, p. 42). These power imbalances exist in a great diversity of communities and each has much to contribute to the 'study' of their community and to facilitating the project in mutually beneficial ways. An Indigenist approach to research could be of great significance and benefit to all and aligns well with the social and political change advocated for throughout this dissertation.

Research that facilitates the *privileging of Indigenous voice, resistance, political integrity, self-determination* and *responsibilities* of the researcher and the communities with whom they engage could certainly contribute greatly to the transformation of knowledge production that led Rigney to articulate an Indigenist paradigm. This critical approach and perspective has the potential to expand current expectations of academia in that studies implementing this model would center on broader intentions that are concerned with manifesting "...transformation within every living entity participating in the research…" (Wilson, 2007, page 195). This means that the institution, the researcher and project contributors are all transformed because of the work they have collaborated on together. This is, after all, the ultimate goal of Indigenist research and a common underlying feature of Indigenous knowledge systems: to become fully human for having engaged with knowledge seeking, making and sharing processes. Indigenist paradigms

are all about the coming to know processes and the relationships formed and sustained in them, as is the study disseminated here.

Having made the case for choosing an Indigenist paradigm as an appropriate guide for this inquiry into transforming Aboriginal education for Ucwalmicw students, I illustrate the three Indigenist principles outlined by Rigney; *political integrity*, *resistance* and *privileging Indigenous voice*, articulations that he notes represent, "…research in progress and a transmission of ideas to promote further debate… "(1999, p. 110). At Rigney's invitation, I also make a case for the consideration of the two additional precepts, *self-determination* and *responsibilities*, as being central to an Indigenist approach to knowledge seeking, making and sharing. It is our experiences with the colonizing project that make necessary the mobilization of an Indigenist paradigm because Indigenous ways of being, doing, knowing and valuing have, for the majority of our engagements with Aboriginal education, been marginalized and/or absent. In the next section of this chapter, I spend time with each of the tenets of the Indigenist paradigm, illustrating how Rigney and other scholars are writing about and acting upon these principles.

Rigney's Three Indigenist Principles

"Resistance as the emancipatory imperative in Indigenist research, political integrity in Indigenous research and, privileging Indigenous voices in research" (Rigney, 1999, p. 116) are the ways of being that I first practiced living in my student and educator lives. These precepts inform and make possible the diversity of methodologies mandatory to anti-colonial knowledge seeking, making and sharing. Indigenist principles inform and guide an approach that simultaneously weaves together the knowledge seeking process with Indigenous survivance, promoting processes that integrate, as opposed to detach or segregate, the researcher from their history, experiences, ways of knowing, being and valuing. Facilitating research from within an Indigenist paradigm benefits from an experiential knowledge of the research context and questions because this is how one connects in a meaningful and more purposeful way to the study (Rigney, 1999; Wilson, 2007). Indigenist methodologies further provide a pathway to understanding that does not focus on the 'problem' that dominant approaches typically center on in Aboriginal education. Alternatively, Indigenist research requires the inclusion, or truth telling, of historical and contemporary forms of attempted genocide inflicted upon First Peoples who

participate in mainstream research and/or education systems. As Rigney makes clear, "this approach challenges the power and control that traditional research methodologies exerts and directs attention toward ones that are compatible with Indigenous worldviews" (2006, p. 43). I begin by situating the Indigenist principle of *resistance*.

Indigenist Principle #1: Resistance

To focus our education on learning the non-Indigenous paradigms that are prevalent in most classrooms and then mobilize them in our research projects with our communities is to invite the cultural genocide of our own ways of coming to understand. Rigney writes that Indigenist research is concerned with engaging with stories of survival and resistance as it strives to,

> uncover and protest the continuing forms of oppression confronting Indigenous Australians. Moreover, it is research that attempts to support the personal, community, cultural, and political struggles of Indigenous Australians to carve out a way of being for ourselves in Australia in which there can be healing from past oppressions and cultural freedom in the future. (1999, p. 117)

As Rigney further points out, "Indigenist research arises out of Indigenous social experiences, which celebrate the courage and determination of Indigenous people to survive. Therefore, Indigenist research acknowledges Indigenous peoples as resisters to racialization not victims of it" (Rigney, 2006, p. 43). The exhausting work of resisting assimilation into colonial mindsets that consistently cajole us into seeing and living in the world in non-spiritually centered ways dissipates when we turn to our own Indigenous/ Ucwalmicw frameworks of being, knowing and doing. For example, "Inside ceremony, one is no longer a colonial subject, or even a resistor to colonization. One becomes spirit and one with Creator, and one's understandings of life are shifted. This undoing of the colonial by the act of ceremony is a decolonizing act" (Iseke, 2013, p. 48). Resistance shifts our attention to the right door (Smith G. , 2003) so that we do not succumb to the many distractions that lure us toward success as defined by mainstream political, economic and education systems. Being in ceremony ensures that we do not wake up one day to find ourselves on top of the wrong mountain, where we may be enjoying the successes that come with successful navigation of Western ways, only to find we have lost our Ucwalmicw languages, ceremonies and values (Twin Cities PBS, 2010). Whereas resistance on its own can

be spiritually, emotionally, intellectually and physically draining, being in ceremony has the opposite effect. We survive and more importantly, thrive, by practicing our Ucwalmicw ways. As these ways are not typically known, let alone practiced in many of the environments in which First Peoples learn, teach, work and live, resisting what is most often privileged in these institutions, (i.e. individualism, neo-liberalism, mono-culturalism, hierarchies) is important to our futurity as Indigenous Peoples. deCosta (2005) concurs and indicates that to be Indigenist is to be an "indigenous activist", one who is inspired by tradition to "...resist [the] invasive and deracinating forces" of imperialism, colonialism and globalization (DeCosta, 2005, p. 1). It is through Indigenist research that we, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, can confront and counter the numerous illegitimate actions of state, corporate and institutional power. When we become aware of the need to resist we begin to dismantle the cognitive hegemony of colonial ideas and values by centering, honoring and engaging with our own ancestral frameworks that are grounded in the values, worldviews and practices of our Indigenous Nations (Churchill, 2003; Rigney, 1999, 2006; Alfred, Coulthard, & Simmons, 2006). This is what an Indigenist approach to resistance entails from within the academy. While it can be exhausting work, as West states, "[t]he stress of 'the resistance' is as important as one's heartbeat, for if you are not fighting you are submitting. This is an unfortunate outcome, but nevertheless a real outcome" (2000, p. 109). When we do not actively resist we potentially open ourselves to "…colonial ideas, values and beliefs…seep[ing] into our cultures and psyches" and we run the risk of reproducing and perpetuating them in our communities (Alfred et al, 2006, p. 2). "A part of our survival is to resist. We resist not to overthrow a government or to take political power, but because it is natural to resist extermination, to survive" (Means, 2011, para. 35).

> Today's Indigenous warriors understand and practice resistance as a means of transcending these forces. In this sense, "resistance" is no longer a sufficient term to describe what is happening among our people; personalities are being reconstructed, lives re-made and communities re-formed in a process more akin to "regeneration". (Alfred et al, 2006, p. 2)

There is a simultaneous action that co-exists with such resistance. What we defy is replenished by something else and in this case, as Alfred et al (2006) note, we, as First Peoples, are re-generated when our own ways and values take precedence in all areas of our lives, including our approaches to knowledge seeking, making and sharing. It is through honoring this

Indigenist precept of resistance that I strive to learn our Ucwalmicts language with my daughter and granddaughter and incorporate what I am learning into my teaching and writing practices. It is in the spirit of resistance that I seek out and learn to weave so that I may fully *experience* what the metaphor/act of this Ucwalmicw practice has to teach me. It is in resisting that I*,* in relation to my Ucwalmicw community ways and responsibilities, determine how and why I will come to know, understand and teach and it is through these acts of mindful resistance that I am transformed by it. Resistance as a political act is but the first step— it is much more than resisting for resistance sake. I consistently challenge the colonial and colonizing framework of Aboriginal education so that I am ever cognizant of, and contributing in good ways to, who I am becoming. Mobilizing Indigenist ways of coming to know within academia facilitates, as Martin puts it, "…our continued assertion to take control of our lives and protect ourselves, our lands, our past, our present, and particularly our futures" (2003, p. 214). My learning, teaching and research dissemination journeys can further oppress my Ucwalmicw spirit or they can protect, heal and re-generate it towards Ucwalmicw survivance. Living and working in mainstream society, I find that I must be ever-vigilant when it comes to resistance because it is too easy to be swept away by the values and ways that my life is currently immersed in. This would be different if I lived back home in the community because I would be surrounded by Ucwalmicw ways and values. This is why resistance is ongoing; this is why it is key to Ucwalmicw survivance. Much is at stake.

This first tenet carries great weight for me. I understand it in this way: while I cannot do anything to change the past, what I choose to do *or not do* today can have a very real impact on our present and future as Ucwalmicw. This was crystallized for me by a FNST 101 student inquiry. After our first class together, the student asked me for suggestions as to how he might successfully navigate the course given that it appeared it would be delivered from an anarchist perspective.[39] This student was concerned with participating in a class delivered in ways he had no familiarity with, ways that ran counter to what he was familiar with and expecting to see in his post-secondary experience. His question challenged me to think deeply about the role and significance of resistance in my life and it led me to realize two things: first, that teaching from

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[39] My response to the student's question is as shared in point 2. His query prompted me to reflect deeply on why I choose to teach the way that I do and that re-reminded me of my responsibilities to the futurity of Ucwalmicw Peoples. The student understood and respected my situation and responsibilities and contributed thoughtfully and appropriately throughout the semester. He did very well in the course.

an Indigenist approach is not anarchy but politically essential on Turtle Island. It is my Ucwalmicw responsibility to the Indigenous territories on which the class is taught and to my ancestors and descendants that I take very seriously. Second, there is nothing else that I can do. If I am not resisting the perpetuation of colonized and colonizing mainstream approaches to knowledge seeking, making and sharing, especially in a First Nations Studies course, I am risking being swept back into the center of that large and hungry mechanical wheel that continues to spin around all of us. I have learned from this student's question, that I must make explicit from the start that the FNST courses that I teach are all about countering and not perpetuating colonial thought and practices. Students are equally expected to counter colonizing practices in all of their course requirement activities and submissions.

Indigenist Principle #2: Political Integrity

Indigenist knowledge seeking, making and sharing "…upholds the political integrity of Indigenous peoples as sovereign…" (Rigney, 2006, p. 40). To honor and maintain political integrity in the research process is to work from within "…Indigenous ontological and epistemological views about the world that directly translate to Indigenous philosophies, languages, cultural and spiritual values and beliefs" (Rigney, 2006, p, 40). This means that the political is not separate from the social, from the spiritual and/or from the intellectual. Integrity is possible when approaches to coming to know and understand honor and mobilize this fact.

Rigney explains that political integrity is necessary to bring veracity and trust into research conducted with, by and for Indigenous communities. "Indigenous autonomy and control over Indigenous knowledges, languages and cultures are fundamental to Indigenist research" (2006, p. 40) which strives to ensure our Indigenous ways are passed forward and lived for generations to come. The Indigenist paradigm rises out of histories of Indigenous communities around the world that have not had a facilitating role in the research process which is often followed up by no access to or control over the findings. The Indigenist approach to knowledge seeking, making and sharing is accountable first to the community and "…it is recognized that the integrity of any Indigenous people or community could never be undermined by Indigenous research because such research is grounded in that integrity" (Wilson, 2007, page 195). The Indigenist paradigm is rooted in Indigenous values and intentions that manifest good outcomes for all involved in the

processes of knowledge seeking. Just as we take great care in when and how we harvest medicines and then how we process and utilize these gifts from Mother Earth, I must also be mindful and take great care in how I gather, process and utilize that which Q'aLaTKú7eMiwc chose to share with me. This is key to maintaining political integrity. Indigenist research centers on the gifts offered to transform humanity as opposed to capturing 'new' knowledge towards completing our PhD's, furthering our careers, our department and/or our institution. I am accountable to my Nation's intentions and wellbeing first and foremost.

Indigenist research "…provides the intellectual context, language and rationale for research as whole-of-life and fundamentally political engagement with the world" (Boyden, 2014, p. 430). Research and education that reach beyond the intellectual, with intentions to bring harmony and social justice into not only the classroom, but also society at large, is political in nature because it defies the status quo which can be perpetuated by those who do not question the intentions behind many mainstream research and education projects. To maintain political integrity is to challenge what is currently 'acceptable' and deemed 'valid' in regard to how we facilitate research and how we design and deliver education. Smith contributes to this idea of the whole-of-life understanding to assert that maintaining political integrity in Indigenous research includes the need for researchers to approach the processes and community with a clear spirit, a good heart and the capacity to do everyday things like fix the generator for the community (2012).

While there is little that I can do to stop the onslaught of infringements on Ucwalmicw territories, including my own community's participation in the British Columbia Treaty process, there is much that I can do to stave off colonization's push to bend and control my Indigenist/Ucwalmicw spirit. I am in control when it comes to who I am becoming through all of my educational pathways. I do not forfeit my power to be Ucwalmicw simply by walking into the university classroom, whether I do so as a student or educator. Self-identifying as Ucwalmicw, using Ucwalmicts, and acknowledging the territories are not merely political statements but political acts that remind me of how I need to be, do, and value in my learning, teaching and community lives. And it is in sustaining a strong sense of Ucwalmicw identity that I recognize that "…the struggle for identity becomes inextricably linked with political struggles for sovereignty and the ongoing battle against cultural encroachment and capitalist desire to control native land, resources, traditions, and languages" (Grande, 2000, p. 489). Struggles that may be seen as anarchist because they expose and interrogate the status quo that most students

are familiar with and expect when they enter a university classroom. Maintaining political integrity in my student and teaching practices is not an easy thing to do; it is by striving to meet the responsibilities that come with receiving the intentions behind Ucwalmicw knowledge sharing that I am better able to do so.

While the weaving of Indigenous worldviews and ways is increasingly finding more space across all levels of education, it will take time and persistence to ensure that Aboriginal education fully transforms into Indigenous education. An Indigenist approach to this work provides a respectful, relationship building method to discovering and accepting truths about what Aboriginal education is and what it does. Political integrity is possible when these projects question perspectives that see education as a form of social-engineering in First Peoples' lives. This approach to coming to understand begins with resistance and all students could potentially benefit from the realization that, perhaps, they too need to resist because they are exposed to the same colonizing aspects of Aboriginal education that persist in many classrooms, programs and institutions. The Indigenist precept of political integrity put into action prompts the consideration of how Aboriginal education is also affecting all our relations. In what ways are non-Indigenous students and their identities effected when they are exposed to the very same curricula, theories, pedagogies, and benchmarks or expected outcomes as their Indigenous counterparts? These are the truths that all students need to come to terms with if we hope to create and sustain classrooms in which Ucwalmicw and all Indigenous students may express their Indigeneity without hesitation or fear. Aboriginal and Indigenous education continue to be politically charged. An *all my relations'* pedagogy is one approach to mobilizing political integrity in a system that is currently watching the wrong door and therefore content with a single prong approach that relies upon absorbing more Indigenous content, practices and staff as the means of transforming the institution so that Indigenous students can 'succeed'.

Indigenist Principle #3: Privileging[40] (Honoring) Indigenous Voices

Rigney's third Indigenist principle centers on and promotes the requirement to privilege Indigenous voice and values (1999). He suggests that this be done by centering research and

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[40] I prefer to consider this precept as the *honoring* as opposed to privileging of Indigenous ways and voices and I use *honor* Indigenous ways from this point forward. This is likely due to the negative connotations that I attach to the concept of privilege that I believe is highly dependent on/attached to the colonizing project.

educational processes on numerous and diverse local (read *wise*) approaches that value and are rooted in the communities from which they spring. Unlike best practices, a wise approach indicates that the methods utilized come from experiential understandings of what works well with a particular group (Wesley-Esquimaux & Calliou, 2010). DeCosta's (2005) point that Indigenist activism comes from spaces grounded in a diversity of ancestral traditions supports this supposition.

Churchill contributes much to discussions on honoring and/or enacting Indigenous ways, stating that he is "...one who not only takes the rights of Indigenous peoples as the highest priority of political life, but who draws upon the traditions–the bodies of knowledge and corresponding codes of value–evolved over many thousands of years by native peoples the world over" (2003, p. 275). This Indigenist scholar enacts resistance and political integrity from a space and outlook that guided his ancestors in the past (Churchill, 2003). Inspired by what he considers "... the only historical examples of proper attitude and comportment on this continent" (p. 276), Churchill embraces and honors the values and traditions of his Nation and is activated from that sacred place. Centering Indigenous ways and voices in our studies and teaching pedagogies allows the Indigenist researcher or educator to "speak back" to those privileged research and education paradigms that "…have contributed to the social construction of Indigenous [Peoples] as oppressed" both historically and currently (Rigney, 2006, p. 39). These social constructions persist in many Aboriginal education classrooms and have real and lasting effects on Indigenous students who participate in them. Centering Indigenous voice provides a pathway from which we can counter the "Indian problem" perspectives that continue to inform many academic understandings of and approaches to Aboriginal education. Additionally, working from Indigenous worldviews can also weave much into the diversification of processes and intentions behind coming to know, making education more beneficial for all. Most significantly, honoring Indigenous voices and ways will do much to "…shift the construction of knowledge to one that does not compromise Indigenous identity and Indigenous principles of independence, unity, and freedom from racism" (Rigney, 1999, p. 119). Centering First Peoples' voices in academia lifts up and sustains our Indigeneity even while immersed in non-Indigenous environments.

While Martin contributes the following points as additional features central to an Indigenist paradigm, I see them as making explicit the preconditions *required* to meet the precept of *honoring Indigenous voices* and ways in the knowledge seeking, making and sharing process:

> Recognition of our worldviews, our knowledges and our realities as distinctive and vital to our existence and survival; Honoring our social mores as essential processes through which we live, learn and situate ourselves as Aboriginal people in our own lands and when in the lands of other Aboriginal people; Emphasis of social, historical and political contexts which shape our experiences, lives, positions and futures…" (2003, p. 205).

It is only through a commitment to and an ability to act on each of these points in one's work that a researcher or educator is capable of *honoring Indigenous voices* and ways in their learning or teaching endeavors. I see Martin's articulations as benchmarks to be met when considering one's capacity to conduct research or deliver education that can be deemed Indigenist. *Honoring Indigenous voices* and ways brings "…forward an Indigenously rooted voice of contention, unconstrained and uncompromised by colonial mentalities. A total commitment to the challenge of regenerating our Indigeneity, to rootedness in Indigenous cultures, to a fundamental commitment to the centrality of our truths…" (Alfred, 2005, p.33). Indigenist guiding frameworks and methodologies center upon and honor Indigenous voices and ways as a means of sustaining and passing them forward and not merely as a reaction to colonial processes. This is what sets Indigenist paradigms apart from decolonizing paradigms. Indigenous ways are thousands of years old and provide pathways of integrity that align with the paramountcy of relationships, respect, harmony, and being and doing in good ways. The fact that these ways simultaneously decenter colonial and colonizing systems is an added benefit.

Indigenist Principle #4: Self-determination

While Rigney does not specifically cite *self-determination* as being a principle of the Indigenist paradigm, he does reference it often in his writings on Indigenism, "…maintaining Indigenous political integrity throughout the whole research process is vital to self-determination and is a fundamental ingredient of this approach" (2006, p. 42). *Self-determination* is at the same time motivator and outcome the three precepts, *resistance, political integrity and honoring Indigenous*

voices and ways, articulated above and it is absolutely necessary to all struggles against colonization. As demonstrated in chapter two of this dissertation, it is the absence of self-determination in educational and research processes that has caused our Nations much intergenerational trauma. Wesley-Esquimaux and Calliou (2010) agree and caution that failure to engage with wise practices that facilitate locally defined self-determination in community endeavors such as education and leadership has the potential to further colonizing ways. They write "…since research is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism… a thoughtless use of standard research techniques would run the risk of perpetuating European imperialism in a study that hopes to further, rather than diminish, Indigenous self-determination…" (Wesley-Esquimaux & Calliou, 2010, p. 23).

Nash (2001) refers to the act of self-determination as the *attainment of dignity* and "…the rights of all people to dance to their own music" (p.120). Choosing to present this analysis of transforming education within the guiding framework of a loom is an example of mobilizing *self-determination* in my PhD journey. I further honor this Indigenist principle by also weaving a dissertation blanket (which I will 'read' at my defense presentation and upon gifting it to Samahquam) alongside the writing of the dissertation. These acts of resistance facilitate my moving outside of and beyond the intellectual rigors of coming to know, to be, as noted above by ross (2010), transformed by the emotional, physical and spiritual acts of *making* through the weaving process. These acts of self-determination are mandatory because they begin with me and with my approaches to seeking and sharing knowledge. As Alfred notes,

> it is still true that the first part of self-determination is the self. In our minds and in our souls, we need to reject the colonists' control and authority, their definition of who we are and what our rights are, their definition of what is worthwhile and how one should live… We need to rebel against what they want us to become, start remembering the qualities of our ancestors, and act on those remembrances. This is the kind of spiritual revolution that will ensure our survival. (2005, p. 32)

Self-determination in this PhD process includes the need to go beyond analyzing the teachings gifted to me by Q'aLaTKú7eMicw to, more importantly, implement them in my learning and teaching lives. It is through activating the community sharing that I came to a more wholistic understanding of what Indigenous education needs to be. It is through ensuring the

survival of cultural diversity that Ucwalmicw survivance becomes part of a spiritual revolution that honors the ways of being of our ancestors.

"Indigenous knowledge is part of the struggle for self-determination, political and intellectual sovereignty of Indigenous peoples" (Dei, 2008, p. 10). Engaging with conventional academic approaches to researching, learning and teaching also weaves those Western ways of seeing, being, doing and valuing in the world into me. It is my responsibility to self, Nation and Tákem Nsnekwnúkw7a that requires me to choose whether or not I will engage with and practice Ucwalmicw processes and protocols in the work I do, no matter where that work may be. While we tend to define self-determination as being sovereign Nations in our ancestral homelands, I agree with Alfred (2005) that self-determination is also manifest in our "… knowing and respecting [our] teachings and thinking and behaving in a way that is consistent with the values passed down to us by our ancestors" (p. 32). It is through everyday acts of living *as* Ucwalmicw that I become self-determining in my research, education and community lives.

Indigenist Principle #5: Responsibilities

In striving to mobilize the Indigenist ethics of *resistance*, *political integrity*, *honoring Ucwalmicw ways* and *self-determination* as expressed above, in my roles as Ucwalmicw student and teacher, I saw the need to add and expand upon one other feature that was, for me, missing in Rigney's Indigenist paradigm. I believe this fifth tenet, *responsibilities*, is what kept me on track with the other four, particularly when it would have been easier and quicker at times to just maintain the status quo in my work and studies. The principle of responsibility is central to a diversity of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. In considering and suggesting the addition of this precept as being important to an Indigenist paradigm, I start from a place of understanding that sees human beings as not having only rights but, more importantly, as having responsibilities. Corntassel (2012) cautions us in regard to the focus on rights discourse asserting that "…our energies should be directed where the real power lies: our inherent responsibilities*"* (p. 91). While the dominant system functions in a manner that requires a great diversity of groups to be vigilant in ensuring their rights are not breached, Corntassel warns us to not get caught up in the politics of distraction which see us chasing after state-defined rights as opposed to knowing and living up to our responsibilities.

These responsibilities are understood as spiritual, Indigenous Nation-centric and are woven into "…long-standing relationships with homelands – relationships that have existed long before the development of the state system" (Corntassel, 2012, p. 91). This sense of responsibility, while centered on lands and territories, is carried forth in all environments in which Indigenous peoples live; this is an inherent value; we carry our spirituality, responsibilities and relationships with us wherever we go. These ways of being are woven into us and guide all aspects of our lives. Dudgeon (2008) calls attention to the need for action when he writes, "…this is not an intellectual exercise but requires the living of one's moral convictions" (p. 16). I therefore consistently attempt to navigate my PhD journey and teaching practices not as a right, but as responsibilities. I find that my intentions behind knowledge seeking, making and sharing from this perspective shift from being personal endeavors to get what is rightfully mine, to taking approaches that will facilitate my ability to meet the greater responsibilities that come with striving to live and remain Ucwalmicw. I am responsible for learning, teaching, honoring and practicing our Ucwalmicw ways. I also acknowledge that we as First Peoples have *responsibilities* to our territories, to the lands, waters, air and all of our relations who sustain and are sustained by them. To meet our obligations we must *resist,* endeavor to attain and sustain *political integrity* and *self-determination*, through *honoring Indigenous voices* and ways. As Rigney notes, the principles of Indigenist ways are all interconnected and interrelated. I suggest that it is our *responsibilities* that activate our striving to meet the other four tenets of Indigenist paradigms outlined here.

Our responsibilities center on creating and maintaining harmony in all relationships. Wilson (2013) expands on the significance of our accountabilities to interrelatedness and notes that First Peoples ARE relationships and are not merely in relationship. This is demonstrated in diverse ways in the *Non-Interference* story. When the young girl returns the zúmak insides to the water it is more than merely fulfilling her responsibilities to her community. This act is all about respecting the gift of life that salmon provide. Harmony in that relationship is maintained by treating with honor those parts of the zúmak that cannot be used. Our ultimate obligation is to actualize good intentions through action and ceremony, towards attaining and sustaining balance and harmony in all our relationships. I am responsible for Tákem Nsnekwnúkw7a*,* and this is how I see *responsibilities* as being necessary in the taking up of the Indigenist paradigm. As noted by Grande (2000), "… Regardless of how any individual American Indian [sic] may

choose to live his or her life as an Indian [sic] person, most experience a deep sense of responsibility and obligation to protect the rights of those choosing to live in the ways of their ancestors" (p. 489). This is what it means to be responsible. Whether I choose to live as Ucwalmicw or not, as an educator my responsibilities to *all my relations* include ensuring that their rights to choose are protected. Just as we once fully accepted our responsibilities to each other and all entities that form the interconnected and interdependent systems of that which we are but a small and insignificant part, I accept the *responsibilities* that come with self-identifying as an Indigenist person (Wilson, 2007). I *resist* assimilation*,* I *honor Ucwalmicw voice and ways*, I strive to maintain *political integrity* and *self-determination* in all that I do so that those who wish to, may continue to enjoy "…cultural freedom in the future" (Rigney, 1999, p. 117). It is our r*esponsibilities* that weave us into and thereby secure us to our communities and nations' ways of being, doing and knowing. Living up to and honoring my *responsibilities* connects me to the collective, to the bigger and more important picture.

Weber-Pillwax (2004) further articulates this principle of *responsibilities* in the research process when she argues that researchers are accountable to the lives of research participants and to the intended and realized benefits of research for the community (Weber-Pillwax, 2004). Indigenist researchers are responsible, first and foremost, to being and doing in ways that facilitate projects that benefit and are meaningful to our communities. This point is as applicable to educators and education systems as it is to researchers and research projects. I must deliver curriculum in ways that benefit and are meaningful to my students if I wish to live up to the responsibilities that come with being an Indigenist/Ucwalmicw educator. These responsibilities apply to all phases of the coming to know, understand, share and mobilize knowledge processes.

Chapter Summary

The left vertical post of this dissertation loom represents the Indigenist guiding spirit that frames my perspectives of and approaches to coming to fully understand how Q'aLaTKú7eMicw sharings might best contribute to the work of transforming Aboriginal education into Indigenous education. I present the three precepts of Indigenist theory as articulated by Rigney (1999; 2006), namely *resistance*, *political integrity* and *honoring Indigenous voices* and demonstrate how various Indigenist scholars write about and activate each principle within their own lives and

research/educational paths. To honor Rigney's (1999) and Wilson's (2007) calls for "…Indigenist scholars to discuss and continually refine this understanding of an Indigenist paradigm" (p. 194), I suggest the principles of *self-determination* and *responsibilities* be included as features of an Indigenist approach to knowledge seeking, making and sharing. In meeting the criteria as laid out by Wilson (2007), I am positioned to "…to describe and use the paradigm…" in that I have placed myself and my work, "…firmly in a relational context" (p. 194). Further, it is through doing so that I was led to experience the need to include the principle of *responsibilities* as being necessary to enacting an Indigenist approach to research, teaching, and learning. In relating this PhD study to the survivance of Ucwalmicw, I quickly became aware of my *responsibilities* to becoming Ucwalmicw and to maintaining Ucwalmicw ways and values for *all my relations* and the next seven generations. This realization deepened my understanding of the significance of self-determination.

I agree with Rigney and Wilson that more discussion, clarification and application of the Indigenist framework is needed and the contributions I offer here are shared for the purposes of further consideration and dialogue. I articulate the five guiding features that were present and activated in my own coming to understand Indigenist ways of seeing, being, knowing and doing in the world. I am grateful to those who have shared their understandings of, and experiences with, the Indigenist paradigm for it allowed me to do this work in a wholistic manner that facilitates beginning and doing in good ways with intention. As Rigney puts it, "Indigenist research is research which focuses on the lived, historical experiences, ideas, traditions, dreams, interests, aspirations and struggles of Indigenous Australians. I desire that Indigenist research contribute to methodological reform for social justice" (2006, p. 43). That pathway to methodological reform has been mobilized through me, my education, and through the ways in which my community contributed to this academic process. Because this left vertical post cannot support the weaving to come on its own, we move on to build the equally important right vertical post, which represents the Indigenist inspired methodology and methods utilized in this study.

Chapter 4 Ucwalmicw Knowledge seeking, making and sharing

Beginning in an Ucwalmicw way The Great Flood Story[41]
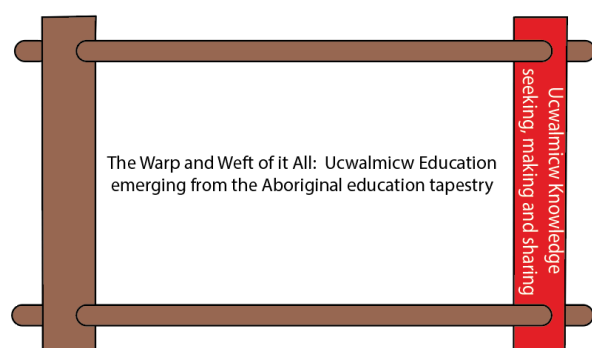
Figure 13 Ucwalmicw ways

A very long time ago, the Great Chief called upon Ntci'nemkin to instruct the Ucwalmicw to gather cedar and begin twining it into a length of rope. Ntci'nemkin and the people did as requested over the next several days. After some time had passed, Ntci'nemkin's younger brother grew weary of gathering and twining the cedar into rope and questioned why they did not use sinew as the more efficient approach to this undertaking. Ntci'nemkin responded that he was doing as instructed by the Great Chief and would continue to do so until the reason was revealed. The younger brother, discontent with this response, encouraged the people to utilize the swifter rope making method of using sinew. Some of the people continued on with Ntci'nemkin while others opted to join his brother.

After a while both groups had produced great lengths of rope and it soon began to rain. It rained and rained and rained and as the waters rose to frightening heights upon the land, the Great Chief told Ntci'nemkin to have the people board their raft and float atop the rising waters. Some of the people joined Ntci'nemkin while others boarded the raft of his sibling. When the rafts neared the peak of the split like a crutch Mountain (See photo in Figure 14: N'Skets)*, the Great Chief instructed the people to throw the ropes they had made over the peak to keep them afloat above their territory. The raft secured by*

Figure 14 N'Skets

the braided cedar held strong and the people on Ntci'nemkin's raft remained upon their territory as the waters eventually subsided. The younger brother's raft floated down the valley as the rope

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[41]Please go to the following link to hear our Elder Aunty Laura Purcell narrate an animated version of this story: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_vHsFWkufhw

made of sinew stretched farther and farther away from N'Skets Mountain. As the water levels lowered, the people on Ntci'nemkin's brother's raft were dispersed throughout the territory. This is how the Ucwalmicw Nation came to be spread throughout the valley.

This is the only Ucwalmicw story that I learned from my grandmother, Kicya7. It not only connects me to my origins, to all my relations in the Ucwalmicw territory and to the mountain sacred to us, it also connects me to Kicya7. I begin this chapter with our Flood Story because this is the section of the weaving that emanates from Ucwalmicw peoples and teachings which emanate from our Great Flood story. I honor our protocols by presenting Q'aLaTKú7eMicw sharings in a respectful way and that is through remembering and telling the Ucwalmicw origin story.

Chapter Overview

Chapters one and two of this dissertation introduce and then situate this PhD study within the context of an ever-emerging tapestry of Indigenous Peoples' diverse experiences with knowledge seeking, making and sharing to form a vision of education transforming. Indigenist approaches to coming to know that inform and guide this work are then articulated in chapter three which further contribute to the work of chapter four which is represented by the right vertical post of the dissertation loom (Figure 13: Ucwalmicw ways). In this chapter on protocols and processes, I substantiate the use of Indigenous methodologies from within the works of various Indigenous scholars, primarily Aluli-Meyer (2003, 2008), Armstrong (2000), Hart (2010), Ormiston (2010), and Weber-Pillwax (2001, 2004). Each of these scholars articulate and engage with what Indigenous methodologies are and what they do, to honor community ways of being, doing, knowing and valuing. I demonstrate how Indigenist theory mobilized in this study necessitates and honors Ucwalmicw approaches to knowledge seeking, making and sharing. I then provide overviews of the three community engagement sessions I participated in with Samahquamicw and the knowledge shared at each. I close the chapter by citing the four Ucwalmicw teachings that will be weaved into the dissertation blanket in chapter six.

An Indigenist methodology is an approach to coming to know in ways that mobilize the key principles of the Indigenist paradigm. To *resist* perpetuating and/or being co-opted by Western methods typically privileged in academia that tend to foster Western values, Indigenist methodologies are activated from within *Indigenous voices and ways* thereby maintain the *political integrity* and *self-determination* of the community with which the researcher works. To honor my *responsibilities* as an Ucwalmicw woman, I am ever cognizant of the fact that to engage with community from that place in this PhD/academic journey is as important as meeting the criteria established by the UBC ethics review board. An Indigenist approach to knowledge seeking and making knows that,

> The influence of culture on method selection is always present, but in Aboriginal communities, an Indigenous researcher may find that the method is actually determined by the parameters set by the ethics and principles of the culture in which s/he is engaged. (Weber-Pillwax, 2004, p. 88)

Samahquamicw Peoples are central contributors to and the key intended benefactors of this study. Therefore, following Weber-Pillwax (2001) and honoring the principles of the Indigenist paradigm that guides this work, we arrive at the need to move forward in a manner that honors Ucwalmicw ethics and principles. Indigenist precepts require approaches that will respectfully "…mesh with the community and serve the community" (Weber-Pillwax, 2001, p. 166). Aluli-Meyer writes that "[r]esearch for us is not simply about asking 'burning questions'…but about being of service to community and to our …distinct and evolving cultures" (2003, p. 54). We are best positioned to do this when our work is with and for community, when we take up community approaches, and when we are cognizant of and endeavoring toward outcomes that are of benefit to the community.

As noted in chapter three, we engage in *resistance* with purpose. As a Samahquamicw person resisting assimilation, which is tantamount to cultural genocide, my intentions are to become fully Ucwalmicw. That is, after all, why I resist. As an Indigenist student, researcher, emerging scholar, and educator, I must consistently challenge the 'norm' in academia's preferred approaches to teaching, learning and research so that I may live up to my *responsibilities* to

honor Ucwalmicw voice and proceed in a manner that is *self-determining* to maintain *political integrity* in all phases of our work. I am equally beholden to those who came before me (many, but certainly not all, of whom are noted throughout this dissertation), those who made and maintain the space to utilize Ucwalmicw methods possible within Western institutions because:

> … at one time, we, as Indigenous peoples, were faced with leaving our Indigeneity at the door when we entered the academic world, several of us are now actively working to ensure our research is not only respectful, or "culturally sensitive," but is also based in approaches and processes that are parts of our cultures. (Hart, 2010, p. 1)

Indigenist precepts align with Hart's points and are more than fodder for intellectual dialogue and/or academic discourse; they are guiding principles to live by and this very fact makes visible the interconnectedness of, and the relationality between, constructs of theory and methodology. From the Indigenist standpoint, principles and policies are processes and actions that are intertwined and inseparable; they are ways of coming to know, be and act with the world. Furthermore, these ways extend thoughtfully and wholistically from within Nation-specific protocols and intentions for *all my relations* through action. Weber-Pillwax expresses this idea in a meaningful way:

> Unless we realize that knowledge in actuality through integration into our own ways of being and knowing and doing, our studies have no life. They become those empty practices of the teacher who cannot be a teacher but who purports to act as a teacher. Like empty practices, academic discourse by itself will not support the life of the individual, the family, or the community. (Weber-Pillwax, 2001, p. 169)

The precepts of an Indigenist paradigm cannot transform me on their own. I cannot contribute to effecting change in my community, Nation or in the broader areas of Aboriginal education unless I myself am transforming. I *am* the status quo whenever my Ucwalmicw spirit is not mobilized and I do tend to be more status quo within the academy, when disconnected from community and Ucwalmicw circles. What I mean by this is it can sometimes be the path of least resistance to walk the ways of the institution while immersed in it and all of its policies, practices and purposes. It can be a challenge to express my Indigeneity, my Ucwalmicwness, while completely surrounded by Western ways of thinking, being, doing and knowing. There are

many situations where I have no choice but to act differently from how I am thinking and feeling and Johnson (2012) cites this "two-mindedness" as being uncomfortable and contrary to who we are (p. 80). One example of this comes from my teaching world where I need to implement institutional policies that require documentation from students who missed a midterm before allowing them an opportunity to make up the marks. I understand why the policy is in place, but my instincts are to approach each situation on a case by case basis. In building knowledge exchange relationships between students and between students and instructors, trust is important. There are times when I feel that policies like these disrupt the relationship building process.

Living and working within academia often feels like a tug-of-war and it most definitely is a balancing act. Resistance can be exhausting, as can practicing Ucwalmicw ways of relating to and seeing everyone as *all my relations* in order to live up to my Grandmother's name, Kicya7, which means Mother to all. This is how the principle of *responsibilities* came up for me in my endeavor to live the Indigenist paradigm in this knowledge seeking process. While pursuing a PhD has been emotionally, spiritually, intellectually and physically taxing, it is important that I do so because, as noted in previous chapters, transforming Aboriginal education into Indigenous education is a massive task that requires the persistence of many. I need to reciprocate for the gifts of those who committed to making space in academia for my Indigeneity to thrive. Being aware of and acknowledging those who came before me are just empty words without action and much is at stake as Dei (2008) reminds us,

> What makes our institutions "successful places" for Indigenous/Aboriginal and racial minority learners is our ability to resist marginalization and to claim a space. This is a constant struggle. Once we claim our space, it is even more difficult to hold on to that space. (p. 9)

Aboriginal education has inflicted intergenerational damage on First Peoples and transforming it will require intergenerational work and perseverance. It is my *responsibilities* that motivate me to act well beyond doing no harm to attempt to contribute to the transformation of education systems so that they increasingly benefit our communities (Anderson, Pakula, Smye, Peters, & Schroeder, 2011). I must reciprocate so that the space made in academia over the past decades continues to be there for the next generations of Indigenous students.

In her (2001) presentation on what Indigenous research is, Weber-Pillwax expands on this predilection for action when working with Indigenous communities. She discusses the value of academic discourse and deconstruction theories and goes on to note that from a community perspective, it is not merely the analysis of, for example, policy that is necessary. Weber-Pillwax argues that, "Out there in the community, they are deconstructing, and they don't need the language of deconstruction to do it" (2001, p. 170). It is not articulating theories about policy that transforms. The point Weber-Pillwax is making is that in our Indigenous communities it is all about the doing, it is all about our actions; just as Indigenist theory and methodology are not *about* Indigeneity but *being* Indigenous. However, because this is also an academic endeavor, I heed the calls of Rigney (1999) and Wilson (2007) and contribute to the dialogue, which, from an Ucwalmicw/Indigenist perspective, I am better able to do having lived and experienced my Indigeneity in all areas of my academic and personal lives. I take up Ucwalmicw methods because they respect and honor the contributions of and intentions behind community sharings and because it is through experiencing and not simply articulating and disseminating them that I am becoming fully Ucwalmicw. This responsibility is all about accountability to family, community and Nation, to ancestors, to future generations of Ucwalmicw and to *all my relations*. Honoring the intentions behind community contributions begins with coming to understand how mobilizing knowledge first effects or transforms me so that I can become an agent of positive change.

To honor Ucwalmicw ways is to see knowledge as being imbued with experience, which allows me to respond to Indigenous voice and ways in a manner that weaves heart, body and spirit with intellect, to "triangulate meaning" (Aluli-Meyer, 2003, p. 217) in my knowledge seeking, making and sharing processes. *Triangulating meaning* is an approach to understanding that begins with the body which Aluli-Meyer calls the *gross* or "…first point in triangulation, the objective, body, physical…" point of coming to know that is "...the lowest form of knowledge production...the starting point..."(Aluli-Myer, 2008, p. 57). The community engagement phase of this dissertation weaving represents the first point in this triangulation process. I invited all interested Samahquamicw to join me at Q'aLaTKú7eM to discuss how Ucwalmicw protocols, processes, and knowledge can transform the classrooms to which our peoples turn for formal education. The teachings gifted to me at the community sharing circles are the cursory and physical phase, my first step toward coming to understand. It is at these initial phases of

knowledge gathering where I first come into contact with what Q'aLaTKú7eMicw sees as necessary to our vision of Samahquamicw education. Determining how I relate to the teachings occurs in the second point of Aluli-Meyer's (2003) triangulation process.

In the *subtle* phase is where we internalize, rationalize and make meaning of what we have seen and/or heard. At this stage I, the learner, am expected to determine the intentions behind the ideas shared for this specific study. In this aspect of knowledge seeking and making, we engage with our subjective and relational thinking processes and it is in this space "…where knowing expands … deepening what we know about something" (Aluli-Myer, 2003, p.59). Taking time to reflect upon Q'aLaTKú7eMicw contributions allows me to make connections between the community Sharing Circles' guiding questions and responses, the preliminary research (literature reviews) and the contextual, experiential knowledge of formal education as an Indigenous student, researcher, and educator. Full consideration of these interconnections is fundamental to doing my own work toward fully comprehending the intentions behind community sharings. This method of triangulation represents wholistic learning in that the Body and Mind are not separate from the third, or *causal* point of coming to understand, which is "…transcendental, spirit, contemplation…" (Aluli-Myer, 2003, p. 60). It is at this spiritual level that we come to comprehend the magnitude of our interconnectedness and the significant role that *how* we come to know plays in maintaining balance and harmony in the overall picture. Honing and simultaneously activating all of our human capacities to learn is the pathway to *becoming fully human* (Cajete, 1994; Aluli-Meyer, 2003); "…the moment one collapses all knowledge sources as only gross or subtle, body or mind, external or internal" we, as Aluli-Meyer (2003, p. 60) goes on to say, become misdirected. Focus on the intellectual skills of learners is being expanded upon across all levels of education, however, I raise this point here because the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw cited wholistic approaches as a protocol that must be honored to transform learning environments. I appreciate Aluli-Meyer's decision to call the third triangulation point the *causal* phase because it causes us to act, to make manifest the understandings that come to us when we weave together all of our capacities to know for the benefit of the collective.

Armstrong's (2000) Dance House model speaks to transforming education systems in a way that affirms the interrelatedness of self, family, community and land[42]. When the self, located at the centre of these four concentric circles, is healthy in all four quadrants (physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual) then the individual is better situated and able to contribute to relationships within family and extended family that are balanced, respectful and harmonious. As the receiver of knowledge in this project, I am required to be more than a transmitter of the teachings. Q'aLaTKú7eMicw shared what they shared with intention. In asking them to contribute to this PhD project, I am responsible for facilitating change through acting on the wisdom shared with me. Aluli-Meyer puts it this way, "Causal knowledge is the fire that bakes the bread (2003, p. 61). The spiritual phase of the triangulation process is where we can see our agency in relation to all beings as found in Armstrong's four concentric circles and that is the ultimate purpose behind coming to know. In relation to Q'aLaTKú7eMicw, the triangulation process led me to realize that not only does transformation start with the individual, but if we hope to see change that benefits all students including Ucwalmicw, education systems need to be doing more in regard to the family, community, and Land circles of education.

For the purposes of this project and for my own growth and development, I choose Indigenous methods so that all of my human capacities to understand are engaged. This is necessary for me to receive and fully comprehend the intentions behind what my community members shared with me. I would not have garnered the full strength or meaning of their sharings had I been content to stop at the *gross* or beginning phase of the learning process, that is capturing and documenting their contributions. It is by moving through the *gross* and *subtle* phases of coming to understand the QalaTKu7emicw words that I saw the need to implement the teachings to understand deeply. By internalizing what was shared and considering why it was shared with me, thereby making the teachings subjective, I recalled one of the QaLaTKu7emicw contributors saying that once something is shared with us, we are being given permission to use or apply the information in our lives. This is an Ucwalmicw way of not prescribing what one should do while also making it very clear that you will not get it until you experience it for yourself. After applying and reflecting upon the mobilization of community contributions in my

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[42] Armstrong (2000) presents these four key components in a set of Circles within Circles. The smallest center Circle is the self, surrounded by a larger Circle which is the family, the third Circle surrounds family and self and is the community, and all three of these Circles are encompassed by the largest concentric Circle which is the land.

learning and teaching practices, I reached the third point of triangulation to experience how, "…causal knowledge breathes and deepens our connection to all things, All people. All ideas" (Aluli-Meyer, 2003, p. 61). Aluli-Meyer's words remind me of the centrality of *all my relations* in Ucwalmicw/Indigenous worldviews, pedagogies and practices. We are all related, what affects one, affects us all. This includes all humans, all animals, plants, waters, the earth, air, cosmos, ancestors and those yet to come.

I dedicate space to Aluli-Myer's work because it honors Indigenous voice and ways and it further explains the concept of wholistic approaches to transforming Aboriginal education raised by the Samahquamicw in this inquiry. We, like Aluli-Meyer (2008) see the valuing and honoring of, "…[o]ther ways of knowing…" (p.224) as being critical to the process of making positive change in academia and community in general. Weber-Pillwax warns us of the dangers that come with relying solely on Western approaches to Indigenous knowledge sharing because the "…intellectualization of Indigenous ways of being and knowing can inhibit and/or distort opportunities for Indigenous people to experience connections and personal transformations" (2001, p. 173). We are asked/expected to approach knowledge seeking, making and sharing using all of our human capacities so that the processes of coming to understand may transform us. LaFrance (2009) acknowledges the need to consider the significance of the heart in the paths we choose, noting that Indigenous practices promote taking our thinking "...from the mind, where it originates, [to] carefully nurture the idea in our heart, and only then putting it into practice…" (p. 88). This wholistic and experiential pathway to coming to know enables us to deeply understand what it is that we seek to learn. Weber-Pillwax (2001) puts it this way, "… it is like writing *bread* on a piece of paper and then eating the paper instead of eating the bread" (p. 172), fully expecting to then know the taste of bread. Sockbeson expands upon this idea:

> I believe I have the skills to help revitalize Waponahki knowledge; however, I understand knowledge to evolve through experience. For many Indigenous peoples our knowledge is held by those who have extensive experience in life: our Elders, and even then they often claim that they are still learning (Cardinal, 1977; Ermine, 1995; Penobscot Nation Oral History Project, 1993). (Sockbeson, 2009, p. 357)

For these very reasons, I have opted not to critique Q'aLaTKú7eMicw contributions to this project, but to apply them and learn from those experiences. That is, after all, the intentions behind community sharings. Hart (2010) agrees, "…an Indigenous methodology includes the

assumption that knowledge gained will be utilized practically" (p. 9). We have a social and moral responsibility to the knowledge we seek out from our Indigenous communities. This is of the utmost importance for me and speaks directly to the concept of intention raised in previous chapters. Conventional Western research tends to focus on a problem and the primary investigator who then 'contributes' their synthesized versions of knowledge shared by their 'informants' to the discourse, and/or with the academy and/or institution. Indigenous knowledge seeking is initiated and facilitated in a manner that is acutely aware of how the application of the contributors' sharings will affect who the knowledge seeker will become and how that will contribute to the wellbeing of the family, community and the land. My responsibilities to the teachings and intentions of the community are about much more than writing myself into a position in the academy (Smith, 2012). Good thoughts and wishes for my own personal growth and for family and community trigger in me a thirst for contributing to the transformation of Aboriginal education to the extent that to know is no longer enough. The work of Indigenist/ Ucwalmicw researchers and educators must center on facilitating growth and positive change for the students, the community and themselves. Contributing to the dialogue is the *gross* aspect of the knowledge seeking, making and sharing process. I utilize Indigenist/Ucwalmicw approaches because they honor community protocols and processes, because the rigors of doing so ensure that community and I are present in a wholistic manner throughout the project and because they value the significance of experiential coming to understand that ultimately begins the transformation process.

Walking the Indigenist talk in my PhD program

In this next section of the chapter I focus on the tenets of Indigenist theory that further guide me towards the taking up of Ucwalmicw ways in this knowledge seeking, making and sharing process. Important to an Indigenous approach is the fact that we position ourselves from the start as being part of and personally/communally invested in and/or related to the research project. As Weber-Pillwax reminds us, "Indigenous research methodologies are those that enable and permit Indigenous researchers to be who they are while engaged actively as participants in research processes that create new knowledge and transform who they are and where they are" (2001, p. 174). To choose Ucwalmicw ways of coming to know and understand is *self-*

determination in action and therefore maintains *political integrity* in this study that began with the intention to transform Aboriginal education in ways that benefit Ucwalmicw Peoples. As Ormiston (2010) notes, "Indigenous people worldwide are taking necessary steps to initiate research reflecting their own needs and aspirations using Indigenous ways of knowing, being, seeing and doing to maintain strong people, communities, and Nations towards a self-determining future" (p.55). An example of honoring Ucwalmicw voice and ways in this project is the use of a guiding framework that holds much meaning and history with Ucwalmicw peoples.

Taking up the loom and weaving process to disseminate the contributions made by Q'aLaTKú7eMicw is an act of survivance and rejuvenation in that I engage with the deep meanings and intentions that are bundled within the sacred act of weaving. In contributing to the expanding boundaries of academia's expectations, I honor my Ucwalmicw responsibilities and relationships as I connect in wholistic ways with the sharings gifted to me by the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw. Ormiston agrees when he writes that, "[a]ll researchers working in an Indigenous context have an ethical responsibility toward the people, their cultures, and the environment" (2010, p.53). This ethical responsibility applies equally across all practices regarding learning and teaching. How we come to know and how we share those understandings must be done in ways that reflect the intentions and purposes of First Peoples' knowledge systems, including our responsibilities to future generations (Ormiston, 2010). This is one of many understandings that is common across Indigenous cultures and the saying "for seven generations" keeps us mindful of how we need to live and be in this world because we are responsible for those yet to come.

Being responsible for generations to come is a teaching that is embedded in Indigenous Knowledge systems and one that is absent within contemporary models of consumerism, capitalism and individualism. I am therefore responsible for learning and perpetuating into the future the teachings of the Ucwalmicw. Like Ormiston (2010), "I believe we need to challenge both research and theory within higher education to ensure our teachings are sustained for generations to come" (p. 55). The approach to this study is an example of transforming academic processes so that they honor and perpetuate Indigenous (in this case) Ucwalmicw voice and ways.

My experiences as an Indigenous student and educator have demonstrated to me that the *single story* (Adichie, 2009) view of the Original Peoples of Turtle Island (North America) often forms the extent of "knowing" First Nations' peoples that exists in non-Indigenous/settler societies' mindscapes. This single-story perspective (that brings a monocultural view of Indigenous peoples) prevails across a great diversity of students with whom I have engaged over the past two decades. I believe that Aboriginal education systems (as much as the media) play a major role in the perpetuation of this perspective. Valuing and teaching only Western understandings of knowledge production and purposes effectively erases the rigor of Indigenous knowledge systems and a great diversity of other equally valid ways of coming to know. Because what is and is not taught in our classrooms determines the status quo regarding what is socially acceptable and valued, Indigenous education carries great potential for transforming and expanding upon the single-story perspective that continues to permeate the classrooms in which Ucwalmicw peoples learn. In an effort to contribute to the substantial work already being done to transform Aboriginal education, I reiterate the research questions that guide the work disseminated here:

1. How can Ucwalmicw processes of knowledge seeking, making and sharing disrupt mainstream understandings of Aboriginal education?
2. In what ways can the facilitation of Ucwalmicw ways of seeking, making and sharing knowledge contribute to the transforming processes of Indigenous education?

Aligned with Martin's (2003) articulations of an approach to Indigenist research, these questions are concerned with "re-claiming through research" (p. 211) and center on the priorities of a specific Nation. What do Ucwalmicw ways have to contribute to the disruption and/or dismantling of mainstream systems that currently do not center on the knowledge systems Indigenous to the places on which these schools sit? Re-claiming Indigenous approaches to research in our own homelands is politically, spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, and physically correct. Paramount to attaining *political integrity* in responding to these two research questions is the Ucwalmicw people and the community sessions that I engaged in with my

Samahquamicw community members. At those sessions, we considered and communed upon the following subset of questions:

1. What are the protocols around knowledge seeking and making in regard to Ucwalmicw education?
2. What are Ucwalmicw processes of knowledge seeking and making?
3. What is our vision of education for Samahquam?

Ucwalmicw Approaches and Community Engagements and Contributions

Our approach to the knowledge seeking and gathering phase of the community engagement process aligns with the Indigenist paradigm in that it was founded on communal approaches and preferences that I had observed and participated in with many of the Ucwalmicw communities over the years. Learning from past experiences in my work as the Community Engagement Hub Coordinator, I honor Samahquamicw values in a manner that recognizes the fact that our cultures are not static. The methods of Ucwalmicw coming to know are ways of being that center on respect, protocols, and processes that build and sustain harmony in relationships and these values continue to be expressed in contemporary times and in contemporary ways as will be presented in the upcoming segments of this chapter.

Community Engagement: Q'aLaTKú7eMicw

After presenting the project to the community at a general membership meeting, I posted the dates and agendas for each session on the Q'aLaTKú7eM community Face Book page. The community sessions brought all segments of the community together, and each began with honoring cultural protocols, reviewing the research questions and consent form, and were

facilitated using Sharing Circles to gather knowledge. We began each of the first two knowledge seeking and sharing events with an opening prayer, lunch for the contributors was provided and each was gifted with a handmade item, mainly crocheted drum bags, hats and

Figure 15 Samahquam Cultural Center

scarves as well as a number of wall hangings and hoodies embellished with community crests. I also smudged the meeting hall (Figure 15: Samahquam Cultural Center) prior to the second session[43] and participated in singing and drumming after both gatherings. We shared a meal at each Q'aLaTKú7eMicw session and also made ancestral offerings with guidance from an Elder Aunty. I consider these to be examples of important protocols that must be honored if our coming together to seek, make and share knowledge is to begin and proceed in a good way with good intentions and outcomes. Weber-Pillwax writes about honoring protocols in the knowledge seeking, making, and sharing processes in her community:

> They are also showing me that they are willing to help me if I am willing to put out the effort to be there and to learn from them. This exchange was all a part of the meal and the giving of gifts. The meal was not a method; it was an event in the stages of respectful adherence to protocols in establishing significant relationships with teachers and guides for one's spiritual journey towards individual growth. (2004, p. 87)

Beginning in a good way with intention is necessary to encourage outcomes that will benefit the community, and this is also why handmade gifts are best because they are made with good thoughts, prayers and positive energy for the person to whom it is gifted. I reciprocate the contributors' sharings with good intentions by weaving the same positive thoughts and love into the gifts that I make for them.

The first two knowledge seeking and sharing gatherings took place in the Samahquam Cultural Center located at Q'aLaTKú7eM. Being in the community to do this work facilitates the maintenance of an Ucwalmicw perspective. Surrounded by family, Elders and community members at the foot of the sacred N'Skets Mountain, I am ever mindful of the reasons why I began this journey in the first place. To engage with Ucwalmicw knowledge seeking and making is to engage in respectful dialogue with all segments of the community in a place that is comfortable and familiar to them, and we know that place as 'home'.

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[43] Although I did bring my Smudge kit with me to the first session, I did not Smudge the hall prior to beginning our first gathering. I believe it had something to do with my own comfort level around facilitating ceremony for others beyond myself. It was through trusting in our ways at the start of the second session that I found the confidence to begin in a good way as I knew was required. I no longer struggle with whether or not to bring out my Smudge kit to start sessions with community.

Sharing Circle #1: Q'aLaTKú7eM

At the first session on December 22, 2013, I was excited to be at this phase, my favorite time in the research process. Being on the territory with family and community and observing the Elders modeling ways I was reading about in my studies is always like a beam of light shining through to my heart. Most are familiar with the saying "a light went off in my head", for me, hearing and participating in our Ucwalmicw ways always evokes a sense of wellbeing and 'aha' moments at a spiritual level. Needless to say, I was anxious to begin learning, but I was also nervous that no one would attend. Sometimes that happens in the community and I had had a couple of LSTC Hub work sessions where only two people came out to share. Fortunately, my concerns were unwarranted as there were ten community members at the first gathering, which started with a review and signing of the *Informed Consent* forms. There were three Elders, five adults and two youth present at this first gathering. A Samahquamicw Chief came into the center before we began and gifted a cedar branch to me. He told me to hang it above my door when I returned home. I was very touched by and appreciative of this thoughtful act and took it as a sign that we were coming together to do good work. It set the tone for the many thoughts and words to come. As always, community members were welcoming, and all appeared completely comfortable in this familiar place, surrounded by the ancestors whose photographs hang on the walls of the center which has a clear view of N'Skets Mountain. There was much laughter, connecting and reconnecting happening throughout all three of the events in which we participated for the purposes of this study. Just being together in these informal ways is good medicine for the self, the family and the community. I will never forget the light it brought into my Elder Auntie's eyes when I asked her to share her knowledge with me. Our community members are sources of great knowledge, medicine and care and we all benefit in many positive ways when we ask them to share their gifts. The collective sense of wellbeing that working together fosters, is why this is my favorite part of the research project.

Before communing in the Sharing Circle process, each contributor was provided with a copy of the Informed Consent. I explained to the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw that this is one of the University's protocols regarding research. I read the form aloud and let my community members know that should they choose to participate and sign the forms, that they retained control over the degree to which they and their contributions would be represented in written and oral

presentations of this study. I further made clear that they could withdraw from the project and have any information they shared removed without penalty. After completing the Informed consent processes, we moved on to commune, via Sharing Circles, on what protocols of Ucwalmicw knowledge seeking and making are important to Samahquamicw. It is important to note the significance of Sharing Circles from an Indigenous perspective and Lavallee describes it well:

> In a research setting, while both the focus group and sharing circle are concerned with gaining knowledge through discussion, the principles behind a sharing circle are quite different. Focus groups extract data while circles are acts of sharing with permission given to the facilitator to report on the discussions in the sharing circle. (2007, p. 134)

I would build on Lavallee's words to note that this process does more then give me permission to report on what has been shared. Community members share their knowledge, experiences and aspirations in these Circles with the understanding that what is being shared will be utilized or mobilized towards family, community and my wellbeing. Circle sharings are put forward *with intention*- they are not merely words and ideas to be critiqued and reported on in the dissertation writing process. Once again accountability requires me to move beyond the *gross* and *subtle* understandings of what is shared. I become responsible for the teachings and to honor community members' time and to fully understand what was gifted, I must implement and reflect upon the sharings and the outcomes of doing so as being necessary components of meeting my responsibilities to the knowledge seeking, making and sharing relationship. I do not stop at the *gross* level of knowledge seeking with the dissemination of 'findings.' I must also experience the *subtle* and *causal* aspects of coming to understand through a more wholistic engagement with the Circle contributions.

At each of the Sharing Circles, I was an eager Samahquamicw knowledge seeker, learner and transcriber. I posed a single, open-ended and general question about Ucwalmicw protocols, processes and values around knowledge seeking, making and sharing. As the Sharing Circle participants expressed their thoughts and responses, I made note of them on flipcharts set up around the room. I did not realize until I was asked by my supervisory committee for details about the process, that I had also been transcribing much of what was said on my heart. Written on the flipcharts at the time of each gathering were the protocols, the processes, and values expressed at each Circle. Internalized and committed to memory were the stories, examples, and

clarifications that these knowledge sharers provided alongside of the main points they raised. I was pleasantly surprised to realize that even though I had gone into the cultural center expecting to record community teachings on paper- I had subconsciously shifted into my Ucwalmicw spirit during our time together. I was not aware of it at the time, but I firmly believe that beginning with drumming, prayer, and feeling at home transforms the learning spirit whether we intend it or not. It is the stories that were shared with me that connected me to the tellers and the teachings and they will always come to me when they are needed on my life and learning journeys.

We broke midway through each Sharing Circle day to share a meal together and after lunch we reviewed the flipcharts to confirm what was discussed, to hear clarifications and stories that came up for contributors over lunch and then continued to build on our understandings of Ucwalmicw protocols, processes and values. It was also decided by the group that the ideas and teachings shared would be cited as being Q'aLaTKú7eMicw sharings in any dissemination processes to come. It was felt that our working together, sharing from where each of us is at, needed to be referenced as a collective remembering and sharing process. Community member contributions began as an informal dialogue between all present. Once everyone had offered what they wanted to share for each of the guiding questions, I asked the group varying versions of, "what does this all boil down to?" I wrote, verbatim, the responses put forward to that question and these are presented in bold font. The supplementary, contextual information and/or stories shared for each item is represented in italicized font. After summing up the discussions, we reviewed the statements noted on the flipcharts and confirmed and/or added to them when expressed as needed by Q'aLaTKú7eMicw. Gifts of reciprocity were then distributed as we closed our gathering with a prayer and drumming.

Sharing Circle #1 Contributions

At this first community session, we focused on and responded to the first guiding question:

1. What are the protocols around knowledge seeking and making in regard to Ucwalmicw education?

This single question guided our sharings of what we knew while Elders and other knowledge practitioners who were in attendance crystallized our understandings of the protocols of Ucwalmicw knowledge seeking, making and sharing. I learned much about protocols from

community participants during this Sharing Circle. I share twelve protocols identified in this session in a list below. The numbers have an uppercase ***P*** in front of them to distinguish that these items were cited as some of the protocols of Samahquamicw knowledge systems. These protocols inform the responsibilities I carry as an Ucwalmicw person, researcher and educator. I work to incorporate them into my learning and teaching practice to experience, reflect upon, and disseminate here how Ucwalmicw teachings can contribute to the transformation of Aboriginal education in a manner that honors local community:

P1. **If someone shows or gives you something – they are also giving you permission to use/do it.** *The example shared by an Elder was about devil's club. She said if someone shows me where and how to harvest and when to use this medicine, they are giving me permission to use it. This teaching has shown me a number of things, one of which is the fact that I am responsible for what I share in the classroom. Is what I am sharing for use by the group of students I am sharing it with? This guides me greatly on how much information I can share with non-Ucwalmicw Peoples.*

P2. **Children were a part of everything. They learned to sit, listen and come to understand what is going on. This grows a sense of belonging in the children.** *Comments leading up to this point included discussion around how when children are separate from the parents (like they are at the meetings we have today) they do not observe how to be when important business is being discussed and they do not witness our protocols in action. They do not learn when to do what.*

P3. **Everyone/family has a role.** *Unfortunately, the lovely woman who spoke to this point has since gone on to the Spirit World. Her wisdom about traditional ways of being was acknowledged by the Elders present after she spoke to how in the past, each family did what it was best at and everyone knew which family was responsible for what. Examples provided were fishing, making and delivering firewood and keeping the sweat lodge. This practice also fostered a sense of belonging that sustained community cohesion. It was noted that today everyone tends to be in their own world, isolated in our own homes.*

P4. **Model respecting everyone for children; praise them when they are doing good things, speak in a good way to them, that is, from the heart.** *Our children need to be surrounded in beauty, they need to know they are precious, appreciated and respected. That is an important protocol to remember because they are the Ucwalmicw future. Key to this point is the significance of modelling because, as expressed throughout this thesis, it is in doing that we become Ucwalmicw. This modelling compounds our understandings to include the importance of passing our ways on to generations to come by living and modelling them.*

P5. **Offer tobacco, gifts.** *An Elder Auntie told me that we should always be giving. She said whenever we attend a gathering or event, bring small gifts to offer someone you may not have seen in a long time. Or something to cheer up a cousin who is going through a difficult time, or someone who is speaking good words, doing good work for the people-offer them tobacco so that their gifts are acknowledged. This protocol ensures reciprocity*

and balance is maintained in our relationships. It is also one approach to lifting each other up.

P6. **Ensure Elders are cared for; they have food, water, and are warm.** *This protocol of respect teaches us to be grateful for the gifts of knowledge and experience that come to us from our Elders. While about reciprocity, we are also modeling important ways of being for the young, we take care of each other.*

P7. **Follow the protocols of the land and know how to do so in a good way, no waste and in tune with the rhythms and science of how we do**. *The Elder Aunty was passionate about this one. She said go out on the land! Learn the place names and the significance of the sites in our territory- these protocols need to be learned and practiced on the land, in sync with the land. Becoming fully Ucwalmicw requires 'walking the land' as another Elder once said.*

P8. **Taking care of and acknowledging our ancestors.** *Another Elder Aunty noted as we were preparing to eat lunch that a plate must be prepared first- she said every time we gather for a meal like this we need to honor this protocol of taking care of those who have gone on to the Spirit World. The Elder also told me when we keep dropping food- that is also a sign that the ancestors are hungry and we must do an offering. We need to remember them.*

P9. **Consider all aspects of the learner, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and physical.** *This one branched off of the discussion noted in point 4, in how we need to treat children. Everything we say and do effects the intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical wellbeing of the learner. We need to always be cognizant of this fact so that we affect in only positive and uplifting ways.*

P10. **Begin things in a good way. Drum if negative or bad feelings are present.** *An Elder Aunty commented on the feeling in the space upon entering it for the second session, she could tell it had been smudged earlier that morning. We can call on ancestral support when times are difficult by bringing out our drums and singing together. This protocol reminds us that we are all connected – and that includes those who have passed on and those yet to come.*

P11. **Help one another.** *I recall a story being shared about how the adults would walk all the way to town to purchase what the Elders needed and bring it back for them and they did so without putting their hand out for money. We need to return to the ways that saw us all pulling for each other, working together.*

P12. **Reciprocate- giving goes both ways and through the universe.** *I believe that what was being indicated here is that how we are ripples out to everyone and everything around us – with the potential to extend to the entire universe if we get that cycle going and keep it going.* (Q'aLaTKú7eMicw, 2013)

We discussed how these protocols are not lost to us, that we can remember them if we listen to our hearts and spirits. It was further recognized that these teachings begin and are also practiced at home, and are not the sole responsibility of the teaching, governance, and societal environments (Q'aLaTKú7eMicw, 2013). Prior to this community engagement session, I had only been aware of the protocols that require acknowledging the territory, introducing ourselves

in certain ways and of ancestral offerings. The Q'aLaTKú7eMicw have greatly expanded my understandings of what protocols are and what they do. This list demonstrates the extent to which ways of being are really examples of protocols that we must remember, practice, model and perpetuate into the future because it is these ways that make us Ucwalmicw.

Sharing Circle #2: Q'aLaTKú7eM

The second session was facilitated on February 2, 2014, five weeks after the first Sharing Circle described previously. It was also held in the Samahquam Cultural Center at Q'aLaTKú7eM. Our second session began with the Smudging of our gathering space and an Opening Prayer. A group review and signing of the informed consent was followed by reminding contributors of their rights to withdraw themselves and their sharings at any time without penalty. There were ten people, three Elder Aunties, six adults and one youth present on this day. Six of those in attendance had also participated in the first Sharing Circle.

Before posing the Circle guiding discussion questions, we were gently steered towards participating in a drum-making workshop that an Elder Aunty announced as she unpacked the supplies she brought with her. Effectively amending the agenda for the day with her good intentions, this Elder modeled for me an important Ucwalmicw teaching, "…that we always *do* something when we come together to learn!" (QaLaTKu7eMicw, 2014) (See Figure 16: *Modeling Ucwalmicw Pedagogies*). This approach to knowledge seeking and making values the wholistic nature of coming to understand in that there is always engagement with some form of physical activity during the knowledge seeking and sharing process. This Elder knows that we are better able to internalize knowledge if our minds *and* bodies are active. Through "following the flow of the community" (Weber-Pillwax, 2004, p. 86), I have learned that what may seem to some to be a digression in Elders' contributions to discussions or the always-gentle shifting of our gathering agendas, is actually the living of pedagogies and teachings. This Samahquamicw Elder explained that we must always be watching to *see* how we need to do things ourselves which tells me that ways of being and doing are being

Figure 16 Modelling Ucwalmicw Pedagogies

modeled for us with intention. We must listen with our hearts, bodies and spirits. This further corroborates the significance of the process over the content in knowledge seeking, making and sharing.

As the participants worked on their drums, we reviewed the outcomes of the previous discussions about the protocols of Ucwalmicw knowledge systems as shared in our first Sharing Circle. Doing this reflective work while immersed within the drum-making activity provided by our Elder had a very significant effect on the space in which we communed. The feeling was very comfortable and respectful at the first Sharing Circle and yet there was something different about our coming together this time. While I knew it had everything to do with the fact that Q'aLaTKú7eMicw were absorbed in the work their hands were doing, I did not come to fully understand the significance of this teaching until the time came to release the dissertation blanket from the loom. I had been experiencing weaving while writing the thesis for several months and when asked at my practice defense presentation if I would be bringing the actual weaving to my oral defense a few days later, I responded yes. I had full intentions of doing so. However, as I was twining in the loose ends, I felt an increasing apprehension at the thought of cutting the warp yarns, forever removing this loved one from my loom. I struggled with identifying exactly what I was feeling, what was happening, and the answer came to me as I shared at the oral exam why I had not brought the weaving with me. I came to understand, in front of my examining committee, that I am humbled by the weaving- by the process and the final tapestry that remained tethered to the dissertation loom. It was then and there that I realized that I had been in ceremony with my ancestors every time I sat at the loom and I was not ready to let them go. It was through experiencing the exact same movements of the fingers that my ancestors experienced, through feeling and coming to know the exact same tensions of the warp and weft yarns that they had felt, that I entered that spiritual space[44] that so many of my ancestors had entered in the very same ways with the very same intentions. It was through experiential engagement with the drum making process that community members and I had entered into a sacred space- that space where we reconnect with those who came before us and those who maintain the teachings that we were experiencing together at that second Sharing Circle. Being in that space while seeking, making, and sharing knowledge is one portal to wholistically coming

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[44] It is very interesting to find that I am transported back to that space as I remember and write about it! Experiential coming to know is extremely powerful and stays with me.

to understand. I am forever grateful for the teachings of Q'aLaTKú7eMicw and I will release the dissertation blanket in a good way, through ceremony, and present it to Samahquamicw in a good way.

Sharing Circle #2 Contributions

After reflecting on the protocols of Ucwalmicw knowledge seeking, making and sharing and after the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw drums were made, we moved on to consider the second and third community engagement guiding questions:

1. What are the processes of knowledge seeking and making?
2. What is our vision of education for Samahquam?

In response to question 1: *What are the processes of knowledge seeking and making?* I found the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw to be extremely concise and to the point in their responses. The following list summarizes what community contributors considered to be some of the key processes of Ucwalmicw knowledge seeking and making and the lowercase *p* in front of each number indicates these items were named as Samahquamicw processes in coming to know:

p1. **Delegating and knowing your job.** *Sometimes people get used to doing everything and this leads to stress and burn-out. Contributors highlighted the need to share workloads and to know what one's responsibilities are and fulfill them.*

p2. **Live it!** *It was stated that these are not just discussions we are having, they are guidelines for how to be.*

p3. **How we carry ourselves- "no push or pull, no judgment".** *The person who raised this point clarified that we do not want to do what education has been doing to us. We share, we model ways of being and doing and it is up to those around us whether or not they pick up and carry the teachings in their own lives.*

p4. **Watch how things are being done.** *An example provided by an Elder Aunty was if we are unsure as to how to behave at a gathering, all we need to do is observe the people around us and we will learn what to do.*

p5. **Walk the talk.** *Knowledge seeking and making must extend beyond the intellectual and we must act upon what we learn. We must implement it in our lives and we must act in a manner that aligns with what we say. This connects closely with process number 2 of this compilation.*

p6. **Talk to our ancestors, to the universe. Praying does not have to be the rosary- talk to the Creator.** *This call to include the spiritual processes of coming to know speaks to one glaring gap in most mainstream education learning environments and curricula.*

p7. **LEAD.** *This connects closely with point number 5, walking the talk and with point number 2, Live it! It is clear that action and modeling are key processes on which Ucwalmicw ways center that the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw wanted me to take away with me from the sharing circle dialogue.*

p8. **Trust again in our ways and in each other.** *There was much discussion about community members' desire to return to Ucwalmicw ways, working together, supporting each other as we did in the past. I have heard this point raised since I first started working with the southern Stl'atl'imx communities. When I asked how to best summarize these ideas, the group told me to write that we need to trust again in our ways and in each other.*

p9. **Re-learning Ucwalmicw ways and decide how they can benefit modern times.** *Dialogue adjacent to this idea included considering the breadth of understandings people have in this regard. We need to honor each person where they are at in the process of filling in (or choosing not to fill) the gaps in ancestral knowledge and language speaking. The need to consider the value and application of such knowledge in current times was also expressed.* (Q'aLaTKú7eMicw, 2014)

Just as Ucwalmicw ways have adapted and changed over time, so too have some of our means of gathering information because Ucwalmicw Peoples are not static. However, the protocols and good intentions behind our contemporary ways remain unchanging. As can be garnered from this list of Q'aLaTKú7eMicw key processes, it is all about behaviors that connect us in good ways and foster a sense of belonging and togetherness. The ideological, spatial and spiritual diaspora caused by the Indian Residential Schools and other waves of colonization has left too many of us feeling isolated, disconnected, like we are in a strange and inhospitable world on our own. We need to learn to trust in these Ucwalmicw ways to the extent that we are practicing them again. We are what we need. It is us that sustains us (Bioneers, 2014).

Reflecting on what the community wanted me to take away from our time together, I see that it is through incorporating processes of 'living it', 'no push or pull' and 'LEADING' into my own ways that the center of the circle, the self, transforms towards becoming transforming. This is where Ucwalmicw responsibilities begin and emanate from. Until the self trusts in and engages with these ways, the center of our Ucwalmicw circles will remain fragmented and disengaged and this too ripples out into the family, extended family, community and the land. The role that modeling plays in knowledge transmission was also made abundantly clear in the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw words and actions.

Having considered and reviewed the protocols and processes of Ucwalmicw coming to understand, our second Sharing Circle was now prepared to respond to the third community engagement question and that was, what is our vision for Samahquam education? As with the

responses to the first two guiding questions, contributor comments were recorded on charts posted around our gathering space and reviewed and edited as needed before closing this second gathering with a prayer, gifting, and drumming.

Visions of Samahquamicw education

Continuing with the informal Sharing Circle process at the second community engagement session, Q'aLaTKú7eMicw shared their thoughts on what a nurturing education system for Samahquamicw would look like. The guiding question was not made specific to early childhood education, elementary, secondary, or post-secondary so the responses are, for the most part, general in nature. To distinguish this set of items from the Protocols and processes responses, I number the visions put forward with the uppercase letter *V* in front of each number. Responses to *what is our vision of education for Samahquam, were as follows:*

V1. **No pass/fail, honors different ways and paces of learning.** *This point is closely connected to the need for a strengths-based approach in that this discussion centered on honoring point P4 as noted in the protocols sharing circle- respecting and praising our children. No learner is a failure, and none should ever experience the feeling of being seen as one. The passing and/or failing grades approach has served to further entrench the belief that Ucwalmicw ways are inferior and have no place in the modern world. Discussions also reiterated the need for wholistic pedagogies at the individual level (enhancing intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical capacities to learn) as well as in the learning environments (home (family), community and land) in which knowledge seeking, making and sharing occur. Q'aLaTKú7eMicw felt that Samahquamicw learning must be supported in all areas of life and not just in the school classroom.*

V2. **Strengths-based education plans.** *Building on the belief that a pass/fail system is non-conducive to a nurturing learning environment, it was noted that we need to return to the practices of recognizing and building upon the strengths that each learner brings with them. This vision is founded on P4 which requires us to respect and appreciate the blessings that are our children.*

V3. **Taught and applied right away- what we are learning is applicable in our daily lives.** *Q'aLaTKú7eMicw value the ability to enact, to the benefit of community, that which we are learning. Practical and local knowledge are as important as learning to navigate in the world around us and we need to balance the two in our education systems.*

V4. **In sync with the land/seasons/time and place.** *This point furthered the discussion on practical and locally based curricula. We need to begin by reconnecting with the land and becoming in sync with it. The Elder Aunty stressed there is a rhythm, a science to being one with the land and this MUST be included at all levels of learning.*

V5. **Wholesome learning environments.** *This Q'aLaTKú7eMicw contribution indicates that for deep learning to occur the student must feel connected to and an important part of the*

knowledge seeking, making and sharing process. All capacities to learn are tended to and engaged. Learners are also recognized as teachers in this collaborative approach to coming to know which is miles away from setting standardized criteria that a learner must meet to prove themselves 'worthy' of passing or moving forward.

V6. **We start young! When we are soaking information up and it lasts longer when we start at young age!** *This particular discussion included learning the protocols and ways of Ucwalmicw, the language and everything else that one needs to learn. This brought us to the next aspiration for Samahquamicw education.*

V7. **Starts at home- before school starts!** *It was important to note the roles and responsibilities of family and extended family in the learning that begins at the very start of one's life. Q'aLaTKú7eMicw also saw the value of having consistency in the Ucwalmicw teachings shared at home, in the community and at school, so that the learner is immersed in Ucwalmicw ways of being, seeing, doing and knowing in the world. It is essential that learners see Ucwalmicw pedagogies and content as being equally important and visible in classroom curricula.*

V8. **Connected with/knowing the land.** *A specific example of this shared by Q'aLaTKú7eMicw was the development of an Atlas curriculum- in our Ucwalmicts language that teaches ancestral place names, stories on the land and spiritual places. This curriculum would be taught on the land and students would learn about the medicines, the traditional activities in specific places (for example, berry picking, sacred sites) and about the appropriate times to do these things. This led into other recommendations that included school years being in sync with the seasons and the land. Most importantly, contributors advocated for education that grounds us as Ucwalmicw Peoples and re-connects us with family, extended family, community and the land. Additionally, it was suggested that curriculum be designed to bring back our ancestral names and along with them our traditional governance systems and the ceremonies and protocols around that important work.*

V9. **For all generations to close the gaps in our knowledge and ways that came through contact (residential schools, 60s scoop and other waves of colonization).** *This vision included the need to recognize and address the fact that community members are at varying stages in closing the gaps in their Ucwalmicw knowledge and instruction needs to meet each learner where they are at in that process. Q'aLaTKú7eMicw saw the need to re-shape the structures of classrooms so that they are not age or grade-centered, but learner centered, meaning all ages coming together to model and observe the teachings as was done in our traditional knowledge systems. It was further expressed that many Ucwalmicw need to learn about colonization, past and present, and the effects it has on our identities and pride.*

V10. **Acknowledges changes in our knowledge base and degrees to which each person carries Ucwalmicw knowledge.** *The metaphor shared by one of the men who participated in the community sharing circles speaks well to this one. It was noted that Q'aLaTKú7eM references the point on the land where the 'stillness of the lake goes into the river' (citing a personal communication from Donald Alex Peters). The Q'aLaTKú7eMicw participant stated that this is symbolic of the fact that while we will always have an ancestral pool of knowledge (the lake), we also honor the non-static sources and ways of knowing of current and future generations (the river that flows gently with through the lake). The stillness further represents the 'no push, no pull'*

approach that respects learners where they are at as well as honoring their own aspirations around what they wish to know and live in regard to Ucwalmicw ways.

V11.   **Acknowledges we all have a voice, we all have knowledge and experiences to share.** *This point contributes Q'aLaTKú7eMicw perspectives of what an wholistic approach to education includes. Transforming classrooms from spaces where one person is responsible for transmitting information and all others for receiving and reiterating it into collaborative learning environments represents one pathway to celebrating all learners and the skills, knowledge and experiences they have to contribute to the knowledge making systems with which they engage.*

The flip chart transcriptions for both Q'aLaTKú7eM sharing circles were individually confirmed (there are 6 sheets in total) prior to ending each session, transcribed and posted on the
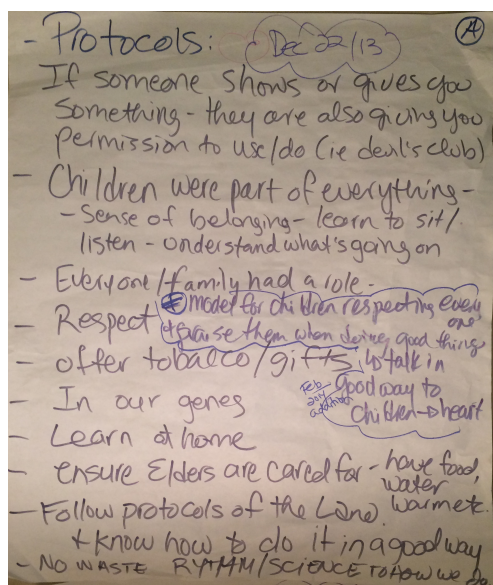
Figure 17 Community Sharing Circle Flip Chart

Q'aLaTKú7eM Facebook page for all interested membership to review. These are the sharings presented in this dissertation and that inform my life, learning and teaching practices. This approach to working with community represents *honoring Ucwalmicw voice and ways* as well as *self-determination.* I chose not to audio or video record the thoughts and words of Q'aLaTKú7eMicw and then go off to my office to draw out what I thought were the central themes. The 'data analysis' process instead happened during each of these two community circles and was conducted by the contributors themselves, and later through reflecting on

my implementation of some of their teachings. Q'aLaTKú7eMicw told me what was important to consider in the re-visioning of Indigenous education systems that would be respectful and nurturing of Ucwalmicw students. Every item on the flip chart summary lists (See Figure 17: *Community Sharing Circle Flip Chart*) was expressed, reviewed and approved by Q'aLaTKú7eMicw as being key protocols and processes of Ucwalmicw coming to know and understand. Because we are given permission to use what is shared with us by the fact that it is being shared, the expectation was that I would mobilize the protocols and processes confirmed by Q'aLaTKú7eMicw to wholistically determine the findings of our knowledge seeking and sharing activities and how they might contribute to realizing Samahquamicw visions of education.

Three community Sharing Circles had originally been planned for this study. However, after witnessing the drum-making pedagogy modeled for me at the second gathering, I adapted the intended approach to demonstrate that I had learned the teachings around having permission to use or do what has been shown to me. To mobilize the teachings modeled for me by the Elder Aunty, I adapted the planned third Sharing Circle to incorporate a physical activity as part of our last community engagement session for this project. The activity we intended to make part of our knowledge seeking and making session was learning on the land where, when and how to dig cedar roots for basket-making at an upcoming *Walking the Land Together* event. This approach was exciting for me as I had been waiting for an opportunity to learn this Ucwalmicw practice for many years. Sadly, due to unforeseen circumstances in the community, the event did not take place and I therefore needed to implement an alternative community-approved method for this last community engagement activity. It is clear to me that Martin (2003) has experiential understandings of this need for flexibility in research design and facilitation when working with Indigenous communities:

> The ability to design research that celebrates a relational ontology requires flexibility and reflexivity that is more than a matter of matching methods of data collection to the research question. Flexibility in design reflects the extent to which the researcher is prepared to show respect in understanding that research is not a priority in times of crisis, grieving, celebration, ritual or maintenance of relations amongst Entities.[45] This is the cultural safety and cultural respect Lester Irabinna Rigney commands. (p. 212)

To demonstrate respect is to know and honor the fact that the community takes precedence over any research project. If there is anything significant happening in Samahquam that, without prompting, question or debate, becomes the priority. Such was to be the case in the *walking the land* event which, due to community circumstances, did not occur. For this reason, I opted to wait for the next planned general membership meeting to facilitate the third round of community contributions gathering. This meant that I needed to shift from a Sharing Circle and walking the

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[45] I understand this term to be similar to Turtle Island understandings of and relationships with Helper Beings or Relatives.

land together (doing something while we come to understand) method to a survey approach to collecting community input so as to not disrupt the purposes and always full agenda of the Samahquam membership meeting.

For the survey process, I posted a visual representation of the sixteen examples of teaching activities that Q'aLaTKú7eMicw saw as necessary to realizing a Samahquamicw vision of education. These sixteen teachings, detailed in Table 1, were seen as pathways to realizing the visions outlined as essential to Ucwalmicw education. To deepen my understandings of Samahquamicw aspirations, General Assembly meeting participants were asked to consider which activities they felt should be taught and learned in four different learning environment situations: a) the home, b) on-reserve schools, c) public schools and/or, d) teacher education programs (See Figure 18: AGM Survey
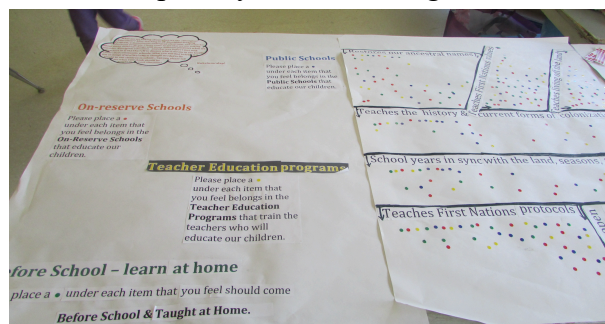
Figure 18 AGM Survey Sheets
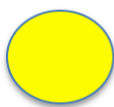
Sheets). I verbally shared contextual information about the project and answered questions as to how the list was populated with each survey participant prior to explaining how they could contribute to this project.

Members who participated were asked to place color coded stickers under each of the sixteen teaching activities posted on flip chart sheets. The blue circle sticker represented public schools; the red, on-reserve schools; the yellow, teacher education programs; and the green, to be taught at home. Contributors could suggest as many of the four environments as they saw fit under each of the teachings. Twenty-five people contributed to this survey process, bringing the total number of participants in this study to forty-five[46]. Not knowing how many people would participate in this larger group, I made ten gifts of blankets and mandalas to be drawn for at the end of the meeting. Those who contributed to the survey received an entry into the draw. These survey contributions reinforce and complement the thoughts shared by membership who reside in Q'aLaTku7eM. They further build upon them in that they demonstrate the need for a wholistic approach to teaching what Q'aLaTKú7eMicw saw as important to learn. I say this because, as the results show, and much to my surprise, Samahquamicw membership believed that many of

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[46] There are 345 Samahquam members- meaning 13% of the population contributed to this knowledge sharing process (10 contributors at each of the in-community gatherings and 25 contributors to the AGM Survey process).

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the sixteen activities needed to be taught across all four learning environments. This reiterated Q'aLaTKú7eMicw contribution V1 which advocated for Ucwalmicw teachings be consistent across all areas of Samahquamicw learning.

Table 1 July 19, 2014 Survey Results

February 2, 2014 Sharing Circle Contributions on Samahquamicw visions of education:	Learn at Home before School	Local, on-reserve schools	Public Schools	Teacher Education Programs
1. Restores our ancestral names	11	12	9	9
2. Teaches First Nations' values	15	13	12	10
3. Teaches living off the land	10	13	9	9
4. Teaches history & current forms of colonization	4	9	12	9
5. School years in sync with the land, seasons, time & place	9	11	8	8
6. Teaches First Nations protocols	11	13	11	8
7. Classes are open to all generations	9	16	9	9
8. Teaches caring for the land	10	12	7	7
9. Teaches about FNs' diversities, territories, cultures, histories	6	17	12	11
10. In sync with all areas of students' lives (home, community)	6	11	6	5
11. Revives hereditary systems of community leadership	10	11	11	11
12. Teaches/models importance of relationships	14	12	13	6
13. Strengths-based education plans	6	11	11	5
14. Re-connects students with the land	12	12	10	6
15. Puts into action what is learned	17	16	14	12
16. Supports every child & nurtures them	17	17	11	12
TOTALS	156	206	165	135
	🟢	🔴	🔵	🟡

While I regretted not being able to experience my first root digging activity with my community, I feel that things progressed as they were meant to, and this substitute approach permitted me to continue with the knowledge gathering in a respectful manner that did not interfere with community processes and practices. Though I was unable to experience connecting with my ancestors through being on the land while engaging in an ancient Ucwalmicw process of cedar root digging, I was able to spend the entire day with extended family sharing what I was learning from the teachings provided in the two Q'aLaTKú7eMicw Sharing Circles. Having a table set up at the back of the meeting space for several hours came to be about much more than

facilitating the final phase of community engagement for this PhD project. I was also catching up on Samahquamicw business and re-connecting with community Elders and youth, important activities that I had been engaging with less and less due to the heavy schedule of being a PhD student and full-time educator. Facilitating Sharing Circles and surveys in community always provides me with a sense of coming home and belonging. They are powerful reminders of why I am doing this work and why I continue to teach.

I have found, through evaluations of LSTC Community Engagement Hub activities, that many Samahquam community members prefer contributing in this kind of survey activity, rather than in a group dialogue. I found that flexibility grounded in wise (read: local) practices allows us to hear from a greater segment of the community. This is critical because all voices, opinions and ideas are important to fostering collective ownership over our community endeavors. I, like Weber-Pillwax, view the responsibilities of research as being best fulfilled when I "… act more as a facilitator, keeping in mind the objectives of the project as well as the interests of the collective group" (2004, p. 81). These interests are better ascertained when we consider the diversity of ways in which the population prefers to contribute and then adapt our methods to align with and facilitate them.

This survey method allowed for a larger number of Samahquamicw to contribute to this study that is about, with, and for them. In addition, this preferred method drawn from community practices also honors and weaves into contemporary times the traditional methods of information sharing and decision-making that our ancestors utilized. In the past, each family appointed a *Family Head,* who would attend gatherings to discuss important community matters before making a decision as to how to proceed with that matter. After the information sharing and discussions, these *Family Heads* would discuss the information with their respective families and put forward their thoughts and preferences in the final consensus making activity. Posting the small group contributions on flip charts at the larger community meeting provided the space for extended family and community members to express their preferences and/or concerns and built upon what the smaller groups had put forth. This approach further gave the QaLaTKu7eMicw contributors who were also present at the AGM, an additional opportunity to review and confirm that their contributions were being understood and considered in this research process as they had intended.

Summary of Samahquamicw Contributions to Survey Roll up Mission, BC

Towards actualizing education systems that nurture Ucwalmicw learning, the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw suggested a diversity of processes and protocols that are significant to visions of Samahquamicw education. While the protocols, processes and visions are specific to Ucwalmicw learners, they are entirely relevant and necessary beyond Samahquamicw schools, due to the diversity of places in which Ucwalmicw students are educated. For this reason, these contributions must be actualized across all of those learning environments, including and beyond those considered in the survey administered at the July 2014 AGM.

Because I see them as foundational to my ability to contribute to the transformation of Aboriginal education processes, I have chosen four specific Q'aLaTKú7eMicw protocols and processes to weave into the warp yarns of this dissertation. Beginning with the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw recommendation to be cognizant and respectful of where each learner is at in filling the gaps in their Ucwalmicw knowledge, I know that to implement their contributions in respectful ways as they intended me to do, I must start where I am at in becoming fully Ucwalmicw. To take up Ucwalmicw teachings, I immediately recall and recognize the need to proceed from the place that requires me to *begin and do in good ways and to do so with intention* (P10). This subsequently requires me to *trust again in Ucwalmicw ways* (p8), particularly so because living up to my responsibilities is currently taking place in mainstream society and educational institutions. I will return to my community one day to immerse myself in the Ucwalmicts language and ways and to give back to my community for everything they have done and given to me. However, that day has not yet arrived, and I will not dishonor the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw gifts by neglecting (and potentially forgetting) them by placing them in a book on a shelf. Therefore, I must trust that Ucwalmicw ways have something to offer the students in the mainstream classrooms with which I presently engage. As Weber-Pillwax noted above, action is critical and trusting again in our ways requires me to walk them. I therefore have chosen to weave *walking the talk* (p5) as the third Q'aLaTKú7eMicw weft yarn into this dissertation blanket. Lastly, because dominant approaches to education tend to focus heavily on the intellectual capacity to learn, I take up as the fourth Q'aLaTKú7eMicw weft strand, the protocol of honoring and attending to *wholistic approaches* (P9) to coming to know and

understand. All four of these weft strands were shared with me in the community engagement Sharing Circles facilitated at the Samahquam Cultural Centre in Q'aLaTKú7eM in late 2014 and early 2015.

While Q'aLaTKú7eMicw shared much wisdom from which to draw, I see these four protocols and processes as laying the groundwork for respectfully making change in a mainstream learning environment. *Being and doing in good ways with intention* is at the heart of an all my relations pedagogy. This protocol reminds us that everything we do has consequences and effects those around us. To maintain balance and harmony with all my relations I must think and act in a manner that ripples out in positive and connecting ways. This is critically important when weaving Q'aLaTKú7eMicw weft yarns into recommendations and policies that look to transform Aboriginal education. How we begin is significant because it sets the tone for how we will proceed and what the outcomes will look like.

Through experiential learning, I have come to know that t*rusting again in our ways* was necessary in taking those first steps toward doing things differently within a mainstream classroom. Prior to implementing the protocols and processes of the Ucwalmicw, there was no way to know how students would respond to Indigenous ways in a system that typically views Indigenous Knowledge systems as inferior, antiquated and or quaint. This means that the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw teaching to trust again in those ways that have been marginalized and ridiculed for so long was going to require faith. As I trusted in Ucwalmicw ways, it became increasingly easier to not only consider additional ways to utilize them in university classrooms, but to also implement them with positive results and feedback. It was also *trusting again in our ways* that helped me to Smudge the meeting space for our second community engagement session and feel a sense of gratitude for that good medicine and teaching knowing that doing so was felt and appreciated by our Elder Mother.

The third weft yarn connects closely with all three of the other processes because it is that which sustains the integrity in them all. *Walking the talk* of being and doing in good ways fosters a growing ability to *trust again in those ways* and is absolutely necessary in *wholistic approaches* that facilitate transformative coming to understand. *Walking the talk* is where coming to understand work is done. I refer back to ross' (2010) idea that it is in the making that we are made. In walking Ucwalmicw ways, I am becoming fully Ucwalmicw. It is not enough to know the ways of my ancestors. I must live them.

While there is much evidence to support the fact that the concept of *wholistic* learning is increasingly being understood as an important pedagogy for working with Indigenous students, I demonstrate how Ucwalmicw calls to wholistically apply this protocol can deepen and broaden the work being done under this precept. *Wholistic approaches* from Ucwalmicw perspectives begin with the four human capacities to learn and expand out to include family, community and the land.

Because these rigors of Ucwalmicw knowledge seeking represent the weft yarns of this dissertation weaving, I will illustrate how utilizing Indigenous ways to mobilize a diversity of recommendations presented in chapter five (warp yarns) can provide current and local approaches to transforming all classrooms whether Samahquamicw learners are present or not.

Chapter Summary: The Loom is Set

The first four chapters of this dissertation provide the loom with a solid framework onto which the Samahquamicw contributions presented in this chapter may be woven. This dissertation blanket weaving is framed by contextual information, theories, approaches and literature that greatly inform how this project can best contribute to the development of Indigenous education. The dissertation loom represents the parameters within which the dissertation blanket is woven. With all four sides now set, I turn to chapter five to begin the weaving process by warping the loom with the foundational, vertical yarns that are drawn from Indigenous education principles and recommendations. The four Ucwalmicw teachings will twine into and further strengthen these Indigenous education recommendations so that together the warp and weft of the weaving will reveal beauty of the ever-emerging Indigenous education tapestry made possible through incorporating local aspirations, protocols and processes.

Chapter 5: Warping the Loom with Good Intentions for Indigenous Education

The warp: vertical threads in tension, our intentions. Careful preparation of the warp threads is the basis for a weaving that will remain strong throughout the process… Attention to making a beautiful, strong, even warp is like the creation of intentions that match our values. Even though you will not see these warp threads in the finished piece, they are the inner strength of the weaving. (Merrill & Estell, 2007, p. 19)

Chapter Overview
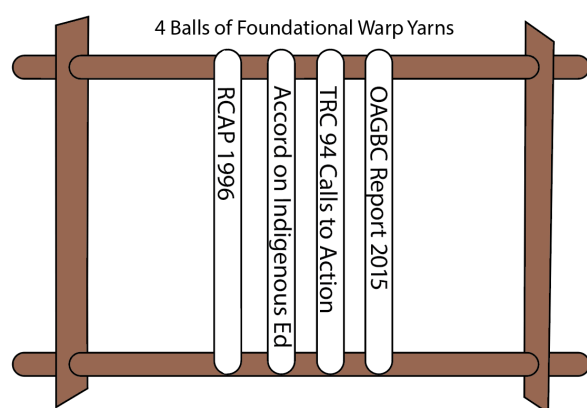
The twining process begins with the warping of the loom. Foundational yarns are cast firmly onto the frame by running one length of yarn vertically up and down around the top and bottom roller bars. The carefully placed warping extends across the width of these bars maintaining the connections between the left and right vertical posts, that is *Indigenist Theory* and *Ucwalmicw Knowledge Seeking and*

4 Balls of Foundational Warp Yarns

RCAP 1996

Accord on Indigenous Ed

TRC 94 Calls to Action

OAGBC Report 2015

Figure 19 Foundational Warp Yarns

sharing. As with an actual loom this is the structure that supports the tension of the weaving to come and, as evidenced thus far, there is no shortage of tension in Indigenous education. The warp yarns form the underpinning of the weaving onto which the pattern, story or vision is woven. In the dissertation blanket, the warp and weft yarns twine together in diverse ways to create an article of strength, warmth, beauty and good intentions. In *The Art of Weaving a Life* authors Merrill and Estelle reflect on their practice and share that weaving "…is a unifying experience" (2007, p.1) which aligns well with the intentions behind this project. The warp strands of this dissertation blanket represent principles and recommendations expressed after the federal government endorsement of the *Indian Control of Indian Education* policy paper (ICIE) in 1973. Each strand is drawn from one of four balls of yarn, or four key documents, that have the integrity to support the twining in of the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw teachings (weft yarns) (Figure 19: Foundational Warp Yarns).

While a plethora of state and institutional accords and reports speak to changing perceptions and goals of Aboriginal education, this dissertation builds upon contributions from four key documents: the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (1996) (Education chapter), the Association of Canadian Deans of Education (ACDE) *Accord on Indigenous Education* (2010), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *94 Calls to Action* (2015) (Education sections) and the British Columbia Auditor General Report, *An Audit of the education of Aboriginal students in the B.C. Public school system* (2015). These national and provincial policy documents are prime examples of reports and recommendations that underpin the transformations we are seeing in Aboriginal education; for example, changes facilitated by the unique to British Columbia Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements, the features of culturally based/responsive education, the common themes of success in on-reserve schools, and the student support and dual programming models implemented by post-secondary institutions as illustrated in chapter two. Each of the four warping balls of yarn is concerned with reconciling the effects that education has on First Peoples and our communities. Each document was compiled with, and continues to represent, a commitment to facilitating transformative change across a diverse range of learning environments. Most importantly, all of these policy documents were compiled based on Indigenous voice and community contributions.

I draw the PhD dissertation warping yarns from these four reports to illustrate how the findings of BC and nation-wide inquiries can be implemented in respectful and distinct ways by utilizing local knowledge and pedagogies. This begins to address the challenges of serving a diversity of First Nations in mainstream educational contexts in good ways. With little or no support from the state, these recommendations do the important work of guiding schools, communities, and various organizations in ways that honor the First Peoples who contributed to these reports, *with intention,* their perspectives on moving forward together in good ways.

In preparing to warp the loom, I unravel the four balls of yarn, each formed from a respective report, by providing contextual information and then situating each document through examining how it has contributed to reconciling mainstream education systems. Each of these reports contains principles and recommendations too numerous to cover within the scope of this dissertation, therefore, I tease out and identify examples from each document that hold the potential for weaving in Ucwalmicw protocols and processes. I do this utilizing Q'aLaTKú7eMicw contributions as lenses through which to consider, from contemporary

Ucwalmicw perspectives, the applicability of this diverse set of recommendations. I close this chapter by presenting an overview of the four Ucwalmicw protocols and practices that will be applied as weft yarns in chapter six to demonstrate mobilizing the intentions (warp yarns) of this thesis blanket by weaving in Q'aLaTKú7eMicw community contributions.

Warping Yarn, Ball 1: Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) (1996)

The federal government of Canada established the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples in 1991. This commission was made up of four Indigenous and three non-Indigenous commissioners, who were appointed to investigate and report back on "…the evolution of the relationship among aboriginal [sic] peoples (Indian, Inuit and Métis), the Canadian government, and Canadian society as a whole" (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996, p. 12). The Commission was tasked with ascertaining the "…foundations of a fair and honorable relationship between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people of Canada" INAC, 2016, para. 8). The commission's mandate involved two overarching agendas:

> …the development of a constitutional law theory of the status of [I]ndigenous peoples and their national relationship with the Canadian state; and the development of a cohesive policy framework for the delivery of programs to [I]ndigenous individuals, families, and communities for the amelioration of social conditions. (Hughes, 2012, p. 112)

This seminal report represents the first (state commissioned) of its kind in this country. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) further stands out because it sought the voices and experiences of Indigenous peoples themselves concerning every aspect of their lives. This government sanctioned project was conducted over the course of 178 days of public hearings and visits to 96 communities (apihtawikosisan, 2012), consultations with dozens of experts and a comprehensive review of past research studies, inquiries and reports (INAC, 2016). Centering on a collaborative approach to knowledge seeking, First Peoples' community participation was key in the development and design of this massive research endeavor (Kovach, 2005). This well-known and oft cited report is divided in to five volumes; Volume 1: Looking Forward, Looking Back; Volume 2: Restructuring the Relationship; Volume 3, Gathering Strength; Volume 4, Perspectives and Realities; and Volume 5, Renewal: A Twenty-Year

Commitment. The 4200 pages long document includes over 400 recommendations for enhancing First Peoples' lives, including their/our education (Ormiston, 2010) which is covered in Volume 3.5, which is the section of the report being considered for inclusion in this dissertation blanket weaving. The intent of the Royal Commission was to "…create a new relationship between the state and Indigenous people…" (Ormiston N. , 2010, p. 52) and to address "…the painful legacy of colonial history…" (Battiste M. , 2000, p. 8) particularly as perpetuated through education systems. The Commission identified the need to address the fact that current educational experiences typically eroded identity and self-worth in Indigenous students (RCAP, 1996, p. 405).

The 3.5 *Education* segment of RCAP (1996) begins with noting that contributors to the study expressed the need for schooling that developed students as "Aboriginal citizens" (p. 407) who completed their education with a strong and positive sense of Aboriginal identity through focusing on the wholistic development of the child's/youth's spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical capacities for learning.

The RCAP report then moves on to speak to the non-completion rates, the resultant lack of employment opportunities and the erosion of identity and self-esteem fostered by the systems of education encountered by the study contributors, stating that,

> those who continue in Canada's formal education systems told [RCAP] of regular encounters with racism, racism expressed not only in interpersonal exchanges but also through the denial of Aboriginal values, perspectives and cultures in the curriculum and the life of the institution. (1996, p. 408)

The RCAP report argues that significant change is required to meet First Nations' expectations for systems that facilitate "cultural and economic renewal" and to counter the "…coercive efforts at social engineering [that] continue to be felt generations later" (RCAP, 1996, p.408). The report goes on to provide examples of changes that have occurred as a result of ICIE (1972), alongside in-depth descriptions of the diversity of learning environments being accessed by First Peoples' students. It is made clear how the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB, now AFN) calls for the devolution of locally controlled education has been actualized as the transfer of federal/provincial control to band-*operated* schools through forced (by default) delivery of provincial curricula and requirements to run classes in line with the provincial school

year. RCAP confirms there are no resources or capacity building provided to make adaptations in curricula that incorporate Indigenous teachings, values and/or pedagogies possible.

The report proceeds with references to new undertakings like *Aboriginal Education Authorities,*[47] highlighting the Mi'kmaq agreement, before providing a snapshot of First Nations' demographics complete with breakdowns of where students were attending school when this report was commissioned. At the time of this study, 68.7% of First Nations' learners were enrolled in provincial school systems (RCAP, 1996, p. 411). It is noted that in locations with larger First Nations' populations, some districts negotiated the establishment of Aboriginal schools. This, however, was a rare occurrence and it was far more typical for Aboriginal students to attend schools that made "…no special effort to make them or their families feel part of the life of the school" (RCAP, 1996, p. 412). Examples of change in the post ICIE initiatives captured in this report include creating more positive learning environments for Aboriginal children, the hiring of Aboriginal teachers and Aboriginal support staff, scans for and the removal of blatant racism in curricula and the establishment of alternative programming for at risk students.

Rationale for inclusion of RCAP 1996 in this dissertation weaving

The RCAP report is chock full of sound recommendations and ideas that are concerned with the wellbeing, across all sectors, of Indigenous life. In this dissertation weaving, I demonstrate how Ucwalmicw ways can breathe life into the ambitions of the RCAP contributors to strengthen the ever-emerging tapestry of Indigenous education. Referencing and implementing recommendations from decades old studies is an act that honors the good thoughts, strengths and intentions of what has been, and continues to be, expressed time and time again by First Peoples regarding First Peoples' education. The work needed, as outlined in the RCAP findings, is not complete and we need to consistently refer back to it to ensure we are on good paths to

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[47] These partnerships between the Government of Canada, First Nations or their delegated organizations, and provinces allow for sharing of resources and practices, towards improved outcomes for students. "The Mi'kmaq Agreement stipulates that the primary, elementary, secondary programs and services offered by the Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK) shall be comparable to those provided by other education systems in Canada. *Mi'kmaq Education Act (Canada)* and the *Mik'maq Education Act (Nova Scotia)*" https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1308840098023/1308840148639, para. 23.

embracing Indigenous education. This thesis illustrates localized approaches to implementing some of these RCAP nation-wide suggestions.

RCAP (1996) Contributions to Indigenous Education

Transformation is a process and thinking and writing about *how* to transform is the starting point of that process. Relationships take time and they require ongoing attention and energy. Building trust is fundamental to establishing connections that grow stronger and closer as opposed to unraveling at the first sign of adversity or conflict. Hughes (2012) writes that the RCAP report contributed greatly to raising public awareness around First Peoples and our shared histories and experiences which is the critical first step towards building relationships founded on trust and mutual respect.

Since its dissemination, RCAP has fostered a growing sense of responsibility in the provinces to address the ongoing inadequacies of current models of education. This awareness has led to the development of province-wide legislation in Nova Scotia, British Columbia (Archibald & Hare, 2016) and, most recently, Ontario, towards transforming aspirations from recommendations into Indigenous education policy-making and practice. These steps represent important examples of collaborations at the provincial level and model working together to implement Indigenous ways of being, doing and knowing that we can learn from and apply at regional and local levels. The development of Indigenous education acts demonstrates not only a growing awareness of, but also a growing trust in Indigenous understandings of and approaches to teaching and learning. Acting on trust weaves strength into the relationships that grow out of these new pathways to educating.

Another RCAP recommendation that has been implemented by educational institutions across this country is the incorporation of Indigenous content and pedagogies into curriculum development and delivery (Archibald & Hare, 2016). Archibald and Hare's 2016 background paper marked the 20-year anniversary of the RCAP report. The document was presented to facilitate analysis and dialogue regarding policy making on the Indigenization of education in Canada at the November 2016 Forum on *Sharing the Land, Sharing a Future.* The authors reframe RCAP's life cycle of child, youth, adult, and Elder (Chapter 5: Education, p. 446) into a conceptual framework of life-long learning to focus their attention on recommendations made in

regard to early childhood education, K-12 education, post-secondary education, and community education.

Archibald and Hare (2016) provide a number of examples for us to consider in regard to Indigenization. They note that there is a steady increase of Indigenous content being made available to teachers and instructors and central to this point is the relationship building with local communities that enabled the gathering of such content. The RCAP is further credited for an increase in Indigenous Peoples' involvement in policy and decision-making, the creation of institution-wide strategies, strengthening baseline data collection processes, increasing Indigenous representation in teaching and staff positions and the provision of ongoing professional development for working with Indigenous students and/or respectfully incorporating Indigenous content and pedagogies into curriculum and classrooms. Unfortunately, these processes for change are not being implemented at an even pace across all learning environments, and, according to Pidgeon, even in the institutions that are moving to Indigenize, "ongoing struggles to overcome racism, covert and overt discrimination, and resistance to the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge(s) within curricular and co-curricular programs and services continue despite best intentions to do better" (2014, p.8). Buker (2014) concurs and argues, "there remains a "ceiling of power," that refuses to examine their resistance to an Indigenous view- point" (p. 26).

The BC teacher's Federation states in their 2017/18 Members Guide to the BCTF that they believe, "that an educational system that forces Aboriginal students to assimilate to majority cultural attitudes and patterns is a form of racism" (BCTF, 2018, p. 20). Even so, as Pidgeon indicates, there continues to be resistance to Indigenizing education and the RCAP (1996) recommendations form the basis of policy-making in British Columbia that have required, since September of 2012, all teacher candidates to complete coursework with Indigenous content or pedagogies to become certified to teach in this province (BC Ministry of Education, 2017). While a single course is not nearly enough to prepare teachers to work in good ways with Indigenous content and students, the reality is many teacher candidates now become certified with 3-credits in Indigenous content coursework, which is 3 credits more than they would have attained prior to this policy.

"While governments may have been reluctant to embrace the full range of the RCAP recommendations, Indigenous governments, communities and organizations have built upon

them – leading to the very real possibility of a redefined relationship consistent with the original vision" (Archibald & Hare, 2016, p. 2). Most importantly, from the perspective of this particular project, the work of incorporating local knowledge into the curricula in respectful and accurate ways has led to the fostering of relationship building among schools, universities and First Nations' communities. That is a major contribution from Indigenous worldviews that center on maintaining harmony and balance in relationships as being the intentions behind knowledge seeking, making and sharing processes.

Understanding RCAP warp yarns through Ucwalmicw lenses

Having provided an overview of Aboriginal education as examined in the RCAP Report (1996) and examples of change that have occurred over the 20 years since its publication, I now turn attention towards RCAP recommendations drawn from its *Transformative Education* section (p. 448) that concludes the Volume 3.5 chapter of the report to consider how they can be mobilized in local situations.

RCAP (1996) describes transformative education as learning that connects to community and is of relevance to students' lives (p.449). It advocates for a teacher-facilitated process that guides, "without dominating", students in their coming to know and understand through their educational, social, economic and political life journeys towards "making a difference" (p. 449). Reviewing this RCAP recommendation through the Ucwalmicw lens, words like *connecting*, *making a difference* and *without dominating* are the concepts that stand out. The RCAP suggestion for learning to be relevant across all aspects of students' lives aligns succinctly with the Samahquamicw survey results that demonstrate this very same thing. Q'aLaTKú7eMicw (2013) assertion that tending to the learner from a wholistic perspective is key begins to interpret this RCAP suggestion to consider all of the environments of a student's life. Samahquamicw expressed the need to consider all domains in the teaching process towards attaining their vision of all, "…children …surrounded by and supported on all fronts with the teachings—home, school, in community" (Q'aLaTKú7eMicw, 2014).

The Ucwalmicw lens sees this as a wholistic approach to teaching and learning and I am reminded of Q'aLaTKú7eMicw (2013) calls to "consider all aspects of the learner" which extends beyond the spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical capacities to learn. The

wholistic intentions behind teaching and learning are integrated across the interrelated and interdependent educational, social, political and economic domains of our students' lives. Ucwalmicw would also include the spiritual aspects of life in this list.

Equally important in this particular RCAP recommendation and in Q'aLaTKú7eMicw sharings is the need to make a difference. The Samahquamicw contributions that emerge in this regard are found in the responses offered to our February 2, 2014 Sharing Circle question about the processes of Ucwalmicw knowledge seeking, making and sharing. Coming to know is concerned with who we will become and Q'aLaTKú7eMicw go further to state that it must also be about "benefit[ting] the collective" (2014). This RCAP recommendation to transform education in ways that facilitate students' capacities for *making a difference* (1996, p. 449) translates in an Ucwalmicw worldview to mean being concerned with the wellbeing of all beings, or all our relations. Again, education needs to benefit the collective.

The second strand I pull from the RCAP report is, "…the importance of action in the transformative education process" (RCAP, 1996, p. 449). I choose this recommendation because ongoing action is key to keeping the values and hopes of the RCAP contributors alive. Q'aLaTKú7eMicw (2014) concurs when they made explicit the need to "live it", "walk the talk" and to "carry ourselves with no push or pull, no judgment", meaning the teachings (and recommendations offered) must be applied in order for them to take effect. Action is required. The Q'aLaTKú7eMicw knowledge sharers told me, "we need to trust again in our ways and in each other" (2014). This particular RCAP call to action maintains political integrity and honors Indigenous voice when weaving entails trusting in Indigenous ways and peoples that are local to the education systems that seek transformation.

In this segment of the chapter, I have unraveled the bulky and broadly concerned RCAP yarn and focused on specific RCAP recommendations that contribute to a post-secondary guiding framework. In the next section, I situate the 2010 Association of Canadian Deans of Education *Accord on Indigenous education* within this warping of the dissertation loom process.

Warp Strand 2: Association of Canadian Deans of Education *Accord on Indigenous Education* (2010)

The next metaphorical ball of warp yarn that I unravel for consideration in this dissertation weaving is the *Accord on Indigenous Education* (2010) (*Accord*) prepared by the Association of Canadian Deans of Education (ACDE). This Canada-wide organization, "…brings together deans, directors and chairs of education in Canadian universities and university-colleges [and is] … committed to pan-Canadian leadership in professional and teacher education, educational research, and policy in universities and university-colleges" (ACDE, n.d., Para. 1). The ACDE and its "…61-institution membership, recognized the role it could play as an association for educators in order to push for improvements in Indigenous education" (Maclean's, 2010, Para. 2) Under the leadership of Indigenous scholars Drs. Jo-Ann Archibald, John Lundy, Cecilia Reynolds and Lorna Williams, the *Accord on Indigenous Education* established a vision and set of guiding principles for realizing enhanced outcomes in the signatories' Indigenous programs and research (ACDE, 2010). While the intended reach of the *Accord* is its implementation across education departments and faculties, the organization hopes that it will become the model for change across the entire post-secondary institution (Maclean's, 2010). Buker (2014) outlines the scope of the Accords' aspirations:

> The Accord's progressive goals give agency to the membership in the ACDE to foster respectful and welcoming learning environments; inclusive curricula; culturally responsive pedagogies; mechanisms for valuing and promoting Indigeneity in education; culturally responsive assessment; affirming and revitalizing Indigenous languages; retention strategies for Indigenous education leadership; and to foster non-Indigenous learners and Indigeneity through reflection and dialogue. (p. 25)

Eight pages long, the Accord is formatted into six segments that begin with Section 1: Preamble, which moves on to Section 2: The Context for Indigenous Education in Canada; Section 3: ACDE and Indigenous Education; Section 4: Vision; Section 5: Principles; and Section 6: Goals (ACDE, 2010). The vision behind the *Accord* is that "… Indigenous identities, cultures, languages, values, ways of knowing, and knowledge systems will flourish in all Canadian learning settings" (ACDE, 2010, p. 4), extending its reach to include classrooms beyond the university campus.

The *Accord* begins by defining the term Aboriginal, and all the rights to cultures, languages, customs and knowledges that come with it, as articulated in Section 35 of the 1982 Canadian Constitution Act. It then acknowledges the local and global impact that colonization has on Indigenous Knowledge Systems and indicates that within the *Accord*, "… the use of the term Indigenous focuses attention on Aboriginal education in Canada, while at the same time engaging in a movement to address global educational issues" (ACDE, 2010, p. 1). The context for Indigenous education is described in a fashion similar to the RCAP report, recapping the need for improved participation and success rates for Aboriginal students to be realized through increased engagement with Indigenous knowledge systems in their educational experiences. The document authors advocate for transformative education that rejects the "status quo," and moves beyond "closing the gap" discourse (p. 2) towards the well-being of First Peoples and their communities. The ACDE "… recognizes that it has a role and responsibility to expand educators' knowledge about and understanding of Indigenous education" (2010, p.2) in light of colonial processes that have made Indigenous knowledges invisible. The *Accord* highlights that the absence of a diversity in ways of being, doing, knowing and valuing in post-secondary systems leads to high rates of social issues for Indigenous peoples. This practice is then further linked to the low graduation rates of First Peoples' students that were, at the time the *Accord* was written, below 50 percent nationally with only 8 percent of Aboriginal students attaining university degrees (p. 2). Like the RCAP, the ACDE framework references responses to long-time, dire statistics, including those put forward by Indigenous peoples and organizations, large national studies and government commissions. Common across these studies is a call for the political and educational involvement of First Peoples to ensure "…that Indigenous knowledge systems have a central position in educational policy, curriculum, and pedagogy, in order to make significant improvements to Indigenous education" (ACDE, 2010, p.2). It is further acknowledged that such actions are taking place at local, regional, provincial and national levels and an exceptional example of curricular and pedagogical contributions is provided citing the (2007) Canadian Council on Learning's (CCL) Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Center's (ALKC) three models of learning. These paradigms are based on the worldviews of First

Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. Wholism and life-long learning are commonalities found across all three of these online accessible resources[48].

The *Accord* concludes, as did the RCAP sixteen years earlier, that the "…majority of Aboriginal students attend public schools and public post-secondary institutions where there is often no or limited influence on Indigenous curricular and organizational matters" (ACDE, 2010, p. 4). It is further maintained that teacher and graduate education programs view Indigenous knowledge systems as having "…limited application to students in general" and the ACDE "…believes it can enhance the profile and benefits of Indigenous education within its member institutions and to the public at large" (ACDE, 2010, p.4). This is the purpose and intent of the ACDE's *Accord on Indigenous Education* and signatories to it agree to endeavour towards the vision and goals of the *Accord* in all of their education programs and research initiatives. Page 4 indicates that, "…signatories will use this *Accord* to guide program review and transformation, working collaboratively to prioritize the educational purposes and values of Indigenous communities and people" (ACDE, 2010) and agree to share with other participants their successes and practices. Perhaps most significantly, the *Accord*,

> supports a socially just society for Indigenous peoples; reflects a respectful, collaborative, and consultative process with Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge holders; promotes multiple partnerships among educational and Indigenous communities; [and] values the diversity of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing and learning. (ACDE, 2010, p. 5)

Rationale for inclusion of the *Accord on Indigenous Education*

I include the *Accord on Indigenous Education* as a foundational warp strand for this dissertation weaving because it provides one pathway toward implementing the sweeping recommendations disseminated in the RCAP report in the university environment. The *Accord on Indigenous Education* is an excellent example of mobilizing Indigenous aspirations as present in the ICIE (1972) and RCAP (1996) documents. The *Accord* models activating those components that apply in the post-secondary institution which is of primary concern in this PhD study. I further include

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[48] The three resources are available here:
http://www.afn.ca/uploads/files/education2/state_of_aboriginal_learning_in_canada-final_report,_ccl,_2009.pdf
Retrieved May 1, 2018.

this commitment to Indigenous education given the possibilities that *The Accord* principles and goals have to effect change in how pre-service K-12 teachers are trained, simultaneously addressing both post-secondary and elementary through high school classrooms.

Contributions of the *Accord on Indigenous Education*

Since committing to the *Accord on Indigenous Education*, many changes have been noted in a number of post-secondary institutions, particularly within teacher education programs. Poitras, Pratt and Danyluk (2016) write about the effect that mandatory Indigenous content courses in second year programs is having on teacher candidates. They report that "…many students became motivated to realize their role and responsibility in affecting positive social change" (p.105) towards enacting what Shulman (2005) calls a signature pedagogy framed around integrity or what is deemed to be "good work" (p. 53) in the teaching profession. Teachers' spheres of influence play a central role in effecting change in the classroom and ultimately in how mainstream society views itself in relation to First Peoples. This particular contribution demonstrates that the ACDE was correct in believing that the *Accord* provided a pathway to cultivating teachers' and mainstream society's perceptions of Indigenous education and worldviews.

Other positive changes that are becoming part of the university experience due to the ongoing implementation of the *Accord* include,

> the development of new courses, the increasing presence of Indigenous educators and Elders in Schools and Faculties of Education and strengthened university-community collaborations. Within courses, it is possible to find increased attention to Indigenous ontology and epistemology, settler identity, colonization and decolonization practices. (Wiens, Hare, Fitznor, Restoule, & Battiste, 2015)

Some examples of *Accord* contributions in universities in the BC lower mainland that serve Ucwalmicw students include the establishment of a professorship in Indigenous Education alongside a requirement for all candidates to successfully complete an Indigenous content course to become certified by the Teacher Education Office at the University of British Columbia. At Simon Fraser University (SFU), a new tenure track hire in Indigenous education and the creation of the Office of Indigenous Education (Pidgeon, 2016) followed that institutions signing of the

Accord. SFU has also charged an advisory committee with overseeing the implementation of this guiding framework across the faculty (Pidgeon, 2016).

Each of these approaches serves to create learning environments that are more familiar and therefore welcoming to Indigenous peoples while enhancing awareness and understandings of the "…the social, cultural, and language backgrounds of their students…" (Banks, et al., 2005, p. 33). This facilitates an increase in the academic achievement of those students while also eliminating disparities.

Understanding the ACDE Accord warp yarns through Ucwalmicw lenses

An overview of the ACDE (2010) document demonstrates that implementation of the *Accord* is expected to foster respectful and welcoming learning environments, inclusive curricula, culturally responsive pedagogies and assessments, mechanisms for valuing and promoting Indigeneity in education, affirming and revitalizing Indigenous languages, Indigenous education leadership, exposing non-Indigenous learners to Indigeneity and culturally respectful Indigenous research. Toward those ends, I identify the following points of clarification made under a number of these anticipated goals to demonstrate which Ucwalmicw community sharings might mobilize ACDE commitments to transforming Indigenous education in ways that foster respectful relationship building. The *Accord* commits to challenging "…existing curriculum frameworks and structures in order that they may engage learners in experiencing the Indigenous world and Indigenous knowledge in a wholistic way" (ACDE, 2010, p. 5). We must proceed with much thought and care when challenging the status quo. This work is not about further dividing First Peoples and Canadians. It is about respect and our responsibilities to and for each other that have been neglected for far too long. When considering this warp yarn the first thing that comes to my mind is the teachings shared with me in Q'aLaTKú7eM in our first Sharing Circle, "RESPECT. Model…respecting everyone and give praise when doing good things, talk in a good way…from the heart" (Q'aLaTKú7eMicw, 2013). Challenging anything that people are familiar with, especially those ways that are the *only* ways that they know and/or have experience with, requires a caring heart, mind and hand if it is to be done in a good way that benefits all. Ucwalmicw teachings center on respect and respect is what is required to weave this blanket of transformation in education together. Twining warp and weft yarns together must be done from the heart with intentions to create a tapestry that is made of strength, beauty and integrity.

A second warp yarn for this dissertation blanket weaving is found in the strand of the *Accord* that promises to "…encourage all students, teacher candidates, and graduate students to explore and question their own sense of power and privilege (or lack thereof) within Canadian society as compared with others in that society" (ACDE, 2010, p. 7). Again, this pattern for change is not an easy one to weave and mindful approaches are needed to ensure that we work side by side towards attaining goals that are meaningful for all of us. Q'aLaTKú7eMicw demonstrated an awareness of the potential discord in doing this important work when they advised me to "start things in a good way… to drum if/when negative or bad feelings are present and to help one another" (2014). Beginning in a good way is critical and I will speak to examples of doing so in a university classroom in chapter six. One must begin and proceed by speaking from the heart about personal experiences in initiating and continuing the work of challenging and questioning that which has always been standard, valid and/or privileged in our education systems. Power and privilege are not always visible or seen as inequitable to those who have them and it can be extremely difficult to consider one's own implicitness in perpetuating the colonizing project. Q'aLaTKú7eMicw taught me that I must be prepared to support students in a substantial way should bad feelings arise in our collaborative weaving of transforming approaches to coming to know. This may or may not include drumming to alleviate feelings of hurt, guilt or denial – that depends on each group of students. However, it most definitely will always require active and non-judgemental listening and responding from the heart with concern for all in mind.

While this document makes explicit the ongoing effects of colonization in Indigenous education, like the RCAP, it primarily sees this as only being problematic for Indigenous students and communities. Engaging with Q'aLaTKú7eMicw teachings to implement these two chosen ACDE strands provides an approach to challenging and questioning the status quo advocated for in the *Accord* that is initiated with good intentions for all. Doing this difficult work together must begin and proceed in a good way and that is not about blaming or shaming. It is about finding meaningful ways to expand upon perspectives of fixing systems so that Indigenous peoples can succeed to realizing that we are all being distracted so that the status quo is not jeopardized. Weaving into the *Accord* warp yarns is proposed in a manner that honors Ucwalmicw ways that strive for respect and harmony in all our relationships. Weaving the ever-changing tapestry of Indigenous education cannot occur in isolation if we hope to initiate and

sustain such relationship building processes. Transformation is about bringing balance to education systems that not only respect but celebrate the great diversity that is found in humanity and present in every pre-school, elementary, high school and university classroom.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *94 Calls to Action* (2015)

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is a critical component of the Indian Residential Schools (IRS) Settlement Agreement and as such "…derives its mandate from an agreement between parties to a lawsuit rather than from unilateral governmental action" (Hughes, 2012, p. 109) as was the case with the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. The TRC was established to provide a safe space in which First Nations, Inuit and Métis students, their families, communities, the Churches, school employees, Government and other Canadians could tell their stories of IRS experiences. "The Commission spent six years travelling to all parts of Canada to hear from the Aboriginal people who had been taken from their families as children, forcibly if necessary, and …heard from more than 6,000 witnesses" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission (b), 2015, p. V). The TRC's focus on truth was viewed as being the critical first step towards reconciling education and relationships. Over the course of its travels the commission documented the truth about what took place and how IRS history continues to affect First Peoples and our communities to this day. A central goal of this process was to raise awareness in mainstream Canada regarding this little-known segment of our shared history, and it "…hopes to guide and inspire Aboriginal peoples and Canadians in a process of reconciliation and renewed relationships that are based on mutual understanding and respect" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission (a), 2015, para. 5). The TRC final report calls on university programs to require that all students in the fields of health, law, social work and education be educated about the Indian Residential School system and the effects it had and continues to have on all segments of First Peoples' lives (Archibald & Hare, 2016). Towards reconciling and healing this traumatic past, the final TRC report makes 94 calls to action that seek to weave respectful relationships among all First Peoples', federal/provincial governments and Canadians.

The TRC 94 Calls to Action is divided into two sections. The *Legacy* section considers child welfare, education (items 6-12), language and culture, health and justice. The *Reconciliation* section addresses several agents and documents that include Canadian

governments, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Royal Proclamation, Covenant of Reconciliation, Settlement Agreement Parties of the United Nations, Equity for Aboriginal Peoples in the legal system, and the National Council for Reconciliation. It further identifies specific actions to be taken in relation to the following: professional development and training for public servants, church apologies and reconciliation, education for reconciliation (items 62-65), youth programs, museums and archives, missing children and burial information, National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, Commemoration, media and reconciliation, sports and reconciliation, business and reconciliation and newcomers to Canada.

The calls specific to education presented in the *Legacy* half of the TRC report begin with a recommendation to repeal Section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada that is the *Correction of Child by Force* law. Teachers and parents may use this section of the Criminal Code as a defence in cases of violence against children[49]. When one considers the diverse forms and extent of abuse endured by First Peoples' children in the residential school system, it is obvious why this is a necessary first step towards reconciling education systems. Having Section 43 remain in the Criminal Code compromises the integrity of relationship building to come because it could be construed as not learning from a very dark and harmful past.

Next items include calls for the government to begin the collaborative work of closing the gaps that exist in education and employment success between First Peoples and non-Indigenous Canadians. The need to eliminate the funding discrepancies between on and off reserve schooled children and to publish annual reports regarding these changes is noted as being necessary, as is the need to monitor the educational and income circumstances of First Peoples in Canada in comparison to non-Aboriginal Canadians. Towards transforming education for First Peoples, this report's authors call on the government to work with First Peoples on establishing legislation that commits sufficient funding to the extent that the education gap is closed within one generation. The principles of this proposed legislation seek to facilitate the following: increasing levels of educational attainment; development and facilitation of culturally appropriate curricula; including language credit courses to ensure the survival of Indigenous language; parental and community control of and participation in their children's educations; recognition and honoring of Treaties; and the provision of adequate funding to address the back log of students seeking post-secondary education (Truth and Reconciliation Canada (a), 2015). The final item in the

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[49] http://www.repeal43.org/ Retrieved May 1, 2018

Legacy section petitions federal, provincial, territorial and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs.

The calls for change expressed in the *Education for reconciliation* section of the TRC Report begin with stressing the need for a joint effort and commitment between all levels of government in collaboration with Survivors, First Peoples and educators to create and make possible the delivery of First Peoples specific curricula by well trained teachers in public and Aboriginal school systems. The establishment of senior-level positions dedicated to the infusion of Indigenous content at the assistant deputy minister level or higher was cited as necessary (Truth and Reconciliation Canada (a), 2015). The TRC calls on the Council of Ministers of Canada to ensure the implementation of such learning resources across all grade levels, the sharing of best practices in doing this work, and the building of intercultural empathy and mutual respect in all classrooms.

The TRC advocates for,

> all levels of government that provide public funds to denominational schools to require such schools to provide an education on comparative religious studies, which must include a segment on Aboriginal spiritual beliefs and practices developed in collaboration with Aboriginal Elders. (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (a), 2015, p. 7)

Reconciliation in this domain begins with dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery, Terra Nullius and Manifest Destiny worldviews that justify and sustain to this day the perception of the need to 'save' First Peoples from their/our 'heathen' ways. Rooted in Eurocentric beliefs that there exists only one truth, one way, one God, these tools of colonization demonize the beauty, strength and interrelatedness of Indigenous forms of spirituality. These Western ideologies mobilized and sustained the residential school systems that sought to annihilate the thousands of years old Indigenous knowledge systems. Therefore, reconciliation requires a broadening of understanding within the diversity of religious systems that contributed so greatly to the trauma of children, families and Nations placed under their tutelage and care for more than one hundred years. Making amends begins by addressing this underlying 'justification' for imposing the IRS system upon Indigenous peoples.

The final call to action in the *education for reconciliation* section of the TRC report speaks to the need to establish a national research program with multi-year funding to further facilitate the reconciliation process. This speaks to the fact that reconciliation efforts require an on-going

commitment if respectful relationship building is to be realized and sustained. This will not happen through three-year projects or taking a three-hour workshop.

Rationale for inclusion of the TRC 94 Calls to Action

One of the most recent Canada-wide compilations of recommendations for transforming Indigenous education, I take up portions of the report as the third strand to be woven into the foundational warping of this dissertation loom. While this strand twines across all levels of education in public and band-operated learning environments, it is fitting in this project because I am deeply concerned with reconciling education systems that have served and continue to serve Indigenous students. Institutions that transform are required to realize this reconciliation. I include the Education specific calls in this dissertation blanket to demonstrate how these calls can be interpreted and implemented in respectful and local ways considering that,

> among educators, there is a general lack of understanding of Indigenous peoples, and of their histories, world views and culture. In particular, there are numerous examples of how stereotypes rooted in racist ideology may inform how Indigenous peoples are viewed in society and in the education system. (Cote-Meek, 2017, para. 4)

Modeling is a key Indigenous pedagogy that responds to frequent expressions of concern around not knowing how to implement these principles and calls to action in good ways. That is the work this dissertation takes up.

Contributions of the TRC 94 Calls to Action

Hughes (2012) and Poitras Pratt and Danyluk (2017) start the discussion off with noting that the TRC calls to action greatly increased public awareness around the truth about residential schools in Canada. Prior to the Conservative government's 2008 apology and this commission's work, many Canadians were unaware of or simply did not believe that this system actually existed. While raising awareness may appear to be a small thing, the reality is that Canadians are beginning to understand exactly what it is that they are asking for when they tell First Peoples to

'get over it'[50]. Perhaps knowing about the trauma that was inflicted upon Indigenous children, their families and communities for over 100 years will bring Settler Canada to realize the strength and resiliency inherent in First Nations' peoples and communities.

The TRC has also "…prompted many Canadian post-secondary institutions to re-examine the ways in which they are providing education to Indigenous students…to engage in the Calls to Action and to take a leadership role in education" (Cote-Meek, 2017, para. 1). Quoting the chair of the TRC, Murray Sinclair, "education is what got us into this mess…[and] education is the key to reconciliation" (Cote-Meek, 2017, para. 1). This is why the Calls to Action must be warped onto this dissertation loom. Shifts in how Indigenous students are being taught include an increased focus on transformative curricula at all levels of education. To demonstrate the institutional scales of interest in doing so, the Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED) (2016) reports that over 130 leaders attended the summit meeting it co-hosted with the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology in Vancouver, BC in October of 2016. The purpose of the Summit was to brainstorm how to implement the TRC Calls to Action in public post-secondary institutions and Indigenous institutes of higher learning. Some of the strategies that arose in the symposium include: the need for institutions to listen and learn from communities; presidents and vice-presidents learning the cultural protocols local to where their universities stand and modeling them in informed ways; spreading responsibility for Indigenous education across the institution; enhanced collaborations between public and Indigenous education systems; and many more.

Another example of institutional commitments to implementing the TRC Calls is SFUs *Aboriginal Reconciliation Council* (ARC). The council was established in 2016 and tasked with connecting with the SFU and local First Nations' communities and organizations for guidance as to how to best utilize the strategic funding of $9 million allotted by the university for projects and initiatives that will support reconciliation efforts over the next three years. The Council centers its work on its Principle 1, which is a "nothing about us, without us" approach to walking this path together (Aboriginal Reconciliation Council, 2016, p. 27). Aligned with the TRC calls

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[50] I often heard this in response to any discussions about First Peoples and colonization in my undergraduate courses. In my graduate courses, I have witnessed this phrase has morphed into 'how can we move forward?' whenever the dialogue centres on settler colonialism. Reconciling, as noted by the TRC, needs to begin with truth telling, acknowledgement and acceptance of past and present wrong doings and we cannot skip over these critical steps if we hope to learn and move forward together in good ways.

and the AVED symposium finding that calls for listening to Indigenous voices, this ARC Principle acknowledges that:

> Aboriginal voice is an essential component of all ARC projects and recommendations. One of the strongest messages to emerge from the campus and community consultations was that for far too long, educational decisions have been made about Aboriginal peoples, not with Aboriginal peoples. True and sustained reconciliation will necessitate participation by Aboriginal peoples in all decisions about Aboriginal peoples at SFU. (Aboriginal Reconciliation Council, 2016, p. 27)

The SFU ARC final report, complete with 34 calls to action and an implementation framework, was presented at a Kwis Ns7eyx̱ (Witness) Ceremony held in Convocation Hall on October 16, 2017 (Aboriginal Reconciliation Council, 2016).

As with the RCAP and the *Accord*, due to space and time constraints, I can weave but a few of the many contributions that the TRC 94 Calls to Action has made into this particular weaving. Everything does something and before considering how Ucwalmicw ways can contribute to this work of transforming education it is good to acknowledge the prominent work that is already taking place. There is much to build upon, or to weave into in this case.

Understanding TRC warp yarns through Ucwalmicw lenses

The items of the TRC report that address education are presently being taken up to varying degrees by a number of Canadian universities and will greatly inform how they proceed in delivering Indigenous education. While the majority of these educational calls to action do focus on Aboriginal populations it is also made clear that resources that address residential schools, histories and pedagogies of First Peoples must be incorporated across the curriculum of all levels of education (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (a), 2015, p. 7). As expressed by numerous scholars there are obstacles that require mindful consideration as to how this work can be done in respectful and meaningful ways. The teachings of Q'aLaTKú7eMicw offer processes and protocols for us to take up in these considerations. One of the TRC's calls to action advocates for the training of teachers to integrate Indigenous knowledges and pedagogies into their practice (Truth and Reconciliation Canada (a), 2015, p. 7). One way that we might honor Ucwalmicw contributions in this domain is by facilitating "…immersion program[s] where we

practice what we are learning" (Q'aLaTKú7eMicw, 2014). As mentioned in the previous section of this chapter, if we hope to see all classrooms led by confident educators who take up this call with integrity and respect, we must immerse teacher candidates in programs that center on Indigenous voice and ways. While Indigenous faculty and Elder support is limited, university leadership could require that all program courses and not just the mandatory single First Nations course, include Indigenous scholarship in weekly assigned readings and course assignment criteria that includes the need to indicate how the course subject matter relates to First Peoples, colonization, decolonization and/or transforming education systems on Turtle Island. Published Indigenous scholarship is a resource that is far more available and accessible at this point in the reconciliation journey. Each course in the program could guide students to seek out, learn from and teach their peers and instructors what they are learning from the local Indigenous scholarship on the topic at hand. This would provide some relief for local Elders and faculty as well as those programs that strive to make connections with these more limited resources.

While accessing published resources is not the entire answer, there is much that can be learned from a great diversity of scholars on Indigenous worldviews and pedagogies as well as Indigenous perspectives of colonization, that would provide a solid and respectful foundation on which to build whenever access to Indigenous practitioners and Elders does come available. Much contextual knowledge and information is accessible via the scholarship. Teacher education programs that require all program educators to include Indigenous assigned readings in all weekly topics and require students to include at least one Indigenous resource in all of their assignments is entirely do-able. In fact, it is a possibility right now. Teacher education programs that model Indigenous content requirements across their entire program would demonstrate that the institution sees the values and strengths that Indigenous Knowledge systems have to offer all subject areas. This would be modeled for the teacher candidates enrolled in the programs while creating the path by walking it for the larger institution in which the programs are housed.

The second TRC Call to Action that I consider utilizing an Ucwalmicw lens is the recommendation to build intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect in student populations (Truth and Reconciliation Commission (a), 2015, p. 7). It is through contemplating invitations like this that I began to see the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw sharings weaving themselves together to form an *all my relations*[51] pedagogy. Two teachings come to me when thinking about

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[51] Or Tákem nsnekwnúkw7a (tack-um-in-shnook-new-kwa) in the Ucwalmicts language

this TRC guiding principle and they are the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw suggestions to always be mindful of "how we carry ourselves…no push, no pull" (Q'aLaTKú7eMicw, 2014) and to remember to "reciprocate, giving goes both ways and through the universe" (Q'aLaTKú7eMicw, 2013). I believe the first Q'aLaTKú7eMicw suggested approach guides us to model the sharing of our own cultural understandings and values (how we carry ourselves) in ways that are centered in respect (no push, no pull). Acknowledging and valuing a diversity of ways of being, doing and knowing is the heart of building intercultural understanding. Empathy and mutual respect become manifest when we engage with protocols and practices that do not seek to push or pull, but instead celebrate and learn from diversity. It is in being genuinely interested in and learning from the cultural values, languages, histories and ways of being that surround us that our ways of being, doing and knowing also become sought out, valued and respected. Curricula must and can provide dedicated space for these intercultural exchanges to take place. I often encourage students to share their own ancestral teachings and values, letting them know that it is important to receive and to give, and that it is through sharing these ways that connections are made.

I now turn to an exploration of the British Columbia Auditor General's 2015 report as the final contributing source of foundational yarn for this dissertation blanket.

British Columbia Auditor General Report (2015)

This *Audit of the Education of Aboriginal Students in the B.C. Public School System* (OAGBC, 2015) was conducted to determine whether or not the Ministry of Education was successful in leading the public-school system to meet the provincial government's commitment to close the gaps in educational outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students (BC Auditor General, 2015). The Auditor General of British Columbia,

> is an independent Officer of the Legislature, appointed by the elected members of the Legislative Assembly for a single term of eight years. Together with her staff, the Auditor General performs financial audits, performance audits and issues other non-audit reports. (2017, para. 1)

The goal of the work conducted by this office is to serve the people of BC and their elected representatives by conducting audits that inform how well the government is managing its responsibilities and resources. The Auditor General is mandated under the Auditor General Act

to assess ministries, Crown corporations and other organizations, like school districts, universities, colleges and health societies and authorities, that are managed by, or accountable to, the provincial government. The financial and performance audits serve as accountability tools that offer "…sound advice and recommendations for improvement" for the audited entities (OAGBC, 2017, para. 3).

The audit this dissertation project is concerned with is the Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia's (OAGBC) 2015 *Audit of the Education of Aboriginal Students in the B.C. Public School System.* The Auditor General stated that "(i)n 2005, the B.C. government publicly committed to close the gaps in education outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students by 2015. At the time, Aboriginal students graduated at a rate of 49%, compared to 82% for non-Aboriginal students" (BC Auditor General, 2015, p. 5). By 2014, 62% of Aboriginal students were graduating and while the number has improved by 13%, the gap has not yet been closed. The OAGBC reports that there are still some school districts in BC that graduate less than 50% of their Aboriginal student population. Based on the audit findings, Carol Bellringer, current BC Auditor General, suggests that the Ministry of Education (ministry) "…must collaborate with boards of education, superintendents, and Aboriginal leaders and communities on a single, shared, system-wide strategy to close the gaps for Aboriginal students. The ministry needs to intervene when results are not being achieved" (BC Auditor General, 2015, p. 3).

The final report for this inquiry concluded:

> Despite government's public commitment in 2005, the Ministry of Education… had not fully exercised its duties and powers to close the gaps for Aboriginal students. Specifically, the ministry: had not provided the education system with sufficient leadership and direction to close the gaps, undertook limited analysis of the wide range of student outcome data it monitored, to understand trends and outcomes for Aboriginal students and inform change, reported on outcomes but not what was effective in closing the gaps. (BC Auditor General, 2015, p.5)

This OAGBC report demonstrates the significant role that evaluation plays in keeping ministries accountable to the promises they make regarding Aboriginal education and specifically, the important role that leadership, and modelling, play in walking new pathways.

While First Peoples fall under the fiduciary responsibility of the federal government, for the most part, as demonstrated in chapter two of this dissertation, Indigenous peoples are being served by provincial education systems, making this report entirely relevant to this dissertation. If Ucwalmicw are not completing high school, the transformative changes this work seeks to affect in post-secondary institutions will not have the opportunity to benefit Ucwalmicw. The Audit indicates that 62,000 Indigenous students (9,000 of whom are status) attend public institutions in BC (BC Auditor General, 2015, p. 7). Furthermore, this audit is specific to British Columbia and references the activities of school districts that are located within and around the Ucwalmicw Territories, bringing a much-needed local lens to the discussions at hand. Moreover, the BC Auditor report focuses on the K-12 system of education, and importantly, recommends that the ministry to whom these schools are accountable "…fully exercise its duties and powers to close the gaps for Aboriginal students" (BC Auditor General, 2015, p.5).

The fact that the OAGBC begins its report by acknowledging that, "We focused on Aboriginal students, but our recommendations should improve the public education system in ways that will benefit all students" (OAGBC, 2017, p.3) warrants, in my opinion, its inclusion in this study because it aligns well with the concept of *all my relations*.

Contributions of the British Columbia Auditor General Report (2015)

In reviewing the audit, I see the potential for many positive outcomes as a result of this report. First, it holds the province accountable to its own 2005 goal to close the gaps in First Peoples' education completion rates in BC schools. Second, the OAGBC made eleven recommendations, all of which have been accepted by the ministry. Third, the audit calls on the ministry "…to do more to support non-racist learning environments: every child should feel safe; Aboriginal history, language and culture need to be valued" (BC Auditor General, 2015, p. 3). All of these recommendations echo the sentiments of ICIE (1972), the RCAP (1996) and the TRC 94 Calls to Action (2015) and provide pathways to the ministry's capacity to effect positive change for Indigenous students in K-12. One contribution the OAGBC report makes is it is an example of modelling transparency and accountability to the diversity of commitments that institutions are making to transform Aboriginal education. Examples named in this thesis include the *Aboriginal*

Education Enhancement Agreements of British Columbia, the Association of Deans of Education Council's Canada-wide *Accord on Indigenous Education* and Simon Fraser University's *Aboriginal Reconciliation Council*.

Most importantly, I see this report as demonstrating the need to view transformation as a cyclical process that begins with and sustains ongoing dialogue between education systems and First Peoples and our communities. This audit further models the need to monitor and assess actions implemented, to share and build upon successful strategies and to make adjustments on those that are not leading to positive change. The continuing role that leadership plays is cited time and time again indicating that this is a process that cannot just be delegated; all levels, ministry, education boards, First Peoples' organizations, families and communities must work together to effect and sustain change.

Understanding British Columbia Auditor General Report warp yarns through Ucwalmicw lenses

The OAGBC found that the curriculum developed in collaboration with the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) namely, BC First Nations Studies 12 and English First Peoples 10, 11 and 12 were realizing limited offerings and enrolment numbers across school districts. The Auditor General further indicated that First Peoples' communities and leadership felt the curriculum did not accurately represent, in particular, issues involving racism, Indian residential schools and legislation like the Indian Act (BC Auditor General, 2015). These are a sampling of some of those difficult to look at realities that I see as being easier to avoid in many classrooms. Yet, this is the very work that needs to be done to facilitate meaningful change and relationship building. The QaLaTKu7eMicw (2013) teaching that speaks to this is the need to "consider all aspects of the learner, emotional, spiritual, physical and intellectual". Those beliefs or mindsets and practices, past and present, that teachers and students prefer to steer clear of have lasting and ongoing effects on the emotional, spiritual, physical and intellectual wellbeing of Indigenous students. Facing our shared histories and current state of Settler/First Peoples relationships is not merely an intellectual endeavor. Approaching these difficult topics from a wholistic perspective begins with our accepting this fact which in turn prepares us for the arduous work of genuinely looking at past and present forms of injustice and how we

unknowingly (or knowingly) perpetuate the colonizing project by acting on what we do and do not yet know. This will require tending to the wholistic well-being of all students who are open to filling in the gaps of their own knowledge in relation to the First Peoples of Turtle Island.

The OAGBC report referenced how the abilities of the ministry to take action have been strengthened, including the introduction of Bill 11-*Education Statutes Amendment Act 2015*. The OAGBC saw this amendment as a ministry change that "… will likely impact the framework within which policies, programs and initiatives relevant to Aboriginal students are delivered" (BC Auditor General, 2015, p. 24). This contribution is significant considering the Auditor General made note on numerous occasions within this report of the need for the ministry to take action in cases where districts were not implementing curriculum or creating strategies to attain goals set around improved academic outcomes for Indigenous students. The advice Q'aLaTKú7eMicw (2014) offered me equally applies to the ministry accountable to First Peoples attending public schools and it too must take up the call to "LEAD … walk the talk!" The OAGBC found that the ministry "…had not engaged boards, Aboriginal leaders and communities, and other education partners to develop a shared system-wide strategy for Aboriginal education, with goals and targets focused on closing the gaps" (BC Auditor General, 2015, p. 28). The Ministry of Education must model relationship building, listening to and mobilizing what it is hearing from all stakeholders in this process towards designing a more meaningful pathway to, and hopefully transformed definition for, success in Indigenous education outcomes. The ministry must walk the talk behind its commitment to close gaps by supporting the districts, teachers, families and students for whom this promise was made. This means taking action when and where it is needed, particularly with schools that are struggling with enacting change in how they serve Indigenous student populations.

Chapter Summary

In this fifth chapter of the dissemination process I untangle the four balls of yarn that will twine together to form the necessarily sturdy foundational warp yarn onto which I will weave the dissertation blanket (chapter six). As I teased out the knots I paid close attention to the tension that exists in each ball towards further explicating the intentions behind each principle and recommendation document. It is important to refer to documents like those taken up in chapter

five, however due to how they are cited, RCAP, TRC, ACDE and OAG, it is easy to forget that all are founded on Indigenous voices and First Peoples' communities' ambitions. We need to continue to honor those voices as they provide respectful pathways to connecting with the Nations Indigenous to the lands on which institutions of education stand.

I began with the 1996 *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* report that echoes key elements of the *Indian Control of Indian Education* policy paper. The RCAP focuses on how education systems can better support the inclusion and success rates of First Peoples' students through the incorporation of Indigenous content in the curricula. This influential and oft referenced report further emphasizes the need to provide support services and Indigenous teachers and staff to assist in managing the "deficits" and/or retention of the Aboriginal student. Chapter two of this dissertation reveals how some of the RCAP warp yarns have affected the tapestries of the B.C. K-12 system through the implementations of *Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements* and in the examples of how K-12- post secondary systems endeavor to incorporate culturally based/responsive approaches to Indigenous schooling. Successes in on-reserve schooling outlined by Bell (2004) re-iterate the aspirations of RCAP contributors who consistently put forth the need for locally controlled education, further demonstrating this 1996 report's ongoing value.

The 2010 Association of ACDE's *Accord on Indigenous Education* is a guiding document that was designed through the collaboration of a select group of Indigenous scholars and faculty representing a number of Canadian universities. The *Accord* characterizes the second strand that twines into and extends upon the RCAP document in that while it also advocates the need to improve the engagement and success rates of First Peoples' students through the transformation of education, it goes a step further to note that the responsibilities lie with educators who must come to understand and respectfully implement Indigenous Knowledge systems within all of their classrooms. This *Accord* also brings to light the fact that thirty-seven years after ICIE was endorsed and fourteen years after RCAP's findings, Indigenous students, for the most part, continue to engage with systems that are minimally or in no way reflective of the influences of Indigenous communities or organizational matters.

The third strand woven into the warp yarn of this dissertation, is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *94 Calls to Action.* Like the RCAP and the *Accord*, the education sections of the TRC report focus on the need to close the gaps that exist and continue to grow

between First Peoples and Canadians in their education and economic attainment levels. Again, the need to incorporate Indigenous ways and histories in all levels of curricula is cited as being critical to engaging, retaining and successfully graduating the Aboriginal student population. The definition of reconciliation that I gather from the items put forth in the Education section of the 94 Calls to Action appears to be dependent upon improving the educational and economic success rates of First Peoples in Canada and re-educating Canadians on First Peoples' histories, Treaties and the Residential School System. While the infusion of these across education systems would begin to address the gaps in mainstream society's knowledge and understanding, it is not explicitly noted as being critical to the building of respectful relationships with Canadians that center on truth telling.

The fourth and final warp strand woven into this dissertation blanket brings a local perspective to this weaving and that is the Auditor General of BC's 2015 report on the education of Aboriginal students in BC public schools. Focused on determining how the Ministry of Education was fairing with its 2005 commitment to bring parity between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal graduation rates by 2015, this report offers valuable insights into understanding the processes that follow taking up recommendations and guiding principles as expressed in the previous three yarns. We need to think beyond mobilizing calls to action and ensure that there are ongoing discussions with First Peoples and our communities as we design strategic plans that include evaluating outcomes, sharing successes and collaborating on making adjustments if and when they are needed. This process of working together is as important to realizing the objectives shared in all of the reports and accords available to us because it is the process of respectful relationship building that greatly matters and is being modeled. It is these respectful relationships that will sustain these processes of transforming Aboriginal education for generations to come.

While there is a significant span of years between these selected balls of yarn, the articulation of approaches to transforming Indigenous education remain the same. All focus on the needs of the Aboriginal student and how systems can adapt to meet and support them. This does not define transformation and will never lead to Indigenous education because it centers on fixing the "Indian Problem". Even in instances where the discussion does not center on the Aboriginal student, and these instances are too few and far between in all the four documents reviewed in this chapter, the focus shifts just long enough to state that all Canadians need to learn

about First Peoples and their histories, issues, ways of being and contributing. Furthermore, this understanding of and approach to educational transformation continues to advocate for First Peoples' successful integration into and completion of mainstream, colonizing, education. In chapter six, I illustrate the processes of weaving Q'aLaTKú7eMicw sharings into these foundational warp yarns and consider the significance of Indigenous pedagogies in contributing to the ever-emerging tapestries of Indigenous education.

Chapter 6: Ucwalmicw Weaving on the Warp of Indigenous Education (Weft Yarns)

Weaving involves crossing two threads, the warp and the weft, one vertical and the other horizontal, one stretched taut and the other undulating and intertwined with the first. To produce the textile, it is necessary for these two threads to be bound, otherwise each will remain a fragile and fluttering potentiality... (Valcarenghi, 1994, p. 9)
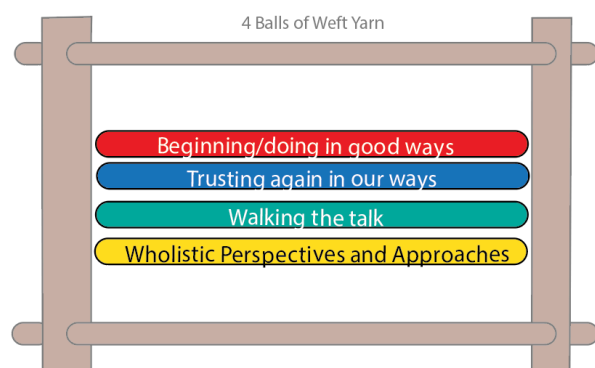
Chapter Overview

Figure 20 Ucwalmicw Weft Yarns

Having warped the dissertation loom with a fine selection of Indigenous education recommendations and policies, I take up the weft yarns, being four Ucwalmicw protocols and processes, namely *being and doing in good ways with intention, trusting again in our ways, walking the talk,* and *wholistic perspectives and approaches* (Figure 20: *Ucwalmicw Weft Yarns).* With these teachings, I contribute to the diversity of ways in which the RCAP, the ACDE, the TRC, the OAGBC calls to action are being and can be mobilized towards the transformation of Aboriginal education. I do and present this work with the highest of intentions that seek to be inclusive of *all my relations* in the processes of revisioning the systems that serve, albeit in different ways, to assimilate Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. The guidance of my Samahquamicw community came through two in-community Sharing Circle gatherings and one survey activity facilitated at a Samahquam general membership meeting. Through communing on group responses to the three guiding questions, the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw provided the points at which I was to begin the physical, emotional and spiritual aspects of coming to know. The contributions of Q'aLaTKú7eMicw have greatly informed my teaching pedagogies in the FNST 101, 403, and 286 classes that I have taught over the past 4 years. It is by implementing the Samahquamicw protocols and processes in my teaching practices that I came to deeper understandings of how Samahquamicw contributions address the larger research question for this PhD project:

1. In what ways can Ucwalmicw knowledge system processes disrupt mainstream understandings of Aboriginal education?

As decided by the Sharing Circle groups, individuals are not named[52] in the dissemination processes, and because everyone contributed their own understandings, memories, clarifications and/or asked questions that led us deeper into our groups' understanding, the contributors asked to be cited as the collective, Q'aLaTKú7eMicw. I will use this name and the year to differentiate between the two Sharing Circle sessions when citing the information shared in this writing of the dissertation blanket. Doing so connects me to my ancestors and the generations to come when I remember the translation of the Ucwalmicw word Q'aLaTKú7eM shared with us during our discussions on how to cite community contributions. I was told that an Ucwalmicw Elder, Donald Alex Peters, explained that the name describes a specific place on Ucwalmicw territories where, "the stillness of the lake goes into the river" (Q'aLaTKú7eMicw, 2014). The point where this happens is one of the ancestral locations of Samahquamicw settlement and the largest of our communities is located there today. The Q'aLaTKú7eMicw community member who shared Peter's explanation with us went on to embed the word with metaphor, noting that the lake was like the pool of ancestral knowledge through which the Ucwalmicw of today and those yet to come flow (the river). While we honour Ucwalmicw protocols around coming together to do this important work, as presented in chapter four of this thesis, we begin and proceed in good ways that also honour the experiences of changing times and experiences that flow in and through these ancestral teachings and values.

I begin this sixth chapter with some discussion on each of these four pedagogies and protocols and share how the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw people shared and/or modeled them for me. I then demonstrate how the teachings intertwine with the sharings of other Indigenous scholars to further demonstrate that while there is great diversity between our Indigenous Nations, there are many common underlying values and protocols that continue to exist between us as well. Next, I weave the four selected Ucwalmicw ways into the policies and recommendations that were teased out and identified in chapter five, illustrating how Ucwalmicw ways can contribute to the transformation of Aboriginal education. I close the chapter with an overview of the final chapter

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[52] The exception is Donald Alex Peters (Ucwalmicw) who had passed on to the Spirit World long before our Sharing Circles and was therefore not present to agree to being named as Q'aLaTKú7eMicw for the purposes of this dissemination process. I therefore acknowledge him as the source of this translation of Q'aLaTKú7eM.

of this dissertation, *Reading and Gifting the Dissertation Blanket.*

Weaving Intersections

Because this chapter centers on the processes of mobilizing Q'aLaTKú7eMicw protocols and processes, it is organized under four of the teachings shared by Q'aLaTKú7eMicw for the purposes of this study. However, to assist with keeping track of the eight policies drawn from the four documents reviewed in chapter five (the warp yarns of this weaving), I first provide an organizing table (Table 2: *Weaving Intersections*) to illustrate which Ucwalmicw teachings (weft yarns) are being woven into each. Each of the columns represents one of the four Ucwalmicw protocol or practice weft yarns being taken up in this process and the color of the column matches the color of the weft yarn woven into the actual blanket. Two warp (policy) yarns are identified under (taken up by) each of the Ucwalmicw teachings to demonstrate how local knowledge can mobilize policy to transform Aboriginal education. As the opening quote notes, the warp (policy) and weft (Ucwalmicw ways) yarns must come together to produce the textile (Indigenous education).

Table 2 Weaving Intersections

Ucwalmicw protocols and practices (Four Weft yarns)				
Policies (warp yarns)	**1. Being and doing in good ways with intention**	**2. Trusting again in our ways**	**3. Walking the Talk**	**4. Wholistic perspectives and approaches**
	RCAP Warp Yarn: Facilitating students' coming to know in their educational, social, political and economical journeys towards making a difference	**OAGBC Warp Yarn:** Address obstacles to ensuring safe, non-racist, culturally relevant learning environments	**RCAP Warp Yarn:** The importance of action in the transformative education process	**ACDE Warp Yarn:** To challenge existing curriculum frameworks and structures in order that they may engage learners in experiencing the Indigenous world and Indigenous knowledge in a wholistic way
	ACDE Warp Yarn: To encourage all students, teacher candidates, and graduate students to explore and question their own sense of power and privilege (or lack thereof) within Canadian society as compared with others in that society	**TRC Warp Yarn:** Building intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect in student populations	**TRC Warp Yarn:** Training teachers for integrating Indigenous knowledges and teaching methods into their practice	**OAGBC Warp Yarn:** Provide all students with a curriculum that addresses the past and present effects of the colonization of Aboriginal Peoples in British Columbia

Articulating and Weaving Ucwalmicw teachings into Indigenous Education policies and recommendations

While weaving the horizontal pattern thread on the loom, we touch each vertical thread of our belief. In just this way, a conscious life is woven thread by thread (Merrill & Estell, 2007, p. 5).

Being and doing in good ways with intention: red weft yarn

In response to our first Sharing Circle (December 2013) guiding question, "What are the protocols around knowledge seeking and making in regard to Stl'atl'imx education?" many thoughts and ways of being were expressed in a dialogue style format. While I call the sessions Circles, we did not sit in a Circle or proceed in rounds with each person taking a turn to respond. Contributors shared their thoughts as they arose, which triggered others' thoughts and questions as well as clarifications and/or provisions of examples being offered throughout the session. The first Ucwalmicw teaching that I have opted to take up from this first session in this weaving process is the *being and doing in good ways with intention* warp yarn (numbered P10 in the chapter four dissemination of community contributions). I have not heard Samahquamicw community Elders or practitioners verbalize what "being and doing in good ways with intention" specifically means because I have learned through listening to their words and observing their actions that our knowledge-sharers live and model it for us in their daily actions. A Samahquamicw Elder demonstrated this for me at the second community Sharing Circle (February 2014) when she unpacked the drum making kits she brought with her, noting that we must observe how to be and then enact these ways in our own lives (QaLaTKu7eMicw, 2014). Examples of *being and doing in good ways with intention* that arose in our discussions following the expression of this protocol are the need to drum when there are bad feelings or something bad has happened and the need to make ancestral offerings whenever we share food together at gatherings like these. Being and doing in good ways with intention centers on teachings of interconnectedness and respect. Maintaining harmony and balance requires respecting the fact that we are all connected. Everything we do affects those around us and we strive to be and do in good ways when we are cognizant of the fact that we are all part of one interrelating tapestry. Tug on or tear one yarn and the entire fabric shifts or begins to unravel. Awareness of this teaching is made evident in the *Non-interference* story where even though the young girl found

the box intriguing, her respect for all beings guided her to place it back on the water so that it could continue on its journey. It is through living the teachings that are demonstrated for us in our daily relations that we model and thereby become teachers of the teachings. "Ideally, teaching implies setting an example by being the example…" (Akan, 1999, p. 17) and this is closely connected to the teal weft yarn, *walk the talk*. It is in the *processes* of weaving together observations of how our Elders and community members are with listening to the words that they share and then putting that into action. When we do so in our own lives we connect on a *wholistic* level (yellow weft yarn) with what it means to *be and do in good ways with intention*. This is why the processes of learning are central to Indigenous knowledge systems. Being and doing in good ways with intention cannot be fully understood using only our intellect. Intention is the spiritual motivator of our being and doing; it is the strand that connects us to everything around us when we have good thoughts and aspirations for others. These "[o]ther ways of knowing something *must* be introduced if we are to evolve into a more enlightened society" (Aluli-Meyer, 2008, p. 224), if Aboriginal education is to be transformed and transforming. While the impetus behind this study is to transform systems to ensure positive environments for Ucwalmicw peoples, the mobilization of the spirit *behind* Indigenous teachings of interconnectedness and harmonious relationships grounded in concepts of balance and spirituality are good intentions for *all our relations*. Indigenous education cannot take place in isolation because, whether we acknowledge it or not, we are all connected. *Being and doing in good ways* with intention for Ucwalmicw education is simultaneously having good intentions for all of us. *Other ways of knowing* referred to above by Aluli-Meyer include experiential and wholistic ways of coming to know, or as she says the "triangulation of meaning" (2008, p. 217). To focus on only our intellectual capacities is to neglect the other key, equally (perhaps more) important human competencies that, when also honed, facilitate *being and doing in good ways* with intentions that place us on the path to becoming wholly human (Akan, 1999; Aluli-Meyer, 2008; Cajete, 1994). This Ucwalmicw protocol is all about behaving in a manner that enacts our good intentions for what we will all become and how we will maintain harmony and balance within our interconnectedness. It is evident to me that some of the intentions behind current education systems remain tethered to curricula and pedagogies that mold graduates' perspectives and values to fit within the dominant framework of what it means to be a fully contributing Canadian citizen. Becoming fully *human* through knowledge seeking, making and mobilizing

requires us to engage with not only our intellectual, but also the emotional, spiritual and physical attributes available to us so that we can fully experience and express our humanity as opposed to merely our citizenship within a state construct. Mobilizing from this spiritual center is to begin and proceed with the best of intentions for the good of all; "…to look to the mountain" (Cajete, 1994, p. 115) towards gaining those highest perspectives and achieving the best outcomes in our educational and life journeys which are also interconnected, not detached, aspects of our lives. This applies to *all our relations* for,

> Historically, people treated each other … with the highest respect no matter where they walked or who they encountered, the four-legged or the two-legged… The traditional teachings state that, in order for us to live with nature, we have to respect it. Once we respect it, we never mistreat it. This is part of the path of walking with dignity. (Ormiston, 2012, p. 5)

Ormiston's sharing of this Tlingit[53] teaching articulates an important aspect of *being and doing in good ways*. It is this respect for all life and centering our intentions on the wellbeing of all that are key features of this Q'aLaTKú7eMicw protocol. "Walking with dignity" is intertwined with and dependent upon walking with integrity and this is a path we can better stay on when our intentions concern everything and everyone to which we are connected and related. To begin in a good way is to begin with respect and concern for all with the intention of building and sustaining ethical and harmonious relationships (Ormiston, 2012). The Saulteaux[54] metaphor of walking and talking,

> is more than metaphor but is also a direct and clear statement of the personal ethical responsibility of teachers and educators to care intimately for [our students] and to live in such a way that our words reflect the way we live. (Akan, 1999, p. 16)

The Ucwalmicw way of *being and doing in good ways*, is much more than a metaphor or saying, it is a protocol that requires not merely academic analysis for its inclusion in this

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[53] The Tlingit People are the Original Peoples of what is now known as Southeast Alaska (http://www.ccthita.org/about/history/index.html Retrieved May 1, 2018)

[54] The Saulteaux First Nation is part of the Ojibwa or Chippewa Nation and is located in what is now known as Northern Saskatchewan (http://www.saulteauxfn.ca/community_profile.html Retrieved May 1, 2018).

dissertation but also walking it, living it, and then reflecting on the understandings that come from doing so and weaving *that* into the dissertation blanket.

Harmony, non-interference and egalitarianism are all examples of the underlying intentions behind Indigenous Knowledge Systems and I argue that *intention* is the motivating spirit behind Ucwalmicw teachings. Motivated by the manifestations of our good intentions for all is a prime example of vigor in IKS.

> …the Tlingit principles guide the process by which I can conduct myself "in a good way…" [they] allow me to think through ethical issues such as protocols of gifting participants, how and where to meet them, how to offer respect to participant narratives, and my responsibility to share what I have learned once this dissertation is complete. (Ormiston, 2012, p. 97)

Ormiston's contribution guides me to share one way in which I endeavor to *walk the talk* with this first Ucwalmicw teaching. It has been very illuminating for me to be thinking, writing and speaking about these ways of being while teaching in a variety of university classrooms as listed in the introductory chapter of this thesis. Keeping in mind the Indigenist principles that guide me, I am consistently reminded to enact what I am talking about with my students. Considering I begin the first class in all courses with discussions on *being and doing in good ways*, self-determination, responsibilities and political integrity require that I also *walk the talk.* For this reason, I do my best to consistently be cognizant of my mindset when developing lesson plans, assignments and/or grading papers and exams. I plan and teach with *intention* because I want to make a difference in students' lives and in the university environment towards

1. Being and doing in good ways with intention

RCAP Warp Yarn: Facilitating students' coming to know in their educational, social, political and economical journeys towards making a difference

facilitating transformative education. I am mindful of the fact that I am accountable to the good intentions behind QaLaTKu7eMicw sharings gifted to me during the community engagement phases of this research. The daily, behind the scenes tasks of my educator role are designed, delivered, facilitated and evaluated in *good ways with good intentions* as I endeavor to honor my responsibilities to *all my relations*.

How do we apply *being and doing in good ways* with intention to the RCAP recommendation that suggests that to transform education we *must facilitate students' coming to know in their educational, social, political and economic journeys towards making a difference*? I am working on this one right now with five different sections of FNST 101. The way I begin with each new group of students is critical to proceeding with them in good ways over the

semester. I am finding that the most important aspect of this approach is to consistently verbalize what I am doing and why. I begin each semester by impressing upon my students how important it is to me that they feel comfortable and a sense of belonging in our classroom. We engage in a number of activities towards that end including in depth discussions on what 'all my relations' means, ending with the statement that everyone in that room is related from an Ucwalmicw perspective. I flesh out what this means because these understandings come from worldviews that many have never encountered before. I inform the students that to honor the teachings of Tákem nsnekwnúkw7a, I am responsible for all my relations; I am responsible for them. The last thing I want to do is make a student uncomfortable and yet that comes with the territory in First Nations Studies 101 classes which are all about colonization. To mitigate this, an activity based on *First Nations Codes of Ethics* is facilitated during our first class of the semester. Students take turns reading aloud an example of a traditional First Nations code of ethics and then engage in a process of consensus decision making to determine what will go on their group's Code of Conduct. Only those points that **everyone** agrees to honor make it onto the final list. This protocol mobilizes honoring the importance of everyone's preferences and commitments to how they are willing and able to participate in and engage with their classmates, educator and guest speakers. I make clear that this is not just a lesson plan activity to kill time and that we will review the code throughout the semester to check in on how we are living up to it as well as make any additions or changes the students see as needed.

Indigenous pedagogies, or as I am coming to see them, protocols, are given much space and time in several of the lectures and class activities over our thirteen weeks together as a community. We *begin in a good way* by making connections with Ucwalmicw/Indigenous protocols and practices, with the territories on which we meet and with each other. I make explicit that the work we are going to do together needs to be done in a good way if it is to be meaningful, if it is to be more than just a job for me, and if it is to be more than simply three credits for them. I explain that I am there to make a difference, to live the teachings of *all my relations* so that they too are inspired to expand their own perceptions towards making a difference in all areas of their lives. Presenting the possibilities of fully engaging in a classroom environment in ways that extend beyond the typical monocultural expectations of mainstream classrooms inspires critical thought and actions in regard to students' educational, social, political and economic life journeys.

I find that I speak from my heart a lot, particularly when articulating the intentions behind, and when engaging with, Ucwalmicw/Indigenous protocols and processes. I think it is because I am genuinely concerned with how the students are doing in regard to facing, for some for the first time ever, the truths about Canadian and First Peoples' past and present relationship. I make the case for viewing the world from a diversity of perspectives not only for First Peoples' sake

1. Being and doing in good ways with intention

ACDE Warp Yarn: To encourage all students, teacher candidates, and graduate students to explore and question their own sense of power and privilege (or lack thereof) within Canadian society as compared with others in that society

but also for the sake of anyone and everyone who has been conditioned to see Canada through the "Indian problem" lens. Establishing these class specific codes of conduct allow us to have discussions about uncomfortable topics because we know that we will do so in a respectful way because respect is one of the items that has made it on to every code established in all of the courses I facilitate this activity in.

This is to proceed in a good way, with intentions that are not about placing blame or paralyzing with guilt because those are pointless activities that waste energy and that contradict the very precepts of the *all my relations* worldview. However, transformation is also evaded when we opt not to have the discussions at all and I follow Alfred's (2005) and Regan's (2010) prompts to ensure that our approaches to advancing transformation in Aboriginal education need to be Indigenous and or anti-colonial centered. To initiate respectful relationship building, activities that ensure all my students, right from the start, feel respected and honored is mandatory. This is to begin in a good way. Establishing our own code of conduct supports our proceeding in a good way.

This first Ucwalmicw protocol requires not only the acknowledgment of the territories but also the making of space in our class time to articulate what that means and what it does. I ensure students know that this is not simply a political act or lip service. We must follow up with actions when acknowledging the ancestral territories on which we meet. That means if I were to visit in your home, I would behave appropriately and with respect. I would honor you, your space and your practices. Students are then encouraged to consider what it means to be respectful within the context of being on First Peoples' homelands. This is the beginning of coming to know how students might make a difference in their educational, social, political lives. They must first come to terms with what it means to acknowledge and be in the traditional territories of First Peoples. Perspectives that see and consider Indigenous education beyond the "Indian

problem" are essential to coming to understand how and where students can make a difference. Establishing codes of conduct that center on respect for self and others provides a collaborative space in which students can begin the process of coming to terms with what it means to be Canadian in relation to First Peoples before taking next steps in the processes of making change.

Being and doing in good ways is all about addressing the second warp yarn that is concerned with *encouraging the exploration and/or interrogation of one's sense of power and privilege*. Starting semesters with dialogue on how education systems can be socially engineering tools that by design do not only assimilate Indigenous students but all students, is done with intentions that challenge all of us to look at the roles we play in the larger picture.

Towards taking up this *Association of Canadian Deans of Education* policy, *being and doing in a good way* has mobilized me to ask all my students on their first day in our classrooms to practice *wholistic* learning approaches to the 'course materials' that they will be exposed to over the semester. Students are explicitly asked to not only consider how they comprehend the ongoing project of colonization in First Peoples' lives, but to also work on relating to how it affects them in their own lives. Shifting the focus from studying what was and is being done to First Peoples to considering what being Canadian means in relation to those processes is a critical step towards exploring and interrogating one's own power and privilege or lack thereof. Again, this tends to be an unsettling process or feeling that most prefer to avoid.

This is why *beginning and proceeding in a good way* with good intentions for all of us must be the spirit behind engaging in anti-colonizing work together. Prior to initiating acts of exploring, acknowledging, and questioning one's position in this world, it is made clear that this is NOT a project of conviction or acquittal as Rebecca Thomas (TED, 2016) notes in her poem about two-eyed seeing, but one of, as Regan puts it "…collective responsibility we [all] bear for the colonial status quo" (2010, p.11). Over the course of the semester I reiterate that I appreciate the students' respect and "…willingness to stay in the decolonizing struggle of our own discomfort" (Regan, 2010, p. 13). I share about the feelings of spiritual and emotional battering I was left with after every one of my own FNST 101 classes so many years ago. I share how not only did I survive my FNST 101 class, I also gained insight into how it feels to consider and engage with the processes of colonization within a university classroom environment. It is those very experiences that inform my need to practice Ucwalmicw/Indigenous protocols and pedagogies to do this work in a mindful and caring way.

A high percentage of the students in the FNST 101 and 403 classes that I work with identify as Canadian. International students participate in the FIC offerings of FNST 101. Indigenous student enrollment in the courses I teach is very low (for example in the most recent 101 class I taught, 6 out of 89 students identified as Indigenous and this is quite typical). I witness every semester the truth in the Indigenous teaching that tells us that beginning and proceeding in good ways is necessary to realizing good outcomes for all who engage in the process. It is in broaching these processes together that we enact Ucwalmicw protocol and pedagogy and I am finding non-Indigenous students receptive to considering who they are in relation to First Peoples. I am always grateful for their sometimes-apprehensive decisions to continue to do so over the course of the semester. Simpson (2011) has noted that Indigenous resurgence "…cannot occur in isolation" (p. 69); exploring and questioning one's personal sense of power and privilege is the precursor to social change. Creating a nonjudgmental space and building a sense of how we are all re-weaving this blanket together, is fundamental to beginning and doing this work in a good way. Making explicit the intentions behind exposing the ways in which colonial education conditions all students to see only the "Indian problem" demonstrates a genuine concern for *all my relations* and my aspirations to, as Alfred says, "…transform the whole of society and remake the landscape of power…" (2009, p. 27) so that it benefits everyone, including Helper Beings and Mother Earth.

Trusting again in our ways: blue weft yarn

This second Ucwalmicw strand was shared in the discussions that Q'aLaTKú7eMicw had at our second Sharing Circle in February of 2014. The first guiding question for this session was "What are the processes of Ucwalmicw knowledge seeking and making?" As with our first Circle, we interjected thoughts, questions and clarifications as they came to us through hearing the words of those present. The need to *trust again in our ways* was expressed with the assertion that we must also *trust again in each other*. However, in applying this process within a university classroom towards transforming it for all, I opted to focus on only the first half of this instruction. Sharing Circle participants talked at length about being immersed in mainstream/Western ways that ignored and/or devalued Indigenous approaches to and intentions behind coming to know. There was consensus around the idea that this has led many Ucwalmicw peoples to internalize negative

perspectives that devalue Indigenous processes and practices. We also discussed the varying degrees to which Samahquamicw members were remembering and practicing Ucwalmicw ways and values in their lives and the fact that education systems need to be cognizant of and sensitive to this fact. We further noted that *trusting again in our ways* would require some consideration as to how those ways might be beneficial in contemporary times. Ormiston's (2012) dissertation provides an overview of the ways of being that play a significant role in Indigenous lives,

> …I reflect on how values inform all aspects of cultural teachings and how we might utilize these values to live a good life. These values include reciprocity, generosity, love, honor, respect, belonging, sharing, caring, trust and spirituality. Whether participating in canoeing, in a sweat lodge, in a potlatch, in smudging or any other ceremonies, the values espoused in Indigenous cultures have informed, maintained and sustained people throughout time." (p. 69)

These same values are those that could equally sustain us for generations to come, we need only trust in them again. Sadly, while our Samahquamicw community consistently puts forward a need to return to doing things our own way, the truth is, for many, there appears to be a stumbling block between those aspirations and living them. This is not surprising when one considers the history and ongoing waves of colonization that continue to pummel our minds, bodies and spirits. We know we have the answers that are wise and appropriate for our communities and the sustainability of the environment, but we continue to struggle with enacting those ways in our daily lives. Battiste (2010) demonstrates that this is not only a struggle for the Ucwalmicw when she writes, "Indigenous peoples around the world continue to feel the tensions created by a Eurocentric educational system that has taught them not to trust Indigenous knowledge, but to rely on science and technology..." (p. 16). I would go further to say that Aboriginal education systems greatly inform how all students view Indigenous knowledge systems (IKSs). IKSs are not only presented as untrustworthy but as invalid, inferior, simple and/or vanishing. Immersed in these beliefs about First Peoples and our ways of knowing makes it a risky venture to not only trust in but to further mobilize Ucwalmicw ways of being, doing, knowing and valuing within places like academia. I can speak to this on a personal level when I recall my first experiences with mobilizing Indigenous pedagogies in university classrooms. I had no idea how non-Indigenous students would receive approaches to teaching and learning grounded in Indigenous/Ucwalmicw ways and I was extremely anxious at the thought of doing

so. As nerve-wracking as it was, I knew that being an Indigenist academic, I am accountable to my community's sharings, so, trusting in the good intentions of Q'aLaTKú7eMicw, I increasingly center my teaching practices in Ucwalmicw pedagogies and protocols. Course evaluations encourage me to continue doing so as students make comments similar to the following:

> I wanted to thank you for the perspective you are sharing in the classroom, and the compassionate way in which you are presenting it. As someone who has been closed-minded in the past about the topic of social inequality, your class has been a beautiful way to be introduced to these sometimes heavy issues. The class isn't even close to being over yet, but I can truthfully say that I've learned more in this class so far than in any of the various upper-level psychology courses I am currently taking. I am very grateful for the shift in perspective that your teaching style fosters[55] .

I believe this Samahquamicw assertion of *trusting again in our ways* is directly related to and dependent upon the third weft yarn, *walking the talk*. The more I mobilize Indigenous pedagogies, the more I trust in them. As I hear student feedback regarding the incorporation of Ucwalmicw and Indigenous ways of teaching and learning, of coming together as a community, I understand that it is in *doing* that we can trust again in our ways. After asking one FNST 101 class if the first midterm was too easy due to the high average grade attained, a student commented that I was looking at it the wrong way. He felt that it was the level of participation that Ucwalmicw approaches to delivering the material facilitated in the class that led to students doing so well. This same student went on to say he had never experienced a class that engaged the students to such a high degree. It is contributions like these that Q'aLaTKú7eMicw teachings offer. It is student comments like these that motivate me to continue educating and to consistently find ways to weave more Ucwalmicw protocols and processes into my classroom communities.

As Palmer (1980) says, "We don't think our way into a new kind of living; we live our way into a new kind of thinking" (p. 180). It is by practicing our ways that I quickly came to a new way of thinking and/or feeling about them. I no longer wonder if they have a place in all areas of

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[55] FNST 101 student, Spring 2017

my life, and I am coming to see that they have much to offer not only Indigenous students, but all students.

One story that speaks perfectly to the importance of trusting in our Ucwalmicw ways of being was shared with the Aboriginal Bridge Program students and me a few years ago. Seton Lake Elder, Gerry Oleman, of the Ucwalmicw, shared the story of how when he was young he was told to rise early every morning, go down to the lake and begin each day with splashing the freezing cold water with cedar boughs over his head and body. Oleman shared how when he first started this practice he could think only of the shocking coldness of the water. Yet, every morning, he did as he was told, and eventually his thoughts turned from the coldness of the water to question what the point of this daily ritual was. Oleman went on to share how he asked himself this same question in different ways until one morning he realized that he no longer felt the coldness of the water. Sharing through story, Oleman demonstrated the importance of trusting in our ways because even though this daily practice was uncomfortable and the purposes behind it were not clear (at first), Oleman's faith in the intentions behind the teaching enabled him to get to that critical point of meaning making. Trusting in those who instructed him to practice this daily ritual, the teachings of the Ucwalmicw fostered self-discipline, strength and the ability to overcome trying situations in Oleman. It is in *walking the talk* of our Ucwalmicw ways that Oleman came to experience the depth of value that they hold.

The words of Benally (1993) strike a chord with me in that I did not know how impoverished I was before I began trusting in, implementing and living the ways of the Ucwalmicw,

> When we are not taught in this way, drawing on all four areas of knowledge, we become spiritually, emotionally, socially, physically and environmentally impoverished. We become narrow in knowledge. We wind up perpetuating the imbalance within and between ourselves, other people and the natural world. (p. 15)

I now *wholistically* understand what Alfred means when he says that the "…way we approach the challenge of learning will shape us as much as what we seek to learn" (2005, p. 199). The depth of meaning in this quote could only have come to me through my immersion in Indigenous ways of teaching and learning initiated by my first trusting in the good intentions of the QaLaTKu7eMicw sharings, which quickly led me to *trusting again in our ways*.

OAGBC Warp Yarn:
Address obstacles to ensuring safe, non-racist, culturally relevant learning environments

I consider how this Ucwalmicw weft strand could be applied to the OAGBC's warp yarn that advocates for the *provision of a curriculum that instructs all students on the past and present effects of the colonization of Aboriginal Peoples in British Columbia* (Recommendation 6) (OAGBC, 2015, p. 8). For the Ministry of Education to effectively take up this Ucwalmicw teaching it would need to first turn the lens on the institute of education itself with an open mind, and heart, towards understanding the role that education played and continues to play in the perpetuation of monocultural ideals, values and approaches to education. The Office of the Attorney General of British Columbia (2015) made its eleven recommendations, "to support the ministry in its ongoing work with boards of education, superintendents, and Aboriginal leaders and communities, to improve education outcomes for Aboriginal students and close the gaps" (p. 6). I argue that starting at a place of assessing the institution itself holds the potential for ministry leadership to model addressing how the obstacles to safe, non-racist, culturally relevant learning came to be in our classrooms in the first place. This is not a recommendation that can be fixed by directing teachers to incorporate more Indigenous content into the curriculum. The very intentions behind schooling need to be considered and addressed for long term and meaningful change to begin at the very core of the problem. I recall Cote-Meek's quoting Senator Murray Sinclair, "Education is what got us into this mess…but education is the key to reconciliation" (2017, para. 1). It is the system that needs to transform if we want to see Indigenous education flourish.

The OAGBC's recommendation that the ministry continues to work with Aboriginal leaders and communities proposes an important space in which to listen to and learn from local communities in regard to what intentions behind coming to know Indigenous to this province are. "Ensuring governance structures recognize and respect Indigenous Peoples; spreading responsibility for Indigenous education throughout the institution" (AVED, 2016, p. 7) are two examples from the symposium co-hosted by NVIT and the Ministry of Advanced Education as discussed in chapter five. *Trusting in our ways* in this context requires the ministry of education to *walk the talk* of their public commitment to improve outcomes for Indigenous students. I believe that making this statement public (BC Auditor General, 2015, p. 5) is an indication of the ministry trusting the need that it saw for change in Aboriginal education. One way to take

action on this 2005 recognition is to model the necessity of Indigenous leadership in their governance systems as advocated for at the AVED symposium. Listening to and learning from the Indigenous communities across all levels of this system would demonstrate integrity behind the words that promise to facilitate change.

Another way to consider the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw weft yarn, *trusting again in our ways*, in relation to this OAGBC recommendation is for the ministry to trust in what the Indigenous communities share to the extent that it is foundational to how the ministry works with boards of education, superintendents, and Aboriginal leadership and communities. I imagine this practice would soon result in a shift in perspectives on the significance of how groups come together and the import of intentions behind doing so. Having Indigenous leadership at the ministry would hopefully lead to changes in where, when, how and why meetings are facilitated, and how the work considered at those meetings proceeds in good ways to the benefit of the schools, their staff, and students, Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Just as I have found that there is a great diversity of ways of thinking, knowing, being and valuing present in every classroom, I am certain the same diversity exists in all levels of the ministry. *Trusting again in our ways* encourages and opens pathways to thinking about and doing things differently. Acknowledging the teachings of Indigenous peoples at the ministry level provides an important starting point for structural change that centers on the building and sustaining of respectful and balanced relationships and interconnectedness. Key understandings that are foundational to all IKSs are the values of respect, harmony, diversity and non-interference. *Trusting again in our ways* offers an approach that encourages an opening up to a multiplicity of ways of being, doing and knowing that could ripple out in to the schools that this ministry supports.

These first examples of mobilizing **trusting again in our ways** in the BC Ministry of Education directly relate to how this Q'aLaTKú7eMicw process can contribute to the realization of the TRCs (2015) call for *building intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect in student populations.* Encouraging, acknowledging and implementing the diversity of ways of being and doing at the ministry level models ways that could also be beneficial in the classroom. Starting from a place that sees the beauty of diversity as opposed to unquestioningly delivering curriculum that values one way of being in this world creates space for all students to learn about and value or to share the teachings and ways

2. Trusting again in our ways

TRC Warp Yarn: Building intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect in student populations

of their own ancestral backgrounds. Just as colonizing education systems have created gaps in Indigenous knowledge systems, they have, by design, had the same damaging effects on a great diversity of cultures. Students that are consistently invited to learn about/from, trust in and share their own ancestral ways in their educational journeys will learn in environments that foster intercultural awareness, understanding of, appreciation and mutual respect for cultural diversity and a multiplicity of ways of being, doing, knowing and valuing.

While it is critical that Indigenous pedagogies and content be integrated across the curriculum, it is important, to keep in mind that all students are immersed in the same socially engineering project of mainstream curricula to which First Peoples are exposed. It is not only Indigenous students who are expected to leave their languages, ancestral ways and values at the door of the classroom if they want to fit in and feel a sense of belonging in these learning environments. Enacting *trusting again in our ways* from an all *my relations* understanding makes visible the tendencies of academia to promote and/or provide a more monocultural, nationalist perspective of and/or approach to educating. It is through denaturalizing the privilege of mainstream thought and ways that space can be made in every classroom and curriculum for the sharing of diverse pathways to meaning making. Learning from multiple perspectives can contribute to processes of coming to mutually respect across student populations, which will enhance not only Indigenous but non-Indigenous students' educational experiences as well.

I believe that when all students are exposed to and/or encouraged to express their own ancestral ways and perspectives on course topics they become more open to learning about the Original Peoples and the truths around how they have been and continue to be treated in their/our own homelands. One way that I introduce this process to my st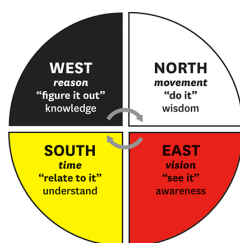udents is through asking them to take note of the fact that the four colors of human ancestry that are represented in the Medicine Wheel (see Figure 21: *Medicine Wheel*[56]) are equal in size. I speak to the fact that if one quadrant is larger than the other three all of humanity falls out of balance. I reiterate that the four quadrants are equal in size to remind us that all ancestries are of equal value and all contribute to the maintenance of balance and harmony in the circle that is the human race. To further evoke thoughtfulness regarding this topic, I ask the students if they feel any of the quadrants should be larger than another, if any are more important than another.

Figure 21 Medicine Wheel

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[56] Image retrieved from https://www.edcan.ca/articles/teaching-by-the-medicine-wheel/ May 1, 2018.

Taking some time to consider the status quo that does not promote or honor equality and equity between all human ancestries is mandatory to the processes of effecting social change. Key to this weaving in of Ucwalmicw teachings is the fact that we are all doing this work together by learning about or from and *trusting in our own ways*. We do it so that all students are *building intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect*. Indigenous students are not isolated within post-secondary classroom environments. To assume that policy-making applies only to Indigenous students is a mistake and I advocate for the application of Ucwalmicw pedagogies and protocols from within the central tenets of Tákem Nsnekwnúkw7a. I find that working from an *all my relations* perspective is essential to deconstructing the walls that continue to exist between Canadians and First Peoples. Walls that are reinforced when the focus is placed on fixing the system so that Indigenous students can succeed. We are all in this together and as Snelgrove *et al* (2014) write, "…there is a [Cherokee] word, digadatsele'i, which means 'we belong to each other'. If we take these relationships seriously, we must be willing to work through contention and, at times, disrupt discourses that reinscribe the colonial status quo" (p. 3). This disruption is essential to building intercultural understanding and respect.

Walking the Talk: teal weft yarn

This is one of the topics that came up in our QaLaTKu7emicw February 2014 session. In considering the processes of Ucwalmicw coming to know it became clear that to trust again in our ways would require our *walking the talk*, our implementing these ways into our daily lives. An example of a call to act is evident in our Elder Aunty Rose's response to my son Devon's query into working in the community. "Walk the land to commune with the ancestors" is the advice she gave him when he spoke of wanting to contribute to Samahquamicw community healing.

Knowing the land and the teachings it holds for our Indigenous communities requires actually being on the land and this response from our Elder Aunt tells us that this is not a question that can be answered in a conversation with an Elder. Physical, spiritual and emotional actions are also required. Ceremony and sacrifice are necessary if we wish to engage with our communities in good ways. The land teaches us everything we need to know, starting with

ourselves and then the teachings ripple out into <u>Tákem nsneḱwnúḱw7a</u>[57]. In order to be of use and benefit to our community, our Elder Aunty informed my son that he needed to begin from a center rooted in the territories of our Ucwalmicw peoples. Healing, like learning, is not compartmentalized into one aspect of our humanity; it is also a physical and spiritual connecting to place and ancestors that is facilitated and maintained by being on the land. This teaching inspired me to propose and facilitate a Community Engagement Hub project that brought community members together with medicinal plant practitioners to learn not only about the medicines but to learn of them in their natural environments. Together we walked the land to see where the medicines grow, what grows around them and how each plant tells us about other helper beings in our local environments. These experiences of hearing about, observing and then practicing respectful harvesting of our traditional medicines serve to connect us to each other, our territories, and to ancestral knowledge as we come to know and honor the context of each plant relative's life.

In delivering the FNST 403 (Indigenous Knowledge Systems in the Modern World) and the 286 class (First Peoples in BC), I take up Battiste's call to "…center Indigenous knowledge by removing the distorting lens of Eurocentrism so that we can immerse ourselves in systems of meaning that are different from those that have conditioned us" (2010, p. 17). I do this by assigning students to connect with the local environment during midterm week.[58] In this assignment, students are to find a place outdoors that is peaceful, away from cars and other noise pollution of the city. They are to go alone (or at least sit on their own if they go with a friend or classmate, and no technology is permitted during this one and half hour activity. Students are asked to consider the land, to listen to it, to feel and connect with the space they have chosen. I see this as one *no push- no pull* way to provide students with opportunities to *walk the talk* of Indigenous knowledges being considered in the classroom. The week after the assignment is due we further *walk the talk* of another Indigenous pedagogy that the students first read about in preparation for this activity, the Talking Circle. In this follow up Circle students tell of how many of them felt that they did not have the time during midterm week to be going and sitting

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[57] Ucwalmicts for 'all my relations': http://www.firstvoices.com/en/Northern-Statimcets/phrase/36f693da23d777b2/All+my+relations
[58] I cite Dr. Jo-ann Archibald as the inspiration for this activity. She assigned our CCFI 601B class to spend time outside in a quiet place and to reflect on what is felt when doing so, giving me experiential awareness and understanding of this assignment.

quietly outside. All students share how surprisingly necessary that time was to re-centering them, to reminding them of why they were pursuing post-secondary education, and many expressed the value of disconnecting from their phones during this outdoor activity. It is not uncommon in this Circle Sharing activity for tears to be shed as students share about reconnecting with what is important and with being humbled by the far greater world that exists beyond upcoming midterms. All students expressed an appreciation for this rejuvenating break during a hectic time in the semester and, even though no marks are attached to it, requested being assigned[59] this activity again prior to finals week.

Walking the talk has everything to do with transforming not only the mind but the spirit and body as well. We transform when we learn deeply through doing. Just as Ormiston (2012) utilizes a canoe journey in his own doctoral dissertation as both a guiding metaphor and as a wholistic means of connecting with his Tlingit ancestors, I find the act of weaving the dissertation blanket connects me to my ancestors and reminds me of who I am attempting to become. In the wholistic act of weaving I connect on a spiritual level with those who came before me and *this* is why I have heard and read so many times that Indigenous knowledges are all about processes. While each of our human capacities to learn is powerful on its own, coming to understand is that much more meaningful when we employ all four; the intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical aptitudes together. It is not just the content or the teachings themselves, but the living of the teachings that changes and moves us closer to becoming fully human. It was not merely hearing about First Peoples' worldviews of Mother Earth that reinvigorated the students, but the addition of being assigned this immersion of self in the practice of connecting to her that they were wholistically engaged with and benefitting from this teaching. Although I had an immediate connection with and believed in it, this point never truly made sense until I experienced it. When weaving metaphors become about relationships, I inevitably find myself weaving good intentions of health, happiness and wellness for *all my relations* into the tapestry of understanding.

The principle of *walking the talk* is evident in the *Non-Interference story*. One example is embedded within the young girl's rising upon each day to give thanks for her life and then proceeding to honor that gift throughout the entire day. This ritual of expressing gratitude every

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[59] One of the FNST 286 students noted in the Sharing Circle that she needed this permission to suspend her studying for an hour and a half and therefore greatly appreciated this assignment and the gift that it was for her.

morning is meaningless if not followed up with the *practice* of honoring that gift throughout the rest of her day. The teachings extend well beyond being merely metaphorical in nature to becoming "…direct and clear statement(s) of …personal, ethical responsibilities…" (Akan, 1999, p. 16), manifest in our setting examples by *being* the examples in that "…our words reflect the way we live" (ibid, 1999, p. 17). Honoring the gift of life throughout the day models these Saulteaux Elder teachings as shared by Akan in that the young girl's practice of giving thanks guides how she lives out each day. Her words match her actions and her actions match her words. *Walking the talk* is to live and *be in good ways* with intention and this is how one walks with integrity. THIS is what *walking the talk* is all about. Mobilizing our Indigenous teachings not to preserve them, but for them to preserve us.

I believe that Q'aLaTKú7eMicw (2014) shared this need to *walk the talk* and live our Ucwalmicw ways as being essential to our coming to understand. Community members feel that we have talked, and work shopped[60] enough about what does not work for us and about our desires to return to doing things in our own Ucwalmicw ways. The time has come to *trust again* in those ways to the extent that we are all, once again, walking them together.

How do we weave this third Ucwalmicw principle into the policies of Indigenous education? Just as this RCAP recommendation points out, action is required. In my articulations of what it means to *walk the talk,* I center on the effects of mobilizing the metaphors and teachings in my life, learning and teaching practices. For this reason, I am coming to

3. Walking the Talk

RCAP Warp Yarn:
The importance of action in the transformative education process

experiential understandings of transforming education through the transforming of the self. Had Canada *walked the talk* of the recommendations it sought out in commissioning the RCAP report, Aboriginal education would look very different today, almost a quarter century later. This RCAP recommendation nevertheless holds importance as it continues to be taken up by communities, schools and institutions of higher learning. To further transform education, we must begin with transforming ourselves and this includes all educators whose circles of influence reach far. To *walk the talk* of transformative education is to become acutely aware of one's own

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[60] I include this practice of 'work shopping' here because our First Nations' communities are inundated with surveys and focus group approaches to determining what needs to be done in all areas of community life, be it health, education, political and/or economic considerations. My own community members have started to respond to these Western forms of gaining community input by saying that they need to see actions based on the surveys and focus groups they have already contributed to and that they suffer from survey fatigue from answering the same questions over and over again to no avail.

sense of power and privilege and to interrogate how that affects the teacher/learner relationship. Approaching this work from a place of humility can facilitate a process that begins and proceeds in a good way with good intentions. Transformative aspirations need to be walked in all aspects of curriculum design, teaching pedagogy choices and practices and student understanding evaluation processes. Narrowing transformation so that it is only about and for Indigenous students excuses many from committing to *walk the talk* of transforming Aboriginal education as it continues to be about "them" and not "us". Furthermore, teacher education programs must model transformative education within all aspects of their program design, delivery and evaluation. This brings us to consider how this Ucwalmicw protocol can take up the next warp yarn that is the TRC call regarding the training of teachers.

To *walk the talk* in this TRC call to action would see teacher education programs

3. Walking the Talk

TRC Warp Yarn:
Training teachers for integrating Indigenous knowledges and teaching methods into their practice

supporting and utilizing Indigenous pedagogies and incorporating Indigenous knowledges within all, and not only the single required First Nations content, courses and activities that make up the degree or certificate programs. This would require the creation of a permanent position for Indigenous leadership and community representation at the program design, monitoring and evaluation level. These positions would be accountable to the local First Peoples communities to ensure accountability to Indigenous ways and values is paramount in the program. Their first order of business would be to work with the upper level positions of the university, because that is how this institution functions- from the top down. We, therefore, need to transform the top first.

Training teachers to integrate Indigenous content in respectful and relationship building ways needs to begin by training those with the decision-making power at these institutions. It is not enough to publicly announce that your institution is committed to transforming or reconciling Aboriginal education. Just as I call on the Ministry of Education leadership to model their commitments in the ways in which they work with school boards and communities, university vice presidents, presidents and directors must also *walk the talk* of the work they purport their institutions are doing. This is absolutely critical to harnessing the commitment of all faculty and staff. This is how significant change can be realized. This is the walk that we all need to walk, it cannot be delegated to First Peoples in the university, or to First Nations' communities, or to teachers and instructors whether or not they feel prepared to take on this task. It will take all of

us. We all need to hold these institutions accountable to the pronouncements that they make, to ensure they are walking their talk.

Through my engagements with a diversity of students, I am acutely aware of the minimal degree to which Indigenous knowledges and pedagogies are being integrated into course curriculum. It is not acceptable to avoid *walking the talk* in our own teaching and learning practices simply because the departments and or programs we work in are doing so. Teacher candidates are fully aware of what is required to be certified as a teacher in British Columbia and choosing to accept that certification with integrity requires them to walk all aspects of that talk. Whether or not their program of certification provides ample space for Indigenous knowledge systems in their learning processes, pre-service teachers must connect with the local First Nations' community wherever possible. I know from experience that even when community events that are open to the public are announced in my university classrooms, it is extremely rare to see any students attend them. Over the four years that I have been teaching in the mainstream environment, I can count on one hand the number of students who have taken the time to attend a public event in a First Nations' community. For teacher candidates in particular, these are important missed opportunities, especially if they are feeling uncertain, unready or under qualified to incorporate Indigenous content and pedagogy into their teaching. Connecting with community is far more valuable then reading about First Nations alone and, most importantly, these soon-to-be teachers could enter the classroom with experiential understandings of how to respectfully connect with and be in local Indigenous communities. This is one example of the all-important beginning in a good way.

Walking the talk towards realizing this TRC call to train teachers to respectfully integrate Indigenous content and pedagogy is a practice that could be honed through challenging oneself to incorporate Indigenous scholarly resources into assignments across all courses in their teacher certification programs. Personally taking up this TRC call to action as opposed to waiting on top down change presents one way to *walk the talk* whether or not the programs students engage with are doing so.

Wholistic Perspectives and Approaches: yellow weft yarn

This fourth and final weft strand to be woven in to this dissertation blanket stresses the need to "…consider all aspects of the learner- emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual"

(QaLaTKu7eMicw, 2013). This obligation to attend to all human capacities to learn was cited by QaLaTKu7eMicw as being one of the protocols of Ucwalmicw knowledge systems. Examples that were discussed included drumming if something negative has happened or after a difficult conversation that has left the group feeling heavy, angry or sad. This is tending to all aspects of the learner and the learners' lives. We do not expect students to pause or deny their emotional and/or spiritual crises to focus on the intellectual aspect of learning. In fact, it is understood that attempting to do so interferes with the learning process. Another point that relates to honoring this protocol was the need for education to be a reciprocal process. "Giving goes both ways and through the universe" (QaLaTKu7eMicw, 2013) and wholistic balance depends on this. The quote further encourages us to consider wholism as reaching beyond the capacities of the individual learner (who is also teaching in a wholistic approach), to include the instructor (who is also learning), the classroom, school, community and extends to and include the universe, ancestors and those yet to come. The wholistic approach is acutely aware of the fact that we are all also connected to the past, present and future.

I found it interesting to learn that wholistic approaches are not only examples of Ucwalmicw pedagogy, as I had initially believed. Instructed to consider all aspects of the learner as being an Ucwalmicw protocol tells me that I need to honor this in all teaching and learning experiences. That is how protocols work. They are the guidelines for beginning and proceeding in good ways with intention. Therefore, to be informed that wholistic perspectives and approaches are not only method, but also required, is a critical understanding in and of itself. Upon considering wholism from a *wholistic perspective*, it makes complete sense. Ucwalmicw protocols inform me of the responsibilities that come with being Ucwalmicw. When we consider, promote and facilitate wholistic teaching and learning, that is engaging and/or nurturing body, heart, spirit *and* mind, we are better able to, as Yunkaporta puts it, "… maintain strong relatedness [and] to be genuinely responsive to protocol" (2009, p. xi). In living up to my responsibilities to QaLaTKu7eMicw and their sharings, I quickly realize that intellectual connections on their own are not nearly as deep and meaningful as those connections that are made at wholistic levels. As noted previously, on their own each of these human capacities to learn is formidable, but when mobilized together, our depth of meaning making grows exponentially.

Furthermore, learning for self is empowering and important, however, learning from a place of right action, as described by Wilson (Southam, 2013) mobilizes our knowledge so that it can become wisdom towards building relationships that center on caring, sharing, compassion and truth. THIS is why *wholistic approaches* are first protocol and then process. When you are of the worldview that we are all interconnected, inter-related and our main purpose for being centers on building and maintaining harmony, the significance of engaging wholistically crystallizes. I sometimes worry about venturing beyond intellectually motivated approaches to learning and teaching because this is not at all what most students expect or sign up for when they enter the university classroom. However, I am also cognizant of the fact that my contributing to the 'professionalizing' and/or 'standardizing' of education can exclude, devalue, problematize and/or stigmatize these other equally important aspects of becoming fully human. This in turn, reinforces the colonizing projects of education that depend on the severing of relationships and solidarity.

What does it mean to nurture the intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical capacities to learn? I appreciate and engage with Aluli-Meyer's (2003, 2008) conceptions and practices of "…the metaphor of triangulating our way to meaning with the use of three points... body, mind, and spirit" (Aluli-Meyer, 2008, p. 224). Aluli-Meyer's work stresses the import of *wholistic approaches* to understanding and notes that the feeling mind and the thinking body are not separate and that, in fact, the two actually "…connect to the spiritual act of knowledge acquisition" (Aluli-Meyer, 2008, p. 223). I believe that the responses shared in the Talking Circles after the FNST 403 and 286 students participated in the connecting to Mother Earth assignment are reflections of this connecting to the spiritual act of knowledge acquisition.

LaDuke speaks to these same understandings when she tells how her father did not wish to hear her philosophy until she could grow corn (The Sustainability Channel, 2018). Aluli-Meyer puts it this way, "*Hoa'e ka 'ike he'enalu I ka hokua o ka 'ale-* show your knowledge of surfing on the back of a wave…It's not about how well you can quote a theory; it's whether those ideas affect how you *act"* (Aluli-Meyer, 2008, p. 221). While knowledge and knowing are in relationship, wholistic understandings are not the same as knowledge acquisition and it is through experience that one (knowledge) can become the other (knowing) (Aluli-Meyer, 2008). It is in the acts of growing corn, surfing and weaving that LaDuke, Aluli-Meyer and I wholistically come to understand the philosophies of growing corn, surfing, and weaving. Too

much of our time, in the majority of academic disciplines, continues to focus on the intellect; Aluli-Meyer's work seeks to transform education systems by dedicating space to considering the truths our bodies and spirits hold, for, as she credits Houston (2004), "…the consciousness that solves a problem can no longer be the same consciousness that developed it" (Aluli-Meyer, 2008, p. 231). Transforming an intellectually preferred and/or valued approach to coming to know requires the inclusion and centering of *wholistic approaches*, or the triangulation of meaning.

Wholistic perspectives further include many other aspects of learning, including the diversity of environments with, and in, which students engage. As demonstrated by the Samahquam membership survey responses, a majority of the teachings identified in the smaller Q'aLaTKú7eMicw Sharing Circles were seen as needing to be taught and learned in the home, in on-reserve schools, in public school classrooms as well as in teacher education programs. Q'aLaTKú7eMicw (2013) assert the need for learners to be surrounded and supported on all fronts with Ucwalmicw protocols and processes, thereby expanding our application of *wholistic perspectives and approaches*. We need to not only consider all aspects of the individual learner, but also the whole of the learning environments with which the student engages. As is noted in Hare's 2011 article, people do not gain all their learning from inside the classroom walls,

> They learn ways of knowing and being specific to their communities and Nations, drawing on the repositories of indigenous [sic] knowledge that include land, ceremony, oral tradition and elders, families and community members…places of learning should come to see [these] as a legitimate source of knowledge. (p. 408)

Much meaning making and understanding is derived through experiential, and other forms of,[61] learning beyond the classroom. This can contribute significantly to student 'success' in education systems and can also enrich the learning experiences for everyone in the classroom. A *wholistic perspective* knows and appreciates this fact. In making space available for researching and/or sharing the ancestral values and teachings of all students, I have personally witnessed the sharings of the many things we have in common.

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[61] For example, spiritual understandings that can come through dreams and rituals that include periods of solitude, prayer and fasting.

Wholistic approaches acknowledge and build on the strengths, experiences and understandings that students bring with them into the classroom. These approaches honor the protocol of seeing the whole student and facilitating the weaving of who they are with who they are becoming. Transformed education does not perpetuate practices that exclude or erase the rich and diverse contexts of experience and ways of knowing and valuing that all students carry with them to the classroom door. It instead respects them as important foundations on which to expand relationships and make connections with knowledge, classmates, instructors, school, family, community and environment. All are equally important as is demonstrated in the illustration of the Medicine Wheel.

One of the ways that I have *walked the talk* with *wholistic approaches* is by beginning all of the courses I teach with discussions around the need for students to bring not only their minds to the classroom, but also their hearts, spirits and bodies. I express the unlikelihood of coming to fully know and understand First Peoples' histories and ways of being, doing, knowing and valuing using only the intellect. I stress that the 'course materials' are much more than that, they represent the lived experiences and lives of my ancestors, myself, my family and community members. The information being shared is not just theory or concepts, but ways of being in and seeing the world that are happening all around us. A wholistic understanding of truth about our, and in this instance, I am referring to Canadians and First Nations, past and current relationship with colonial practices is the first critical step towards meeting Canada's persistent claims of seeking a reconciled relationship with First Peoples. Students in all my classes learn that taking FNST classes is about learning how to be and do differently. It is about relationship building and effecting social and political change. It is not just a job or 3-credit course. Otherwise, I ask them, what is the point?

An example of wholistic approaches in the *Non-Interference Story* in chapter two, is articulated in the first paragraph where we learn that all the wisdom of the young girl's ancestors is passed on to her through stories, dreams and traditions. These ways of knowing reflect wholistic understandings of where knowledge comes from in that they honor and rely upon wisdom derived from dreams and ceremony, bringing in the emotional and spiritual components of learning. The fact that the young girl practices her adult responsibilities through playing 'games' that hone the skills she will need in later life further demonstrates the significance of

experiential and physical learning in that the young girl goes through the motions in preparation for fulfilling her future responsibilities.

I weave the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw *wholistic perspectives and approaches* weft yarn into this dissertation blanket by first taking up the Association of Canadian Deans of Education (ACDE) warp strand that advocates *challenging of existing curriculum frameworks and structures so as to enable learners to experience Indigenous worlds and knowledges in a wholistic manner*. While it may appear obvious to link this particular Ucwalmicw practice with this ACDE guiding policy, how to actually put it in action may not be as clear. I note above that I ask all my students to engage with 'course materials' in a wholistic manner if they want to truly understand towards respectful relationship building with First Peoples and all peoples. To ensure students grasp the full meaning of this idea, more than dialogue and analysis are required. Experiential understanding of this request is fostered through their engagement with a variety of activities that require them to step outside of the typical comfort zone of academia. I utilize the *Teaching by the Medicine Wheel: An Anishinaabe framework for Indigenous education* process that is made available online by the Canadian Education Association (Canadian Education Association, 2014). While the association indicates that the application of this contemporary model is intended for Indigenous students who are now being educated in mainstream systems, I have witnessed the great value that it can also hold for non-Indigenous students who engage with it. Based on the teachings of Cree Elder/Practitioner Michael Thrasher, this approach to coming to understand promotes deep learning as students move through all four sectors of the Wheel,

> Within Medicine Wheels there are many, many "rings" of teachings that exist. A ring of teaching is created by considering a part of the teaching from each of the four directions. These rings of teachings have significant meaning independently but are all the more powerful when understood as a collective of interdependent knowledge teachings and practices. (Canadian Education Association, 2014, p. Para. 4)

In their first engagement with this pedagogy, students are placed in groups of four to five and each group is assigned a different concept to work with, in some cases I assign all groups the concept of reconciliation to prepare them to write their Medicine Wheel pedagogy term papers on that same topic. Walking through this pedagogy is a process of four rounds, which means that

4. Wholistic perspectives and approaches

ACDE Warp Yarn: To challenge existing curriculum frameworks and structures in order that they may engage learners in experiencing the Indigenous world and Indigenous knowledge in a wholistic way

everyone in the group responds to the first task or question before moving on to the second where, again, everyone responds before moving on to the next step. Groups begin in the East quadrant of the Medicine Wheel, which is the 'seeing it' quadrant. At this point in the process, each member of the group first defines the concept that they have been assigned. Once they have completed this process of defining, they then move into the South quadrant, which is the 'relating' phase of the process. At this stage, each group member considers and shares how they personally relate to the concept. This juncture in the process is all about personal experiences as students consider how the concept is relevant in their own lives and histories.

Once everyone has heard how each of their group mates relates to the concept they are ready to move into the West quadrant where they turn to discussing what they have 'figured out' by taking this time to work through their concept together. Students are guided towards sharing and taking up the *seeds*[62] of knowledge, perspectives and experiences they each carry with them and in doing so collaborate towards 'figuring out' what they did not know or understand prior to this set of group activities. When students have a broader, more wholistic understanding of the concept, they move into the North quadrant of this Medicine Wheel pedagogy, which is the 'do it' phase of coming to understand. Students are reminded of Wilson's teachings about *right action* shared with them at the beginning of the semester, that for knowledge to become wisdom it must be shared or mobilized for the benefit of others (Southam, 2013). In this fourth stage of engaging collectively and wholistically with a key concept, students consider and discuss how they can act on what they have learned in their own lives. It is in the process of doing that the transformation of Aboriginal education becomes possible.

I am always impressed by the list of actions that students feel they can/will take with their new, and often more personal, understandings of the concepts they engage with in this wholistic manner. For example, in one of my most recent FNST 101 classes, the lists of actions that students cite they can participate in towards reconciling the relationship between Canadians and First Peoples are broad and impressive. Some of the actions recorded on the North quadrant of group Medicine Wheel submissions include: starting conversations with family and friends; taking ownership of ongoing colonization; apologizing through actions; and taking

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[62] In our first class together, we consider the metaphor of Kokopelli shared with us
by Gregory Cajete of the Pueblo. Kokopelli, among other things, teaches that everyone carries seeds of knowledge, perspectives, experiences and skills and it is in sharing and gathering them along our life journeys that we experience the beauty and value of diversity (Cajete, 1994).

courses/spending time listening and learning about topics that make one uncomfortable or ashamed. Reading these group activity and term paper submissions reinforces for me the value of Indigenous pedagogies.

This Ucwalmicw weft yarn of seeing and doing from *wholistic perspectives* is next woven into the first point under Recommendation 6 from the OAGBC (2015) report that calls on *collaboration between boards of education, superintendents , and Aboriginal leaders and*

4. Wholistic perspectives and approaches

OAGBC Warp Yarn: Provide all students with a curriculum that addresses the past and present effects of the colonization of Aboriginal Peoples in British Columbia

communities towards providing all students with curriculum that addresses the colonization of Aboriginal Peoples (p. 8). I suggest that applying this lens to address the past and present effects of the colonization of Aboriginal Peoples can begin with what Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall calls *Etuaptmumk*, Mi'kmaq for *two-eyed seeing*

(TED, 2016)*.* This practice encourages and enables one to see things from perspectives beyond our own and doing so in a manner that does not require the exclusion or denial of another's perspective. Thomas (TED, 2016) who employs and shares this way of seeing in the colonized and colonizing institution of post-secondary education speaks to how this approach can lead to benefits and opportunities that come with the strengths and beauty of diverse ways. Thomas promotes seeing and considering the world through the strengths of Indigenous knowledge systems through one eye and through the strengths of Western knowledge systems through the other eye simultaneously. Taking this approach to the OAGBC's recommendation would require teachers to seek out and understand what the strengths of Indigenous-eyed-seeing are and apply them alongside the strengths of their own and/or Western-eyed-seeing when planning and delivering lessons regarding colonization.

Thomas goes on to note in her TED Talks presentation that First Peoples have much experience with knowing and seeing through the strengths of Western-eyed-seeing and have been doing so for the better part of 500 years (TED, 2016). "Two eyed seeing is to normalize Indigenous knowledge in the curriculum so that both Indigenous and conventional perspectives and knowledges will be available – not just for Aboriginal peoples, who would be enriched by that effort, but for all peoples" (Battiste, 2010, p. 17). This, and the fact that many are already well versed in this practice, tells me that non-Indigenous peoples are equally capable of learning to see and understand through the strengths and perspectives of Indigenous-eyed-seeing. It takes time, research, practice and a genuine commitment to understanding, as learning anything well

requires. Understanding how colonization has affected and continues to effect Aboriginal Peoples must be understood through a two-eyed seeing approach that lends itself to coming to know how the teachers who are to deliver this curriculum are themselves colonized to varying degrees. It is essential to respectfully designing and delivering anti-colonial curricula that the developers of these lessons are made aware of and positioning themselves in relation to the ongoing colonizing acts against Indigenous Peoples.

The wording of this OAGBC recommendation serves to distance the designers and teachers from the act of colonizing as if it is some external entity that they are now being asked to teach students about. Seeing through two-eyes will prompt a more personal connection to this project of colonization that can better equip self-reflexive teachers to consider deeply what this recommendation means from First Peoples' perspectives. Within the context of this OAGBC report, teachers need to address how familiarity with monocultural perspectives and pedagogies embedded within their learned approaches to meeting recommendations like these play a role in the ongoing effects of colonization in First Peoples' lives.

An example of how I mobilize two-eyed seeing as a key component of teaching from a wholistic perspective, is found in my lesson planning for the dialogue around what it means to identify as settler/Canadian. Because I approach my teaching from an *all my relations'* perspective, much preparatory work needs to happen before engaging in this typically unsettling discussion. This means that I must do the research. I must commit to the time needed to figure out what I am asking of my students when I pose questions around identifying as Canadian. Although I grew up being ashamed of my Ucwalmicw ancestry, without knowing why, I never did relate with or identify as being Canadian. Before reconnecting with my Ucwalmicw community, I had no sense of identity, no sense of belonging. I recall when I was thirteen years old, being pressed about my ancestral background. I have no idea why, but I chose to claim my father's German ancestry. Not First Nations. Not Canadian or German-Canadian. I responded "German", with no understanding of exactly what it meant to do so. Therefore, having not personally experienced what it means to identify as Canadian, to propose and facilitate this work in a good way requires me to first wholistically educate myself.

Moving through the Medicine Wheel pedagogy described above I start by defining the concept through utilizing Settler ally scholarship, which fortunately, is becoming increasingly

accessible.[63] I then move to the South to consider ways that I can relate to what I have learned in the defining phase of this activity. While I may not be able to relate directly to the feelings of discomfort and/or resistance that come with interrogating Canadian status, I absolutely can relate to feeling pain in regard to this topic. It is in remembering how it felt for me to come to terms, in a university classroom, with the fact that I was/am colonized by the same system that perpetuates a Canadian identity void of what it means in relation to Turtle Island and First Peoples, that I can relate to the work that I am asking my students to do. This process is not about laying blame. It is not about retribution. It has everything to do with learning that we have all been conditioned by the same education system that seeks to sever our relationships to each other, to the land, to past and future generations, and to our spirituality. This good work is about coming together in ways that transform how we see education so that we can repair these many important and broken relationships.

Having defined and related to this concept of Settler/Canadian I move to the West where I "figure out" that while this was spiritually and emotionally crushing work to undertake in my undergraduate studies, I need to find respectful and caring ways to broaching this subject so that it brings us closer together and does not push us farther apart. As difficult as it was for me to come to terms with what colonization is, and what it does, I grew, initially, in personal ways, for having gone through the process. As I look back on that semester of returning every week to that uncomfortable post-secondary classroom, I see now that my own experiences can help me to approach this difficult dialogue from a two-eyed seeing and wholistic place. I am now ready to move into the North quadrant of the Medicine Wheel pedagogy in a manner that mobilizes this knowledge towards the benefit of the collective. I empathize with students who are being asked to consider the possibility that they too are shaped by what is and is not taught in the university classroom,

> We are what we know. We are, however, also what we do not know. If what we know about ourselves—our history, our culture, our national identity—is deformed by absences, denials, and incompleteness then our identity—both as individuals and as Americans [and Canadians] —is fragmented. (Pinar, 1993, p. 61)

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[63] I turn to Corey Snelgrove *et al*, Paulette Regan, and much scholarship on this topic can be found at *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society:* http://decolonization.org/index.php/des

While the outcomes of colonization differ for Settler/Canadians and for First Peoples, it is important for all of us to acknowledge what has happened and what is happening and to acknowledge that what continues to be sustained in many mainstream classrooms is happening to all of us. Interrupting and supplanting the perpetuation of monocultural perspectives of and approaches to learning needs to be done for all of us. There is no "Indian problem" without the "Settler problem". Finding ways to connect with students regarding ethical and social concerns, like settler colonialism, from a wholistic perspective guides me towards doing so in a respectful and compassionate way. As Thomas says, the intentions behind taking up this work are not to convict or acquit (TED, 2016, 13:07), but about being responsible for each other and ourselves.

Feeling how one might receive this idea of being colonized through recalling my experiences with learning this about myself is an example of two-eyed seeing that sensitizes my approach to entering this unsettling space with my students. Preparatory protocols we engage with prior to beginning this work include expressing *why* we acknowledge the territories, *why* we are establishing codes of conduct and what is meant by *Tákem nsnekwnúkw7a*. Students are placed in small groups to which they belong for the duration of the semester. Time is made in every class for these groups to work together, to get to know each other better and to feel comfortable and respected in the small and large group settings. All of this is facilitated towards creating an environment that allows us to support and tend to each other through this mostly uncharted territory that we must travel towards creating the path while walking it (Erickson, LaBoucane-Benson, & Hossack, 2011).

Two-eyed seeing represents one respectful approach to understanding Indigenous perspectives and experiences. Utilizing the Medicine Wheel pedagogy towards gaining this second set of eyes offers a wholistic pathway to meaningful understanding, which is foundational to respectfully addressing and incorporating Indigenous philosophies, ethics and social concerns across educational programs. This type of preparatory work by all educators is key.

Chapter Summary

Using bold and italicized font, I demonstrate throughout this chapter how the four Ucwalmicw protocols and processes, *being and doing in good ways with intention*, *trusting again in our ways, walking the talk* and *wholistic perspectives and approaches,* are all interconnected,

intertwined, and interdependent upon each other, making it impossible to discuss each one strictly within its own section of this dissemination process. I have come to understand that these four Ucwalmicw protocols and pedagogies have strengths of their own but are all the more powerful when twined together. As I wrote this chapter on taking up eight Indigenous education policies with Ucwalmicw teachings, the four practices together transformed into a *Tákem nsnekwnúkw7a (all my relations) pedagogy* for implementing policy from a more wholistic perspective. As I reflected on my experiences with applying these Ucwalmicw ways in my teaching practices, I realized the need to do so from a place that is concerned with honoring the diversity of all students. This understanding is what led me to see that focusing on Indigenous student success rates, on the inclusion of Indigenous content in curriculum, and on hiring more Indigenous teachers and staff is not the entire answer. Working from within a *Tákem Nsnekwnúkw7a* worldview weaves across the gaps found in the literature, policy-making and practices that seek to transform Aboriginal education.
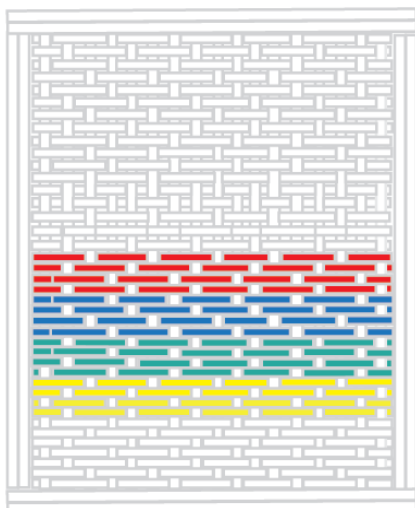
Chapter 7: Reading and Gifting the Dissertation Blanket

Figure 22 Completed Blanket

Guided by the three principles of Rigney's (1999) Indigenist paradigm, namely, *resistance, political integrity*, and *honoring Indigenous voice,* plus two additions; *self-determination* and *responsibilities*, Samahquam community members and I engaged Ucwalmicw methods to draw out the protocols and processes of Stl'atl'imicw knowledge seeking and making that could contribute to the ever-emerging tapestry of Indigenous education. This process was guided by the following research questions,

> 1. How can Ucwalmicw processes of knowledge seeking, making and sharing disrupt mainstream understandings of Aboriginal education?

> 2. In what ways can the facilitation of Ucwalmicw ways of seeking, making and sharing knowledge contribute to the transforming processes of Indigenous education*?*

In responding to these study questions, I demonstrate how applying four Ucwalmicw protocols and pedagogies, *trusting again in our ways*, *walking the talk*, *beginning and doing in good ways with intention*, and *wholistic* approaches to mobilize Indigenous education recommendations facilitates respectful and localized approaches to making change. The Q'aLaTKú7eMicw contributions presented in this dissertation blanket offer relationship-building centered pathways to the positive work that is already transforming the delivery and outcomes of Aboriginal education systems.

This PhD study was motivated by the fact that my community is in the final stages of treaty negotiation with British Columbia and Canada and should the treaty be ratified, there are many important positions that will need staffing as we move out from under Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada's thumb. This has been evidenced in reviews of the In-Shuck-ch Nation skills inventory research. With this in mind, the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw community shared Samahquamicw

protocols and practices that could enhance the transformative processes already underway in Aboriginal education learning environments. Eight foundational warp yarns drawn from Indigenous education policy and recommendation documents were wrapped on to this dissertation loom in chapter five to support the weaving in of the four Q'aLaTKú7eMicw protocols and processes. Illustrations of how these local ways could be and have been respectfully taken up are presented in chapter six of this document.

The ever-emerging tapestry of Indigenous education presented here was made possible by the ongoing dedication and hard work of Indigenous Elders, scholars and practitioners with much support and contributions from non-Indigenous allies.

The 2-Bar Loom and weaving as metaphor and praxis

The guiding metaphor for and praxis of this work was the Samahquamicw loom and blanket weaving process. The 2-Bar loom represents the solid and enduring framework of Ucwalmicw ways onto which a diversity of coming to know protocols and processes have been woven into Ucwalmicw Peoples and communities. This framework is centuries old and continues to provide the strength and support needed for being and becoming Ucwalmicw in contemporary times. For thousands of years prior to contact, Indigenous Knowledge systems wove together the relationships of living a good life that centered on spirituality and harmony. The vigor of our Indigenous warp and weft yarns has withstood the tests of time and the infiltration of colonizing yarns, albeit not without tensions, some unraveling and, at times, near erasure.

In this final chapter I read the dissertation blanket that has been woven upon the 2-Bar loom built for me by my son, Dustin. I begin by articulating the loom that frames and supports the knowledge seeking, making, and sharing that emerges within the colors and patterns of coming to know woven into this particular blanket. I explain the meanings behind the choices of weaving styles and colors before deliberating on the protocols of gifting in preparation for presenting the blanket to the Samahquamicw people who contributed to its design and creation and with and for whom this work was initiated. I further consider the equally important processes of gifting within the academy. Considering next steps towards expanding the scope of change in Aboriginal education environments, I discuss how an *all my relations* pedagogy has emerged out of this project and suggest how it could take up the *single story* and *perfect stranger* warp yarns

that, for the most part, remain hidden in the four Indigenous education policy and recommendation making documents that provide the foundational strands on to which this dissertation blanket has been woven. Just because they are not visible, does not mean that these warp strands do not have real and lasting effects on the experiences of Indigenous students in post-secondary classrooms.

2-Bar Loom

First and foremost, the loom is an Ucwalmicw guide. It is sacred because it reminds me that becoming Ucwalmicw is an ongoing process filled with responsibilities and the need to act in good ways and with good intentions. In building the loom, preparatory actions were taken to ensure the blanket designed and created upon it carries strength and positive energies and wishes for those it is has been made with and for. The lumber, weaving tools, and yarns were Smudged with thoughts and prayers of good intentions for *all my relations*. As the weaver, I too Smudge and pray as I weave from the heart and spirit to the hearts and spirits of the blanket receivers. The completed blanket will be gifted to the Samahquamicw, as it is their gifts of knowledge that contributed greatly to my coming to see and understand the importance of *all my relations* in contributing to the transforming processes of Indigenous education.

The top and bottom rolling bars run horizontally and are supported by the right and left posts of the loom. The two bars are inserted into openings in the posts, allowing a turning movement when needed throughout the weaving process. This represents, for me, the fact that our cultures and ways are not static, but dynamic and always in motion. The weaving process happens in relation to the support posts and the top and bottom rolling bars. All parts and processes are interdependent and inter-related. The rotating action of the rolling bars embodies the fact that First Peoples' ways have always been present and active to varying degrees in varied spaces, even while Aboriginal education was imposing its worldviews and intentions upon Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Indigenous Knowledge systems have never ceased. This point emerges in the tensions described in chapter two of this dissertation and in the patterns of resistance to uniformity that are apparent in the unevenness between sections of the weft yarns as present in the actual blanket. The rolling action of the top and bottom bars further represents

the ongoing and ever-changing ways in which Indigenous Knowledge Systems are affecting change in Aboriginal education.

The vertical posts of the loom are also evident in the written dissertation blanket by alternately aligning all subheadings and images left to right, then right to left. This approach to formatting the document kept me mindful of what the supporting posts of the loom represent. This side-to-side placement of subtitles reminded me that I was weaving back and forth between Ucwalmicw ways and an Indigenist paradigm as I wrote. Walking Ucwalmicw protocols and processes are the pathways to *self-determination*, *political integrity*, *resistance*, *honoring Indigenous voice* and *fulfilling my responsibilities* as an Ucwalmicw woman. I was reminded of this each time I aligned (and re-aligned with subsequent drafts) each section heading of this dissertation from left to right as visual and physical reminders of the need to stay in motion, to not get stuck in the theories or concepts and to afford equal time and space to the actions of Ucwalmicw ways in this writing process. This document, therefore, is also the loom that supports the writing of the Indigenous education tapestry.

The colors and patterns of the weft yarns

The border of the blanket woven on to this dissertation loom is a simple *plain* weave with the weft yarn weaving over one warp, under one warp, over one, under one, back and forth. This tightly-knit weave borders the entire blanket to represent the framework of imposed, mainstream Aboriginal education systems from within which the Indigenous education tapestry emerges. Rectangular in shape, the border epitomizes the linear, colonial and colonizing box of post-secondary institutions that serve Indigenous and non-Indigenous students alike. While transformative processes are well underway, the reality is I continue to hear of and experience the mindsets and approaches of Aboriginal education to this day. There is still much work to be done before we can say that Aboriginal education has been transformed into Indigenous education. The tightly-weaved *plain* stitch border of this blanket reminds me of Dei's (2008) words cited in chapter four, "Once we claim our space, it is even more difficult to hold on to that space" (p. 9). We must endure until that border is no longer in-tact, until it can no longer constrain and restrain the beauty and strength of diversity from fully emerging out of the tapestries of Indigenous education.

To fill the space within this taught perimeter, the white weft yarn takes on a twine-weaving pattern in which two weft strands simultaneously wrap the warp yarn from both behind and in front (See Figure 23: *Twine weave*). This weaving style is best to use when the weaver wishes to make the warp yarn invisible. This twining technique was utilized to differentiate it from the tightly woven and strict framework of colonial and colonizing frameworks to illustrate that there has always been resistance from within the borders of imposed Aboriginal education, even if and when it was not seen.
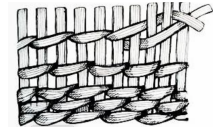

Figure 23 Twine weave

Traditionally, aesthetic expressions such as these would need to be worked and reworked until the patterns and tensions were perfectly symmetrical. This, my second weaving, is by no means perfect as is expected by our Elders and traditional weavers. I chose to leave the bumps and gaps, the uneven tensions visible within this blanket to signify the resistance, tensions, and gaps that have been ever-present in the tapestries of emerging Indigenous education. The noticeably tighter rows of weaving midway through the blanket reflect the extreme tension I was feeling at that stage of the writing process. It was in seeing the overly tight rows that I came to realize that the writing timeline for this dissertation was causing me great stress.

I further left the numerous imperfections in the woven blanket as a statement regarding the toll that Aboriginal education has taken on Indigenous ways of being and knowing. As noted in chapter two, Indigenous knowledge transmission centers on relationships. Immersed in those significant relationships, one would listen to, observe, and then practice the teachings under the guidance of a community Elder or practitioner. Due to the gaps in our Ucwalmicw systems, I did not observe the weaving of blankets as a child before receiving instruction and guidance around the age of ten in blanket weaving. Instead, I learned from: observing, on one occasion, an Elder Aunty contributing to the creation of a communal tapestry; from YouTube videos; from an ancestor's visit in a dream; and from practice, trial and error. As can be seen in the finished tapestry, many gaps and tensions require the weaving in of Indigenous protocols and practices before it becomes a true representation of Indigenous education.

The bottom third of the blanket weaves in the colors of the four Ucwalmicw teachings utilizing the twill patterning weave (Figure 24: *Twill Weave*). I chose this weave for this section

because I knew, from attempting to map out the pattern, that it was a more difficult process to master. Use of this technique represents the fact that it will not always be perfect, and it may continue to be difficult, but we must persistently weave in our teachings, experiences, and
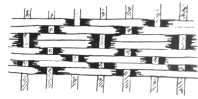
Figure 24 Twill Weave

values, to honor the centuries of resistance and action of those who have gone before us, for those who continue to do this work today, and for those who will be doing it tomorrow. We are but a part of the ever-emerging tapestry.

The twilling pattern of the colored segments of the blanket is created by passing the weft over one warp strand and under the next two, which creates a diagonal pattern of weft strands along the surface. At the edge, the weft is turned back and woven across in the opposite direction. The order of crossing the warp is changed as each line is woven - it is stepped along one warp, but the system of over two, under one is continued throughout the weave (Wells, 1969). Although I drew and mapped this out several times trying to figure it out before attempting to bring this technique in to the actual blanket, as can be seen, this too is not as precise as it is expected to be. These imperfections make visible the effects that formal and imposed education systems have on becoming fully human/ Ucwalmicw while at the same time demonstrating the tensions around consistent efforts to draw Indigenous pedagogies and practices in to Aboriginal education frameworks.

Bringing in colored weft yarns visually demonstrates the life and beauty of diversity that our Indigenous Knowledge systems bring to the monochromatic tapestry of Aboriginal education. The fact that these colored yarns eventually seep into the border of the blanket signifies that the structures need to change in order for us to realize significant change in Indigenous education.

While the left to right weaving in of the weft yarns might appear to be a linear motion, it is also circular at the same time as each strand wraps around the end warp yarns circling back and forth across this tapestry of coming to know. It is a matter of simultaneously seeing beyond mainstream perspectives that might only see the linear, horizontal weaving action set within a box shaped frame that one becomes able to see the beauty of the circular motions that created but are not so evident in the finished blanket. That is not to say that there are not tensions throughout this two-eyed seeing (TED, 2016) process. One example that came up for me was the need to be consistently reminded to demonstrate where this work sat within the literature while I was more Indigenously inclined to weave the blanket and to implement the Ucwalmicw teachings and

write about my reflections on having done so. The distance that exists between the two parallel loom posts, that will never intersect, epitomizes the need to actively make interconnections between the rigors and requirements of analyzing and citing Indigenous education reports and recommendations and the vigors and intentions of mobilizing Indigenous knowledge systems. This dissertation blanket simultaneously represents coming to know and understand towards obtaining a PhD and becoming fully Ucwalmicw through weaving together and within the structures of Indigenous and Western Knowledge systems.

Gifting the Dissertation Blanket

Kuokkanen points out that "(i)t is a well-established argument that the gift functions mainly as a system of social relations, for forming alliances, communities, and solidarity. It is often ignored that in Indigenous worldviews, the gift extends beyond interpersonal relationships to 'all my relations'" (2008, p. 23). While much information was shared regarding the gifting of blankets in chapter one, it is important to articulate the depth of meaning that Indigenous Peoples attach to this protocol/practice. Kuokkanen's definition weaves in nicely with the central intentions of this PhD project. Gifting is a reciprocating act that maintains balance between all beings. One does not receive without gifting and the "sense of collective responsibility" (Kuokkanen, 2008, p. 23) fostered by this practice, underpins Tákem Nsnekwnúkw7a protocols. The central role of these protocols is the well-being of community (Kuokkanen, 2008).

Q'aLaTKú7eMicw shared their time, knowledge, experiences and their communal spaces with me for the purposes of this project. "In reciprocity as practiced in terms of Indigenous worldviews, gifts are not given primarily to ensure a counter gift later on, but to actively acknowledge kinship and coexistence with the world…" (Kuokkanen, 2008, p. 38). As shared in chapter four, handmade gifts imbued with positive wishes, energy and love were presented to community members who engaged in the Sharing Circles and the survey process. The tapestry of Indigenous education policies and recommendations was woven into with the intentions of Samahquamicw as it was woven with intentions for Samahquamicw. I will Smudge and gift, with all the hopes and aspirations for Ucwalmicw education presented throughout this dissertation, the completed blanket to Samahquamicw after reading it at a community gathering. This is to honor and acknowledge the many gifts shared with me before, during and after the

PhD study community engagement processes. This dissertation blanket wraps good intentions, strength, and wishes for Samahquamicw education around the community.

Scholarly "Give Back"

The type of reciprocity in the process of gifting that Kuokkanen references in her work,

> implies *response-ability* – that is, an ability to respond, to remain attuned to the world beyond oneself, as well as a willingness to recognize its existence through the giving of gifts. This sense of responsibility embedded in the gift is the result of living within an ecosystem and being dependent on it. (2008, p. 39)

This project was also facilitated within and for the academic world, of which Ucwalmicw students and I are a part of and depending on as we near the potential ratification of the 25 year-long treaty negotiation we are currently engaged in. To maintain a reciprocal relationship with the academy, which has also supported and contributed much to this project, I expand upon this concept of scholarly give back. While this knowledge seeking, making and sharing process was initiated with and for Ucwalmicw, it was always in our minds that the contributions of this work must also benefit academia. That said, as Kuokkanen (2008) asks, "What must the academy do in order to be able to receive the gift?" (p. 160) when it does not yet see gifting as more than simple economic exchanges. How does an institution receive that which is offered as my responsibilities to all my relations, as a giving back at human and epistemic levels? (Kuokkanen, 2008). Action is required. In supporting and engaging with Indigenous students' PhD processes and accepting their gifts of knowledge into their canons, the university needs to do more than "…simply paying occasional tribute to Indigenous peoples and their land-centered practices or employing them as inspirational symbols without knowing and acting on the responsibilities set by the logic of the gift" (Kuokkanen, 2008, p. 161).

Q'aLaTKú7eMicw sharings, and all other gifts being offered in a great diversity of master's theses and PhD dissertations, need to be employed with good intentions toward building and sustaining harmonious relationships within academia; they must be experienced to fully understand and receive them. Transformation of education systems and our relationships with each other and all our relations, "… will require the dominant culture to change its values as well as the thinking and behavior guided by those values" (Kuokkanen, 2008, p. 161). It would be

very far reaching to begin with transforming the role that universities play in the social engineering of that dominant culture. Indigenous contributions to the academy offer a multitude of pathways towards social and political change and justice. Institutions of integrity would not only receive these gifts, but would also, following Ucwalmicw teachings, mobilize them towards experientially coming to know the power that they hold for re-humanizing education. This aspiration for Indigenous education fully realized is visually represented by the twining in of the colored weft yarns into the previously all white border of the dissertation blanket.

Discussion: Towards Significant Transformation

The bringing together of wholistic ways within an institution that segregates and compartmentalizes signifies weaving across the gaps that exist in current understandings of transforming education for Indigenous students. Kuokkanen acknowledges these gaps and affirms that, "creating Indigenous spaces and asserting Indigenous voices in the academy are generally insufficient measures because their scope is limited to specific programs and spheres of the academy" (2008, p. 160). In addition to applying Q'aLaTKú7eMicw protocols and processes to mobilize policies that attend to the needs of Indigenous students, this dissertation further advocates for applying them to address the gaps in non-Indigenous students' educations. I argue that this work is equally required to facilitate significant change that benefits First Peoples in all their/our life domains.

Chapter six of this dissertation illustrates how local knowledge can mobilize Indigenous education policies in respectful ways towards creating enhanced learning environments that result in successful outcomes for Indigenous students. The patterns that emerge out of this blanket are directly related to what we choose to warp the loom with. The policies and recommendations considered in chapter five and six carry the best of intentions for Indigenous students and their educational experiences are inevitably enriched by them. What these important documents do not address is the *single-story* perspective and *perfect stranger* culture that is perpetuated by guiding us to "watch the wrong door" (Smith, 2003, p. 9) because they remain hidden within Indigenous education policy-making. It is not actually the wrong door, but it is not the only door that requires our attention either.

Failing to acknowledge, let alone address, the larger systems that First Peoples are immersed in, is an example of politics of distraction (Smith, 2003) that contributes to, as opposed

to challenging, what Vimalassery, Hu Pegues and Goldstein (2016) call "epistemologies of unknowing" (p. 1). This orientation works to "…preempt relational modes of analysis" (Vimalassery et al, 2016, p. 1) which, coincidently, emerged through the implementation of Q'aLaTKú7eMicw sharings in my FNST classes. It is through *beginning and doing in good ways*, *trusting in our ways*, *walking the talk* and working from a *wholistic perspective* that I began to see my students as not students but as relations. This led me to deeply consider how to best approach topics in FNST that are uncomfortable and/or difficult to consider. Mobilizing the Q'aLaTKú7eMicw protocols and processes provided a way to address my growing concerns for the students' coming to understand processes. They also began to concretize into a relational mode of analysis and application towards doing the work that needs to be done to begin respectful relationship building in my classrooms. That is, after all, the intentions behind Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

Persistently guiding attention towards finding ways to adapt isolated pockets of space for Indigenous students eliminates the possibilities of facilitating "…significant social and political change…" (Regan, 2010, p. x) across the institution and it, in fact, serves to further segregate First Peoples within the student body of institutions that claim to be working to enhance Indigenous students' experiences and success rates. This then reinforces the barriers that have existed between First Nations and Canadians since first contact.

Reflecting on the implementation of Q'aLaTKú7eMicw contributions to this study, I argue that there is a need to broaden the very narrow application of current policy and practice in transforming Aboriginal education. Doing so begins to respond to the AFN's, the RCAP's, the TRC's and the ACDE's calls for significant social and political change in that it advocates for processes that consider everyone in the classrooms with which Indigenous students engage. First Peoples do not make up a significant portion of the student population in most any learning institution. It is from this wider and experiential understanding that the research questions sought to learn what Samahquamicw community members see as vital to their visions of Samahquamicw education.

In this next-steps discussion, I suggest that while equally ubiquitous in the tapestries of Aboriginal education, the warp yarn of the *perfect stranger* remains hidden beneath the fabric because it is too infrequently taken up in the processes of transformative weaving. This work will not mirror such neglect. Dion describes the *perfect stranger* position as one that the majority of

Settler Canadians prefer to hold in regard to the Original Peoples of Turtle Island. She writes that most, "…have a limited understanding of Aboriginal people, history, and culture; rather their understanding is informed by dominant discourses…" (p. 330) that contribute to this complicated position which is, "…informed simultaneously by what [they] know, what they do not know, and what they refuse to know. It is, for many, a response to recognizing that what they know is premised on a range of experiences with stereotypical representations" (Dion, 2008, p. 331). Such stereotypes and misconceptions of First Peoples are perpetuated by a glaring absence of truth telling in what is and is not taught in university classrooms that prefer to re-direct our attention to addressing the 'challenges and barriers' of Aboriginal student 'success'. Tendencies to do so fortify and continue what Vimalassery et al call epistemologies of unknowing and/or of ignorance. Godlewska, Moore and Bednasek (2010) elucidate these epistemologies in their writings, stating that, "… the principal problem in Aboriginal education in Canada is the education of Canadians" (p. 417). These scholars/practitioners candidly state that their 2010 article, "…exposes Canada's long history of ignorance of Aboriginal Peoples and suggests that while education may not be the source of ignorance, it is now perpetuating it" (p. 417). This is extremely problematic in light of approaches that consistently opt to center on the smallest segment of student populations, which, quite frankly, are not the problem. Godlewska et al argue that the perpetuation of this ignorance, "…is not a passive or haphazard but a profoundly purposive and wilful ignorance" and that the continuing silence surrounding this issue in curricula and pedagogy makes our education systems "… complicit in perpetuating this self-serving ignorance and maintaining the injustices of Canadian history as a living reality for Aboriginal People today" (2010, p. 419).

I greatly appreciate the forthrightness of these scholars for their words demonstrate that it is by design that non-Indigenous students are also conditioned by Aboriginal education which is molding them into *perfect strangers* while at the same time attempting to assimilate their Indigenous counter-parts. In being concerned for the wellbeing of all students, it is important to venture out on this journey beginning from the same place to figure ways out together. It is in viewing Indigenous education through an *all my relations'* lens that the gaps created by avoiding the *perfect stranger* warp yarn become glaringly visible. Aspirations for transformation from a Tákem Nsnekwnúkw7a perspective include good wishes for all beings- for everyone. *Us and them* worldviews will persist so long as we continue to ignore the *perfect stranger* yarn in our

efforts to Indigenize small pockets of the academy for the 'benefit' of Indigenous students. Failure to press the need to interrogate the role that education plays in creating and maintaining such epistemologies is a significant barrier to transformation. I say this based on recent classroom experiences of visceral responses to the word *settler*. If we cannot even consider why this single word is seen as being that which divides First Peoples and Canadians, how can we possibly dismantle the myth of an 'empty land' in which First Nations' peoples continue to be rendered invisible (Furniss, 1999).

Tupper reiterates what Godlewska et al propose, that "…schools and curriculum are implicated in "forgetting" certain aspects of Canada's past as they function to socialize young people into dominant knowledge systems" (2011, p.39). One way to concretize epistemologies of unknowing within curricula is the use of common forms of bias, namely; bias by omission, bias by defamation, and bias by obliteration, all of which "…contribute to the various forms of colonization affecting Indigenous students" (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008, p. 956). These ongoing practices "… reinforce settler identities and students' ignorance of how these identities have been normalized over time" (Tupper, 2011, p. 40). Bailey (2007) refers to this epistemology as 'white [sic] ignorance' and argues that it is a "… form of not knowing (seeing wrongly), resulting from the habit of erasing, dismissing, distorting, and forgetting" the lives and experiences of Aboriginal peoples (p. 85). This effectively creates the conditions for the larger student body to experience minimal encounters with facts and perspectives of who they are in relation to First Peoples that is required for reconciliation to begin (Godlewska, Moore, & & Bednasek, 2010).

Reconciliation from LaDuke's perspective is concerned with mutually healing everyone involved and bringing balance and harmony to the relationship (Sacred Land Film Project, 2011) and Epp (2008) writes,

> Instead of posing the question about reconciliation as a matter of what 'they' [First Nations] want – recognition, compensation, land – and what 'we' can live with, the subject under closest scrutiny becomes 'ourselves'. In other words, the subject is not the 'Indian problem' but the 'settler' problem. (p. 126)

Both Dion (2008, 2009) and Tupper's (2011) contributions to this discussion are disseminated from their respective studies with teacher candidate students and the resistance they experienced

in their inquiries into how these future educators were receiving this idea of addressing the "Settler problem" (Regan, 2010). Dion refers to this as the more challenging aspect of this work and identifies, as does Tupper, a practice of claiming strategic ignorance when asking how students would implement Indigenous content and pedagogies (Treaties in Tupper's inquiry) into their teaching practices. Dion stresses that as educators we cannot allow these strategies to make us complicit in practices of omission for the comfort levels of our students. In disseminating her study findings, Tupper cites a number of blatantly defiant comments from the (anonymous) study participants' responses and she arrives at the same conclusions as Dion,

> When we worry about how preservice teachers will respond to our interventions, and act on this worry by lessening the degree to which we disrupt settler identities through counter narratives, then we remain complicit in white [sic] normativity. Instead, the creation of discomfort/disruption in teacher education spaces should be viewed as not only an essential condition for (white)[sic] preservice teachers, but also for teacher educators. (2011, p. 49)

These strategies are employed by students at large and are not exclusive to teacher candidates. I can say this because I have witnessed the majority of students who enter my classrooms functioning under epistemologies of unknowing and ignorance that allow them to distance themselves from First Peoples and 'their challenges'. These calls to intervene apply to all who accept and carry the responsibilities of teachers. I agree with Tupper that as educators we must walk this path alongside our students to "…reveal and unpack settler identities. This is the hard and necessary work of reconciliation" (Tupper, 2011, p. 50). And if it is to be truly reconciling, it must be done in a good way.

> Epistemic ignorance is more than an "Indigenous problem". It is a problem of higher education generally, in that it threatens free and fearless intellectual inquiry and the pursuit of knowledge and cannot be solved by adding "Native content" to curricula or by incorporating the "indigenous" into critical pedagogy. (Kuokkanen, 2008, p. 160)

This is where this study has much to offer to the weaving of the next Indigenous education blanket. I anticipate that just as students may opt to take the position of *not knowing* how to teach about Indigenous Peoples, pedagogies and content, there will also be a tendency to *not know* how to unpack settler identities, and,

universities cannot simply expect that Indigenous peoples will bring about systemic change on their own. Non-Indigenous people also need space and time to learn about Indigenous history and culture, and about how to build more reconciliatory relations with Indigenous peoples. A post-secondary system cannot help to bring about reconciliation without addressing preconceived ideas, mindsets and attitudes that perpetuate stereotypical views of Indigenous peoples. (Cote-Meek, 2017, Para. 11)

The focus of Indigenous education must reach beyond the effects that mainstream systems are having on First Peoples' students to include what is and is not being taught in the classroom because it is affecting all learners. This in turn affects the kinds of society we create, "If knowledge is fundamental to understanding, interpreting and establishing values within a society, then control over its production becomes an integral component of cultural survival" (Hoare, Levy, & Robinson, 1993, p. 46). As an Ucwalmicw student, I have been exposed to the very same curricula and received the very same lectures as the non-Indigenous student sitting beside me. How, then, is it possible that I am socialized by the education system and my classmate is not? I am in agreement with Alfred's (2005) assertion that, "Our fight is to recognize, to expose, and to ultimately overcome the corrupt, colonized identities and irrational fears that have been bred into us" (p. 35), to keep us divided. "Us", viewed through an Ucwalmicw lens, means *all my relations.* Wagamese (2016) beautifully defines this concept noting:

> It points to truth that we are all related, that we are all connected, that we all belong to each other. The most important word is 'all'. Not just those who look like me, sing like me, dance like me, speak like me, pray like me or behave like me. ALL my relations. That means every person just as it means every rock, mineral, blade of grass and creature. We live because everything else does. If we were to choose collectively to live that teaching, the energy of our change of consciousness would heal each of us--and heal the planet. (p. 36)

Teaching and learning from an all my relations' perspective offers a pathway out of the Settler problem that can in turn facilitate a re-claiming of diverse worldviews and values that are Indigenous to humanity. Connection and commitment to place, languages and cultures is a beautiful thing (Twin Cities PBS, 2010) that all peoples have rights to and responsibilities for. When education systems are working to repair our relationships to each other and to the land we will all be on track towards becoming fully human. This is when classrooms will

become truly safe and successful spaces for Ucwalmicw students. Tákem Nsnekwnúkw7a is not a saying, it is a way of being. *All my relations* reminds me there are many ways of being, doing and valuing in the world that have much to contribute to the building of human solidarity while reestablishing humanity's relationship with the land and all more-than-human beings. All students have the right to be exposed to a diversity of ideas and worldviews so that each can make their own informed decision about how they wish to see and be in the world. There is more than one way. Epistemologies of unknowing and ignorance serve the 1% and they serve it very well. It is my responsibility to honor all my relations by sharing what I know about my own colonization and ongoing resistance to it. It is by centering my teaching and learning in Ucwalmicw protocols and processes that an *all my relations* pedagogy can continue to emerge from my next Indigenous education tapestry.
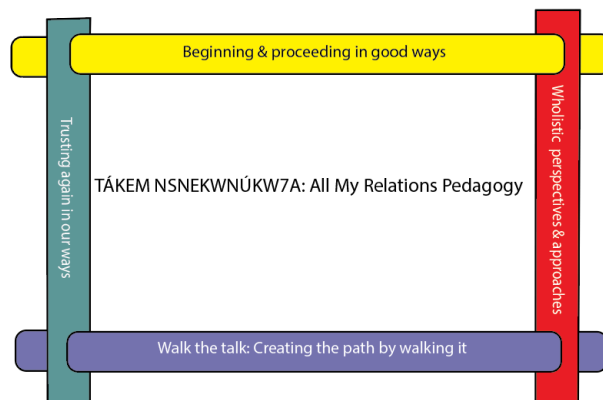
Tákem nsnek̓wnúk̓w7a

Beginning & proceeding in good ways

Trusting again in our ways

TÁKEM NSNEKWNÚKW7A: All My Relations Pedagogy

Wholistic perspectives & approaches

Walk the talk: Creating the path by walking it

Figure 25 Next Blanket

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