UNSETTLING EDUCATION IN STÓ:LŌ TÉMÉXW: EXPLORING THE PARTICULARITIES OF PLACE IN CURRICULUM RESEARCH

by

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Abstract

The role of place of in education is complex and multifaceted; place is both a topic of inquiry and a context for education. Yet many Western approaches to education continue to be structured around universal approaches to knowledge and skills development that neglect the role of place in education. The result is education operating under the illusion of placelessness, which obscures how Western society exerts power over people and land in the places of education. This dissertation responds to the problem of placelessness by examining the author's location as an educator in Stó:lō Téméxw, the land of the Stó:lō people, commonly known as British Columbia's Fraser Valley. This project draws on the curriculum research method of synoptic text, a form of inquiry that explores relevant historical and cultural knowledge on topics in society and education. Synoptic text research is used to explore the historical impacts of possessiveness and superiority in settler colonialism in this region, providing relevant examples from the author's own practice.

This research contributes to the field of place-based education by drawing on concepts from critical place-based and Indigenous land-based education to address the complexities of Indigenous and settler connection to the land. Connection to the land is surveyed within both Stó:lō and settler history. The wisdom of Stó:lō relationship and responsibility to the land is examined alongside the settler assumptions of possessiveness and superiority. By engaging the complicated conversations between Stó:lō and settler perspectives and practices, this curriculum research invites educators to refuse easy solutions to the complexity of decolonization in education.

The curriculum research findings lead to discussion on practices of unlearning and relationality that contribute to decolonization in education. Research conversations with Stó:lō educators and leaders and experiments with curriculum examples are included to illustrate ways the relevant knowledge of Stó:lō Téméxw can inform educational practice. The iterative and contextual nature of these conversations and curriculum examples invite educators to consider the implications for unsettling education in their own places of education.

Lay Summary

Western society often neglects the relationship between education and place. Ignoring this connection obscures how characteristics of society found in specific places influence education. This dissertation addresses this problem by examining connections between place and education in Stó:lō Téméxw, the land of the Stó:lō people, commonly known as British Columbia's Fraser Valley.

Exploring relevant historical and cultural examples in society and education, this project discusses how European settlement in the region (i.e. settler colonialism) has impacted Stó:lō people and land, continuing to influence education today. Identifying problematic assumptions in society and including insights from Indigenous knowledge and culture, this research engages a variety of perspectives to develop understanding and practices for engaging the complexities of education in Stó:lō Téméxw. The research includes conversations with Stó:lō educators and leaders and experiments with curriculum examples to highlight the implications of this research for teaching and learning.

Preface

This dissertation is the original intellectual product of the author, David Warkentin.

Generative AI was not used for any aspects of this dissertation.

The co-operative education (co-op) assignment examples in Appendix C (pp. 332) were developed in collaboration with C. Stewart-Smith, K. Webster, and B. Hill, the staff team responsible for co-op curriculum and programming in the Centre for Experiential and Career Education at the University of the Fraser Valley.

Sections of Chapter 1 (pp. 9-11), Chapter 5 (pp. 161-169), and Chapter 7 (pp. 234-241) were developed in the following peer-reviewed article: Warkentin, D. (2025). Unsettling Cooperative Education: Decolonial Directions. *Journal for the Study of Cooperative and Experiential Education*, *1*(1), 64-73.

The references to the research conversations included in Chapters 4-8 were covered by UBC Ethics Certificate number H23-02913.

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List of Abbreviations

Co-op: Co-operative Education

ICP: Integrative Curriculum of Place

LBE: Land-based Education

PBE: Place-based Education

SRRMC: Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre

UFV: University of the Fraser Valley

WIL: Work-integrated Learning

Glossary

Halq'eméylem Terms

The following is a list of Halq'eméylem words and phrases that are included in this dissertation. Halq'eméylem is the language of the Stó:lō people, the upriver dialect of Halkomelem spoken by Coast Salish Indigenous peoples.

Halq'eméylem: upriver dialect of Halkomelem

Lhilheqey: Mother mountain, also known as Mt. Cheam

Shxweli: life spirit, soul

Sí:yá:m: Stó:lō leader

S'olh Téméxw: our land, our world; refers to Stó:lō territory; used by Stó:lō when referring to their territory

S'ólh Téméxw te íkw'élò. Xólhmet te mekw' stám ít kwelát: "This is our land. We have to look after everything that belongs to us."

Sqwélqwel: contemporary stories of Stó:lō peoples' lived experience

Stó:lō: river; name of the original people living in S'olh Téméxw

Stó:lō Téméxw: Stó:lō land or territory; used by people who are non Stó:lō

Sxwōxwiyám: Stó:lō origin stories

Téméxw: earth, ground, land, the earth, the world

Tómiyeqw: 7 generations past and future

Xá:ytem: transformer site, also known as Hatzic Rock

Xexá:ls: transformers

Xwelítem: hungry ones, people who are not Stó:lō

Acknowledgements

Beyond just a connection to place, this dissertation has brought a connection with people. Relationality was not just a concept I examined but an essential experience in my research journey.

To my supervisory committee, you helped me make sense of all the various ideas and possible directions that I brought to this project. Dr. Alison Taylor, your probing questions, thorough review, and relevant suggestions helped bring a much-needed clarity. Dr. William Pinar, I received your comments and questions with anticipation, knowing they would help me navigate my own experience of complicated conversations. Dr. Joaquin Muñoz, you offered timely guidance to be present to myself in relating to Stó:lō community, wisdom, and the land, recognizing that the starting place wasn't getting it right, but relationship.

The 2020 EdD cohort – Covid Peeps! We'll always be defined by beginning our program during Covid, having sought out in-person connection in this program only to journey through screens and texts for the bulk of our time together. Yet we found a way for conversations, questions, and encouragement that has been rich and generative.

Dr. Shauna Butterwick, your hospitality and guidance in hosting the virtual dissertation writing groups (i.e. Hop-on Hop-off Writing Bus) sustained my focus in my heaviest season of writing. I'll never forget the phrase, "writing alone together."

To my four Stó:lō research participants, kw'as hó:y. Your gift of time, wisdom, and encouragement were instrumental in my understanding of Stó:lō history and culture. Si:yémiya (Sonny McHalsie), your extensive knowledge of Stó:lō places and traditions helped me grasp the depth of a Stó:lō worldview. Grand Chief Clarence Pennier, your personal stories and insights

into Stó:lō politics highlighted the personal and social nature of connection to the land. Dr. Lolehawk Laura Buker, your consistent focus on educators seeing the gift of students has changed my student interactions. Q'um Q'um Xiiem (Dr. Jo-ann Archibald), your wisdom for education oriented in relationship showed up in your stories and questions, informing how I engage relationship in my own practices as an educator.

It was a gift to learn from UFV's Teaching and Learning Indigenization specialists, slínek (Lorna Andrews) and Senóqw'iye (Leanne Joe). Your relational posture and practice in teaching informed how I envision holistic curriculum at the intersection of land, language, and experience in Stó:lō Téméxw.

Candace Stewart-Smith and my team of colleagues in the Centre of Experiential and Career Education at the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV), I'm not sure I could have completed this project if I hadn't found my way to working with the co-op team. Feeling lost without a place of educational practice, your hospitality and encouragement to apply my research in our work together was a gift.

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For Julie.

I love sharing in the journey of connection to people and place with you.

Chapter 1: An Exploration of Place

> What is the significance of place to understandings of life and living? In the English language, place is most commonly used as a noun to indicate location and often connected with a sense of belonging. A sense of belonging to a place stems from contextual familiarity with the social, cultural, ethical, spiritual, economic, historical, and political influences that constitute experience there as human beings…Conceptualizing place as context brings focus to the unique qualities of a particular location that give it prominence and nourish affinity for it. (Donald, 2020, p. 156)

This dissertation is an exploration of place – place as a concept in education, but also place as the specific context in which my life and work as an educator is located. I focus on my own connection to the place of Stó:lō Téméxw, the land commonly known as British Columbia's Fraser Valley,[1] considering how engagement with place leads to ways of connecting curriculum to the particularities of place in generative ways. As an exercise in contextual curriculum research, I examine my connection to place using a series of theoretical and experiential snapshots, descriptions of the complexity of education in Stó:lō Téméxw that capture dynamics of the journey of this exploration of place. Snapshots of history, community, education, and experience form a sort of bricolage (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005) that brings together a range of theoretical, methodological, and experiential elements within my context of work in higher

[1] While I began this study referring to the Fraser Valley as the place of my research, I now use Stó:lō Téméxw, the Halq'eméylem phrase meaning Stó:lō "land" (Galloway, 2009). I have learned from Stó:lō colleagues, leaders, and teachers, such as Senóqw'iye (Leanne Joe), slínek (Lorna Andrews), Swelchalot Shxwha:yathel (Dr. Shirley Hardman), Lolehawk (Dr. Laura Buker), and Si:yémiya (Sonny McHalsie) that using Halq'eméylem words and phrases is a way of showing respect to Stó:lō knowledge, people, and land.

education in Stó:lō Téméxw. I begin this dissertation, then, with a snapshot of my own experience of place.

Early in 2022, as I was developing my dissertation research directions, each Saturday saw protestors line Highway #1 in Stó:lō Téméxw, joining "Freedom Convoy" rallies happening in places all over Canada in a call for the repeal of vaccine and other COVID-19 mandates. Cries of "Freedom!" and "Take Back Our Land!" and "True North Strong and Free!" echoed an assumed entitlement to live in this place from the majority white settler crowd, unfettered by commitment to people or places. And as I observed friends and neighbours join the rallies, my question, "Is *this* my place?" was simultaneously answered: "This *is* my place." I realized that the values represented in the rallies reflected the sentiments of many residents in this place. I was connected to these people whether I wanted to be or not. This experience reminded me why I think place-based education is so important in Stó:lō Téméxw. The conflicted visions for this place need to be addressed and I believe higher education curriculum has a role to play to that end. Higher education in Stó:lō Téméxw, in which I have worked for over a decade as an instructor and administrator, is part of a socio-political culture at the intersection of settler-colonialism, Indigenous self-determination, suburban community-development, population increase, multiculturalism, and religious diversity, just to name a few of the complexities of this place. As someone who has taught and developed interdisciplinary curriculum that incorporates social justice and experiential learning in this context, I have come to value the importance of engaging this place as a key part of education. Stó:lō Téméxw as a place of education is a central focus of this dissertation as I explore directions in higher education curriculum research oriented around the unique characteristics of this place.

I go about this exploration of education and place with an approach to curriculum research that I have come to call an Integrative Curriculum of Place (ICP). As I explain further below, ICP describes how various theories and methods can interrelate to inform iterative and contextual inquiry within my own areas of curriculum practice in Stó:lō Téméxw. This introduction is the first in a collection of research perspectives that survey the different facets of my exploration of place and curriculum research in Stó:lō Téméxw. I liken these different perspectives to a series of snapshots to emphasize that it has taken place in a particular time and place as snapshot can mean "an impression or view of something brief or transitory" (Merriam-Webster, 2024). In this way each chapter provides a glimpse into my journey of curriculum research in Stó:lō Téméxw. But I am also drawn to the concept of snapshot as an artform, a type of storytelling. Like a photographer capturing the nuances of a time and place for an audience to engage visually, this project provides glimpses into the nuances of my time and place as a way for readers to engage the story of decolonization and education in Stó:lō Téméxw.

In this first snapshot, I introduce the beginnings of this research. I discuss my motivations for researching place and education in Stó:lō Téméxw and provide an overview of the concepts of place and placelessness in education. I then reflect on my own role as an educational researcher within my own place of Stó:lō Téméxw, introducing my work as a teacher and administrator in interdisciplinary and experiential learning and indicating how I understand my own role in this place. I offer a brief comment on how this project fits within various fields of educational and curriculum research, concluding with an overview of the project and a summary of the questions and purposes that have driven my research.

1.1 Place and Placelessness

To understand how I arrived at these research directions, I begin with a description of what I mean by "place" and what I have come to understand as the problem of placelessness. Papaschase Cree curriculum theorist, Dwayne Donald (2020), describes place as a concept that denotes both a specific location – "the unique qualities of a particular location that give it prominence" (p. 156) – and the experience of human connection in that location – "the social, cultural, ethical, spiritual, economic, historical, and political influences that constitute experience there as human beings" (p. 156). A problem I have encountered, however, is that higher education curriculum is often formulated and delivered without intentional connection to the place(s) in which education occurs (Marker, 2006). Donald (2020) traces the influence of Enlightenment thinking in contemporary education that prioritizes rational, objective knowledge in the pursuit of generalized scientific understandings of world. The result is curriculum committed to techniques and standards that serve these broad aims of education wherever they occur. Connection to place, Donald (2020) explains, is subservient to this purpose:

> This paradigmatic stance has had wide-reaching implications for education because it promotes a view of the world wherein the particularities of a place only matter to the extent that they can serve to maintain Enlightenment-based values, inventions, technologies, and institutions as the centre of understandings of what it means to be a human being. (p. 158)

Donald (2020) laments, then, how this view of knowledge results in a "curriculum of placelessness," (p. 158) or what educational researcher John Kitchens (2009) describes as a "pedagogy of placelessness" (p. 242). In prioritizing abstract knowledge and students' skill and personal development attention to place in students' educational experience is missing. Such

universalized approaches to curriculum risk neglecting important cultural issues in the places in which all education is situated. For example, this approach to curriculum may engage local Indigenous communities, but do so in a way that views the local Indigenous people and knowledge as merely illustrative of generalized conceptions of Indigeneity rather than as integral partners to curriculum in that place. Indigenous educational researcher Cash Ahenakew (2017) bluntly describes this approach for what it is: "instrumentalization and tokenization" (p. 84). Yet place is not a neutral concept from which knowledge can simply be gleaned; it is a conflicted reality representing multiple historical injustices (Seawright, 2014). Needed is a curriculum of place (Chambers, 2008), and engagement with the complex ways in which education is an ecologically and socially embedded process in particular contexts (Helfenbein, 2021). This analysis of placelessness in education has led me to consider how I participate in place in my own context as an educator.

1.2 My Research Context: Experiential Learning in Stó:lō Téméxw

The main purpose of this dissertation, then, is to respond to this problem of placelessness in education, and to do so in my own work and research in curriculum development in Stó:lō Téméxw. I have spent over a decade as an experiential learning educator in higher education developing curriculum that fosters the integration of learning, the process in which students experience connection, application, and synthesis of knowledge and experience across the many sources of learning in their lives and education (Barber, 2014; Billett, 2014). As I discuss further in Chapter 3, experiential learning has been a constant thread in my curriculum work in both traditional academic courses in a variety of interdisciplinary areas (e.g. religious studies, cultural studies, and philosophy) as well as various work-integrated learning courses and programs (e.g. community-based learning, internships, and co-operative education). In developing courses and

programs that incorporate this integration of learning into curriculum and student experience, however, I have seen that a focus on integration does not guarantee an escape from this problem of placelessness. For example, I have taught interdisciplinary courses that focus on the intersection of religion and culture, with a specific emphasis on social justice. Many of the students I was teaching came from settler-Christian communities, and part of the curriculum included interrogation of settler-colonialism in Christianity. We discussed the legacy of theological teachings like *Terra Nullius* within the Doctrine of Discovery (R. J. Miller et al., 2010) and considered how Christianity has and continues to contribute to settler colonialism today (Heinrichs, 2013). Most of the engagement, however, was in a traditional classroom setting and the experience was limited to abstract conversation. It was in that course that I began to experiment with more intentional engagement with place, and specifically local Indigenous people and land. The incorporation of visits to local Stó:lō sites, teaching from Stó:lō Elders, and research on the Indigenous people and land of students' hometowns shifted to a focus on place. Students began a shift from learning *about* the topic, to learning *with* Indigenous people and land. This is just one example of the varied ways place can be included in curriculum (Ormond, 2013; G. A. Smith, 2002), which often occurs through some form of critically oriented experiential learning such as community-based learning and environmental education field studies. Having experienced the potential of encountering place in new ways, my purpose in this project is to explore more ways this could be done in higher education curriculum in Stó:lō Téméxw.

1.3 Positionality: Locating Myself in Place

It is this very interest in place and education that led me to pursue doctoral research in educational studies. Following selected writers (Chambers, 2008; Donald, 2020; Kitchens, 2009;

Lam et al., 2020), my goal is to develop higher education curriculum in Stó:lō Téméxw that addresses this problem of placelessness and incorporates place – the source of local and situated knowledge – as an essential part of the integration of learning. With the majority of my own education as a student and work as an educator occurring in Stó:lō Téméxw, I am keenly aware of the ways placelessness in education can perpetuate some of the socio-political (e.g. settler colonialism), and environmental (e.g. land use) challenges facing this place. The complex issues of the local community are not seen as relevant to the experience of education, so the analysis and solutions that education could potentially offer are left unaddressed. And as a settler[2] educator who has worked in private religious higher education and now a public university institution, I recognize my complicity in the historical problems of this place and hope my research can contribute to a better way forward. I am committed, then, to navigate this research journey with practices of ethical relationship (Donald, 2009), such as respectful relationships with Stó:lō communities and land, and to do so in ways that support decolonial research for change in practice (Schostak & Schostak, 2008; Stein, 2019). Throughout this research journey I have thought of my posture and practice represented by open hands, the giving and receiving of presence that signals relationship and reciprocity. My conversation with Nis'ga educator and

[2] A brief comment on my use of the term "settler" as part of my identity. I choose to identify as a settler, amongst other aspects of who I am, to signify the story in which my relationship to place has emerged, a story of privilege and power as I live in the legacy of my Mennonite European ancestors arriving in Canada and eventually settling in Stó:lō Téméxw. I resonate, then, with what Snelgrove, Dhamoon, and Corntassel (2014) note in their conversation on unsettling settler colonialism: "Whether using Indigenous words for 'settler' or the English word 'settler', these terms should be discomforting and provide an impetus for decolonial transformation through a renewed community-centered approach" (p. 2). In her dissertation exploring Stó:lō-settler relationships in Stó:lō Téméxw, settler researcher Robyn Heaslip (2017) describes how the term also invites ongoing interrogation of the legacy of settler colonialism in society: "I have also experienced the unsettling potential of the term settler applied to contemporary non-Indigenous people, in that it serves to situate us in an ongoing contemporary phenomenon rather than an historical event" (38). My use of the term settler, then, is my conscious effort to keep situating myself in the ongoing realities of settler colonialism within this project.

researcher, Amy Parent, affirmed this approach and challenged me to risk the journey of relationship in research as a settler. This journey, then, has involved facing the risks associated with curriculum changes toward fostering the integration of learning in place and which grapples with this problem of placelessness. Throughout my research and writing I have endeavored to recognize the inevitable personal disruption (Heaslip, 2017) of this approach to research, what settler educator and researcher Paulette Regan (2010) describes as the "imperative to unsettle the settler within" (p. 13).

This unsettling nature of the research emerged somewhat unexpectedly but became central to how ICP framed this project. Curriculum research, I have come to understand and experience, is not only conceptual and practical (e.g. developing a course or program), but also deeply personal. If I began my research by asking how ICP research would inform curriculum and pedagogy in Stó:lō Téméxw, I quickly realized the question also involved myself: how does ICP inform my own journey as an educator and resident in Stó:lō Téméxw? In describing the role of place in education, these words from curriculum theorist William Pinar (2015) have oriented how I view my own role in researching education and place: "Place is the concept wherein the particularities of history, culture, and subjectivity become entwined" (p. 128). Throughout this dissertation, then, I include critical reflection on my own experience of this research, a key practice that Regan (2010) suggests can attend to the complex experiences within the settler "decolonizing journey" (p. 12). I hope to add my story to the growing number of examples from settler researchers and educators who have told their stories of decolonization to invite others to consider their own decolonial journeys (see Dion, 2022; Hardman, 2024). As this interconnectedness of place and education has informed my work and research in curriculum studies, place-based education has become an orienting field for my research.

1.4 Approach to Curriculum Studies

While I outline my theoretical and methodological directions further in Chapters 2 and 3, I want to make a brief preliminary comment on how my project fits within educational research and the field of curriculum studies. Prior to this research, I had begun drawing from critical pedagogy and Indigenous ways of being and knowing in my own teaching of interdisciplinary social justice curriculum, but I realized that I needed more in-depth understanding of these areas of research and pedagogy. Additionally, a significant personal motivation for my research is to examine possibilities in the praxis of curriculum development in my own work in higher education. Curriculum studies is a natural fit to connect my research to my practice. Now, I recognize that the field of curriculum studies is broad and difficult to concisely summarize in its many different iterations (Wearing et al., 2020). There are almost as many approaches to curriculum theory as there are curriculum theorists. So, where do I situate my own research in the breadth of curriculum studies? I answer this question by briefly examining two notable forces in society that influence higher education and curriculum, followed by discussion of how I envision a relational and contextual approach to curriculum as an alternative.

1.4.1 Addressing Settler Colonialism and Neoliberalism

With my interest to explore research at the intersection of place and practice, I resonate with curriculum theorist Yatta Kanu's description of "curriculum as cultural practice" (p. 4), a recognition of how curriculum is always embedded in society and experienced in practice. Examining the particularities of Stó:lō Téméxw in this curriculum project has led me to consider two influential forces within this place: settler colonialism and neoliberalism.

My approach to curriculum research is influenced by the assessments of educational researchers who suggest that settler colonialism has impacted and continues to impact higher

education (Dion, 2022; L. Patel, 2021; Stein, 2020; Tuck & Yang, 2012). With a "logic of elimination" (Dion, 2022, p. 29), settler colonialism describes the displacement of Indigenous people and settler establishment of presence on and possession of land. Patrick Wolfe (2006) notes how this logic involves the two-fold process of first dissolving Indigenous societies by removing people them from their lands and second, building colonial societies in their place, concluding that in this way settler colonialism "is a structure not an event" (p. 388). In education, such a structure is seen in how the cultural values of settler colonialism get embedded in education through what Sharon Stein (2020) summarizes as the "five 'dimensions' of coloniality (historical, political, economic, epistemological, and psycho-affective)" (p. 163). A significant part of this project is understanding and responding to how the structures of settler colonialism are formative to education and curriculum in Stó:lō Téméxw. For example, settler colonialism established a context in which neoliberal priorities such as human capital logics and individualism have flourished (Burke et al., 2017; D. Lloyd & Wolfe, 2016), becoming norms in society and education. This influence of neoliberalism in contemporary education is the second force in society that I want to introduce.

I share the concerns of other curriculum theorists about neoliberal influences on North American higher education (Apple, 2006; Burns, 2018; Donald, 2019; Pinar, 2022). A neoliberal approach to education often limits curriculum to its utilitarian purposes of producing workers that can contribute to capitalist society (i.e. human capital thinking). Educational success is determined by the pursuit and practice of individualism, "the (in)ability of the individual to develop, articulate and mobilise their employability in the 'appropriate' manner" (Burke et al., 2017, p. 90). These logics gets structured into courses, articulated in policy, or formulated with strategies to coerce assimilation to these purposes. Citing the recent scholarship on "the

neoliberalisation of higher education" (p. 2), Bottrell and Manathunga (2019) summarize the topic with

> designations such as the *corporate* or *enterprise* university, the *entrepreneurial* university and the overarching descriptor, the *neoliberal* university. All universities are now entrenched in *academic capitalism*, internally distorted by an *audit culture* and governed by *managerialism* that is intensified in internal conflicts over the purpose and conditions of academic work. (p. 2, emphasis original)

Now, I agree with Ronald Barnett's (2019) caution against conceding too much influence to the cultural forces of neoliberalism, and instead recognize neoliberalism as one factor within the ecosystem of education. Adopting this ecological approach, suggests Barnett, emphasizes that "universities may be seen as possessing a degree of value agency" (p. 47) from which the "matter of the university's values in the twenty-first century becomes now a matter of the university's responsibilities in putting its resources into play, in improving and developing all the many ecosystems of the world with which it is entwined" (p. 48). Part of this responsibility for curriculum researchers that I consider in this dissertation is both acknowledging the pervasiveness of the characteristics of neoliberalism and finding alternatives to curriculum beyond the utilitarian impulses so commonly employed in contemporary education. My approach to curriculum in this project, then, is towards developing such an alternative.

1.4.2 Curriculum as a Relational and Contextual Encounter

Considering an alternative approach to neoliberal curriculum has included recognizing the limits of curriculum defined by its utility. Such an approach risks perpetuating curriculum as a colonial force in Canadian society as assumptions about progress and belonging rooted in Western conceptions of knowledge and culture are taken for granted and end up excluding

Indigenous people and perspectives (Donald, 2009). Rather than this utilitarian and colonial homogenizing approach to curriculum, I envision an approach to curriculum studies that situates the encounter of education in the relational and contextual complexity of education, which in my case is Stó:lō Téméxw. Curriculum is not just an object, something to tinker with in pursuing the aims of knowledge production and student consumption. Nor do I view curriculum a tool for cultural assimilation, though it sadly has been viewed as such in many instances (Battiste, 2017; Pidgeon, 2014). I view curriculum as an encounter within the web of connection that characterizes its location. This attention to place requires consideration of the entirety of curriculum as a field of study, not just the curriculum as an object (e.g. a course). Attention to place as a practice in curriculum research, then, is a way to be conscious of the complexities of this encounter with place as part of the experience of curriculum. Here I am influenced by curriculum and educational theorists that emphasize the iterative, subjective, contextual, and relational experience of curriculum (e.g. Gert Biesta, Cynthia Chambers, Dwayne Donald, David Greenwood, and William Pinar) in ways that also connect curriculum to the praxis of social engagement (e.g. Paulo Freire). These directions inform how I use of the word "integrative" in ICP research. Integrative research refers to the ways multiple forms of knowledge, experience, and inquiry are needed to navigate the complexities of education. This approach reflects Ernest Boyer's (1990) discussion of a "scholarship of integration," a concept I encountered early in my higher education career and refers to research and education "making connections across the disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way…serious, disciplined work that seeks to interpret, draw together, and bring new insight to bear on original research" (pp. 18-19).

I also am drawn to curriculum that invites connecting Indigenous ways of being and knowing into conceptions of curriculum, such as Donald's (2009) ethical relationality and Indigenous métissage and Stó:lō educational researcher Q'um Q'um Xiiem's (Archibald, 2008) storywork. As I survey in Chapter 2, these influences have led me to develop ICP informed by aspects of critical place-based education (Greenwood, 2012, 2019; Gruenewald, 2003a, 2003b; Seawright, 2014) and Indigenous land-based education (Calderon, 2014; Donald, 2020; Tuck et al., 2014), an approach to researching education and place within the broader field of place-based education that centers peoples' relationship to the land, a curriculum of place rooted in relationship and reciprocity.

This dissertation explores how these theoretical directions inform my own work in higher education curriculum development and teaching in Stó:lō Téméxw. Critiques of neoliberal and settler colonial influences in curriculum inform my examination of curriculum in Stó:lō Téméxw. Seeking to respond to this analysis in my own work as an educator, and drawing from curriculum research that recognizes the complexities of curriculum experience in integrative ways, provides direction in this project. Having spent my career as an educator in Stó:lō Téméxw, I see great opportunity for ongoing curriculum research in these ways. In fact, it is my own relational and contextual journey of first learning within higher education in Stó:lō Téméxw and then teaching here that has produced my vision for curriculum research that focuses on this place. So, with these directions in mind, what will this research journey involve?

1.5 Research Purpose and Directions

As this project progressed, orienting themes emerged that capture the purpose of this research, and which sustained my work throughout the process of research and writing. I developed a set of research goals that included both the theoretical and methodological directions

of the project, but also the topics of curriculum research and practice. First, I wanted to engage a variety of theoretical directions to inform my curriculum research in Stó:lō Téméxw, specifically critical place-based and Indigenous land-based education emphases on decolonization. Theoretical clarity could orient my own work but also contribute to colleagues' work and the field of place-based curriculum research more broadly. Second, I sought to follow flexible methodological directions that would enable me to navigate the iterative and contextual dynamics of place appropriately. Third, I wanted to continue my journey of learning from the wisdom and example of Stó:lō people and land. As this project began, I was early in my journey of experiencing the gift of Stó:lō wisdom and relationship, and so creating practices of respectful relationship as an educator and researcher was a priority as I began. Fourth, considering my positionality as a settler educator and researcher, I was aware of the need to accept the unsettling nature of this research that would require wrestling with complexity and tension as I experienced important aspects of unlearning settler coloniality within myself and within higher education in Stó:lō Téméxw. Lastly, I wanted to go beyond theorizing about curriculum and explore ways to implement my learning into the practices my own work. To this end, praxis has been an important concept for the integration of theory and practice when I consider the application of ICP to my areas of curriculum and pedagogy (Freire, 2005; Kemmis & Smith, 2008).

These purposes for my research – theoretical directions, methodological flexibility, learning from Stó:lō people and land, unlearning settler coloniality, and developing curricular praxis – led to a series of research questions that have guided my process:

1. How does critical place-based and Indigenous land-based connect and inform my ICP approach to curriculum development? Questions about theoretical orientation began more generally – what is critical place-based and Indigenous land-based education? – but as I

developed clarity on these theories the focus shifted to how the decolonial analysis informed my ICP approach to curriculum research in Stó:lō Téméxw.

2. What does the ICP emphasis on engagement with both Indigenous and settler knowledge and practice imply for curriculum research in higher education in Stó:lō Téméxw? How does a focus on unlearning and relationality foster connection to this place? What kind of relationship with local Indigenous communities is required for this research to be conducted in ethical and relational ways? And, what key aspects of Stó:lō Téméxw as a place are relevant for me to consider in this research? Similar to the questions about theory, these methodological questions were initially broader in scope, but as I engaged the characteristics of Stó:lō and settler history, knowledge, and experience, a focus on unlearning and relationality emerged to direct the methodological directions of this curriculum research.
3. What does the application of ICP research look like in the practices of higher education curriculum in Stó:lō Téméxw? What postures and practices of unlearning and relationality emerge in my own areas of interdisciplinary experiential education and work-integrated learning? When I began this research, I did not know what areas of curriculum research in my work would be relevant, but as I explored the particularities of place in ICP curriculum research, it became clear that my current areas of work were most suitable.

1.6 Outline: My Journey with an Integrative Curriculum Place

Towards answering these questions, this dissertation presents various aspects of ICP research within my context of higher education in Stó:lō Téméxw, which could be seen as experiments into the interactive and contextual nature of curriculum research that wrestles with

the complex particularities of place (Donald, 2020). Here I briefly outline how I organize the discussion that follows.

Section I is an overview of the theoretical and methodological directions of ICP research, giving a snapshot into the process of generating a theory and practice for higher education curriculum and pedagogy in Stó:lō Téméxw. Chapter 2 situates ICP within the broader field of place-based education and identifies critical place-based and Indigenous land-based education as two areas of inquiry that offer the type of decolonial and contextual analysis well suited for unsettling educational research directions of this project. Chapter 3 builds on these theoretical directions to discuss how I decided what methods of curriculum research would be suitable for ICP research. I describe how a combination of synoptic text inquiry, relational connections with Stó:lō educators and leaders, and experiments in curriculum praxis produced the type of integrative methodological research to examine the particularities of place and higher education within Stó:lō Téméxw.

Second, the theoretical and methodological directions for ICP research frame how I proceed in Section II (Chapters 4-5) and Section III (Chapters 6-7), which focus on specific areas of Stó:lō Téméxw that are relevant for my areas of curriculum research. These chapters are organized around a foundational Stó:lō teaching that I learned early on in this project: "*S'ólh Téméxw te íkw'élò. Xólhmet te mekw' stám ít kwelát*…'This is our land. We have to look after everything that belongs to us.'" (Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, 2016). This Stó:lō teaching emphasizes the interrelated way foundational beliefs of connection to the land inform practices of responsibility to the land. Section II is a discussion about how Stó:lō (Ch. 4) and settler (Ch. 5) foundational beliefs about connection to the land inform curriculum and pedagogy in this place. Section III shifts the focus to the second half of the Stó:lō teaching and

discusses how historical and cultural aspects of Stó:lō (Ch. 6) and settler (Ch. 7) practices of responsibility to the land can inform curriculum research. Chapter 8 is the final chapter in which I reflect that while the dissertation is completed, the journey of decolonization continues. I summarize key areas of learning in my journey of ICP research and highlight the ongoing nature of this project by exploring potential next steps of unsettling research beyond this dissertation.

Section I. Exploring the Particularities of Place: Theoretical and Methodological Directions

Section I explores the theoretical and methodological directions for an Integrative Curriculum of Place (ICP), which provide a guide for researching decolonization and education in Stó:lō Téméxw and have been a significant part of the research itself. How educators approach the location of curriculum research involves attentiveness to the complex ways in which educators and institutions find themselves embedded in the social fabric of their location (Greenwood, 2019). Navigating the range of theoretical concepts and methodological options within the context of this project, then, has been a central part of my own practice of what place-based education researcher David Greenwood (2012) describes as place-consciousness, "a philosophy that challenges educators to rethink the assumptions of schooling in the context of the places we inhabit and leave behind" (p. 95). Attention to the theoretical and methodological directions of this project reflect my effort to incorporate this place-consciousness throughout every aspect of ICP research.

In describing the theoretical directions of ICP research (Ch. 2), I outline how critical place-based education (PBE) and Indigenous land-based education (LBE) invites research that practices unlearning and relationality (Donald, 2022) at the complex intersections of settler and Indigenous ways of being and knowing. Discussion then turns to how these theoretical considerations inform various methodological options that can extend from ICP research (Ch. 3). I describe how a combination of synoptic text research, local relationships and conversations, and curriculum examples emerged as relevant ways for me to engage in ICP praxis in my place and work.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Directions: Integrative Curriculum of Place (ICP)

This chapter focuses on answering my first research question to clarify the theoretical directions for an Integrative Curriculum of Place (ICP) that frames the rest of this project: How does critical place-based and Indigenous land-based connect and inform my ICP approach to curriculum development?

I explore this question in more detail by providing an overview of place-based education, outlining the critique of placeless education and discussing the central role of place in ICP research. Surveying the diversity of approaches within PBE as a field, I reflect on how both critical place-based and Indigenous land-based education have oriented the theoretical directions for this project. I conclude with discussion on the specific ways practices of unlearning (i.e. decolonization) and relationality (i.e. learning from Indigenous knowledge, people, and land) have framed this project.

2.1 Place-based Education (PBE)

I begin with a discussion of how this project relates to the field of place-based education (PBE). I am drawn to PBE because it addresses the problem of placeless curriculum and provides the type of integrative contextual research that I have sought to include in my own practice. Here I summarize how I have come to view PBE as a framing orientation for my work in curriculum development.

2.1.1 My Experience With Placeless Curriculum

PBE emerged in the late 20th Century in response to curriculum trends that emphasized abstract and universal knowledge for the "cultivation of individual talents and career trajectories" (Smith & Sobel, 2010, p. 22). Environmental educator, David Orr (2013), was one of the first voices to critique these trends for their absence of attention to place: "Other than as a collection

of buildings where learning is supposed to occur, place has no particular standing in contemporary education" (p. 183). The absence of attention to place is evident in practices of "decontextualized classroom instruction" (Gruenewald & Smith, 2007, p. xiv) such as standardized testing that prioritizes the efficient transmission of abstract knowledge regardless of place. Influential American PBE theorists David Gruenewald and Gregory Smith (2007) situate their work in broader trends to critique globalization: "Although there is a growing political, economic, and cultural literature describing how reclaiming the local might mitigate against the potentially harmful effects of globalization, little writing exists on the role of education in this process" (p. xiv). It is this missing attention to place and the invitation to consider the role of education in restoring a sense of place that inspired my own research journey.

Prior to beginning this research, the absence of attention to place was common in my own context as an educational work. For example, in my previous work as part of a curriculum development team in a small private college in Stó:lō Téméxw, I observed a default prioritizing of traditional classroom-based curriculum and pedagogy in which college instructors transmitted knowledge through lectures and assigned readings. In this work I observed that such an approach often came at the expense of community-based courses that engaged local social issues through activities like experiential learning. On reflection, this curriculum assumes an implicit hierarchy of knowledge that prioritizes Eurocentric, generalized, and abstract knowledge (Battiste & Henderson, 2009; Donald, 2020), unlike proposals to integrate various forms of knowledge (Guile, 2010). And while there are certainly trends to integrate more experiential and community-based forms of learning in higher education (Billett, 2014), my experience of curriculum development projects categorized these forms of knowledge as less important than traditional pedagogies such as lecturing, reading, and writing. Part of my interest in PBE

research, then, is the way it articulates the problem of placelessness (Donald, 2020; Kitchens, 2009) that I have been intuiting in my 10+ years of teaching and curriculum development. Considering this observation, how does PBE propose engagement with place?

2.1.2 Engaging Place

Leading PBE theorist, David Sobel, offers a definition of PBE in K-12 education as connecting place to student experience, which is relevant for higher education curriculum as well:

> Place-based education is the process of using the local community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and other subjects across the curriculum. Emphasizing hands-on, real-world learning experiences, this approach to education increases academic achievement, helps students develop stronger ties to their community, enhances students' appreciation for the natural world, and creates a heightened commitment to serving as active, contributing citizens. (Sobel, 2004, p. 7 as cited in Smith & Sobel, 2010, p. 23)

Rather than place as simply the setting for education, Sobel's definition captures the essential purpose of place *within* education. There is no such thing as placeless education since knowledge emerges in an "epistemic culture" (Cetina, 2007, p. 363) — and PBE acknowledges this reality. Sobel's definition also indicates the aim of pursuing the well-being of place, a common emphasis in PBE. As Gruenewald and Smith (2007) suggest, "Place-based education can be understood as a community-based effort to reconnect the process of education, enculturation, and human development to the well-being of community life" (p. xvi). And while there is overlap with community-based learning and PBE, particularly in the emphasis on supporting the improvement of local communities (Roberts, 2016), a key difference is that community-based learning

emphasizes community engagement (e.g. volunteering) as the focal point of curriculum and the particularities of the place or the community may or may not be addressed. PBE, however, emphasizes place itself as the central part of education, in which direct community engagement may or may not be included. It is this prioritization of place that distinguishes PBE from community-based learning. For example, I discuss in later chapters how incorporating a focus on place has shifted my approach to work-integrated learning reflection assignments. Rather than simply viewing a workplace setting as a context for skill development and work experience, reflection activities invite students to "integrate social and ecological awareness so that learning, ethics, and politics are all grounded in the enfleshed world of social and ecological experience" (Greenwood, 2012, p. 99). This shift in emphasis encourages student participation in work-integrated learning beyond personal experience to include relational connection to the people and places of the workplace setting (Simon et al., 1991).

2.1.3 The Diversity of PBE

One of the challenges with PBE is that because of its situatedness in particular contexts it ends up as more of a movement or idea than a coherent educational theory or specific curriculum. There is some continuity in referring to the influence of John Dewey's experiential learning theory, particularly his focus on the local contexts of learning (Orr, 2013; G. A. Smith, 2012; Woodhouse & Knapp, 2000). In addition to Dewey's influence, environmental education is a common field of PBE research that advocates for place as the ecological location which education can participate in protecting and restoring (G. A. Smith, 2002; G. A. Smith & Williams, 1999; Webber et al., 2021). Yet these common trends in PBE research do not ensure theoretical or practical uniformity by any means. Early definitions of PBE, rather, exhibit a significant range of directions in the field. In his summary introduction to PBE, for example,

environmental educator Gregory Smith (2002) highlights five main areas where PBE shows up in education: cultural studies, nature studies, real-world problem solving, internships and entrepreneurial opportunities, and induction into community processes. Woodhouse and Knapp (2000) also highlight a range of emphases in PBE, but they focus their summary on key characteristics instead of fields of education. Defining PBE as a "still evolving approach" – and I would suggest this remains true today – PBE is characterized as emerging from the particularities of place (i.e., it starts with the local), multidisciplinary (i.e. not confined to one academic discipline; see Gruenewald, 2003), experiential and participatory (i.e. focus on supporting sustainable community), not confined to the educational purposes of career preparation, and as education that "connects place with self and community" (Woodhouse & Knapp, 2000, pp. 3-4). These examples highlight how PBE is a sort of umbrella term for the myriad of ways that curriculum can incorporate attention to place. Attention to place does not have to be confined to one discipline or curriculum theory but is an orienting concept I can include across a range of areas. Within this iterative nature of PBE as a field of inquiry, my interest to explore the unique characteristics of my own place in Stó:lō Téméxw led to need for specific direction in this project. My previous interest in critical pedagogy and Indigenous ways of being and knowing in education led me to focus on learning from critical place-based and Indigenous land-based education approaches.

2.2 Critical PBE and Indigenous LBE

A recent summary of PBE, as outlined by a group of Canadian teacher educators (Webber et al., 2021), shows that the variety of approaches in PBE remains, tracing its presence in outdoor, experiential, environmental, critical, and land-based education (LBE). An important addition in their summary, however, is the consideration of land-based education with a focus on

Indigenous knowledge, communities, and land, something that has been missing in many formulations of PBE until more recently (Calderon, 2014). While a broad approach to PBE has helped highlight the importance of place for my work, I was drawn to critical PBE and Indigenous LBE as they have offered valuable direction for the type of integrative participation with place that I envisioned for my higher education curriculum work and research in Stó:lō Téméxw. Incorporating a focus on place in curriculum did not seem to go far enough for engaging the complex particularities of place that I observed around me in Stó:lō Téméxw. *How* I engaged place became an important consideration for my developing research, what environmental educator David Greenwood (2012) describes as "place-conscious education…a philosophy that challenges educators to rethink the assumptions of schooling in the context of the places we inhabit and leave behind" (p. 95). In what follows, I discuss how critical PBE and Indigenous LBE have become important guides in developing my own place-conscious approach to my work in Stó:lō Téméxw. I review the literature of critical PBE and Indigenous LBE, discuss similarities and differences, and outline how each approach has informed my curriculum research for this project.

2.2.1 Critical PBE

I have found critical approaches particularly helpful in clarifying my own teaching and research. Critical engagement with place has been emphasized most clearly in the work of David Gruenewald/Greenwood, cited as a key figure in connecting critical theory and PBE (Calderon, 2014; Kitchens, 2009; Lowan-Trudeau, 2017; Seawright, 2014; Webber et al., 2021). Gruenewald (2003b)/Greenwood's (2019) influential critical pedagogy of place views place as both the location of learning (i.e. the ecological) and the context for social connection and change (i.e. the cultural). He has been a leading voice in articulating the social and moral

purposes of PBE, and the ways in which PBE contributes to the flourishing of local communities. Greenwood (2012) notes that the community engagement for this approach to PBE "is not just a methodology to make learning more relevant and meaningful; it is a philosophy for personal, cultural, and ecological consciousness, renewal, and creativity" (p. 96). In his proposal for a "critical pedagogy of place," Greenwood (2012), who is not Indigenous, proposes a dual focus on decolonization and reinhabitation. Greenwood (2012) relates decolonization to the way critical educators seek to identity, resist, and change oppressive structures, both in the experience and knowledge of oppression, "the educational process of identifying and unlearning patterned and familiar ways of experiencing and knowing" (p. 96). Along with the critical analysis of decolonization, reinhabitation refers to the aims for education to foster ecologically sustainable connection to place. Rejecting the unsustainability of globalization socio-economics, "reinhabitation involves learning to live well socially and ecologically in a place, and learning to live in a way that does not harm other people and places" (Greenwood 2012, p. 96). Place-based educator Gardner Seawright (2014) summarizes this approach as seeing place not only as the location for education but analyzing "the socially constructed nature and inherent conflict of places that are wrapped up in issues of colonization, race, class, gender" (p. 561). Together, decolonization and reinhabitation invite educators to focus on both the critique and experience of place, a combination of analysis and response that has shaped how I view my own connection to place as an educator. I illustrate this critical examination of place, then, with an example from where I live in Abbotsford, British Columba, a suburban city in the place of Stó:lō Téméxw.

Not unlike many growing suburban Canadian cities, Abbotsford has a long track record of disputes over housing developments and land use. For example, one recent public hearing lasted nearly five hours as more than 50 people spoke in the meeting both in favour and in

opposition to a proposed development on a local hillside on Sumas Mountain (Hopes, 2023). While the mayor touted the benefits of future planning, First Nations expressed concerns about lack of consultation, environmentalists critiqued potential environmental risks, and housing developers expressed commitments to sustainable development and the need to provide housing for the growing community. From city planners, to politicians, to residents, to developers, to local First Nations, each voice highlighted the "conflict of places" that Seawright notes and which Greenwood's critical pedagogy of place is meant to address. To wrestle with this type of complexity in relation to this example in Abbotsford, critical PBE could explore how these decision processes are structured and implemented, including whose voices get privileged (and why), inviting students to reflect on their role in contextual conflicts in their own places. In sum, this example illustrates how place is both culture and environment, and PBE needs to engage this reality through critical examination of place in all its complex facets.

In my previous teaching and developing curriculum in Stó:lō Téméxw, critical PBE informed my work in a couple of ways. First, critical PBE directed how my curriculum development process intersects with the complex dynamics of Stó:lō Téméxw. For example, as a religious college, my previous institution drew financial and institutional support from religious denominations and churches and partnered in curriculum and programing with other local community organizations like non-profit social services and academic institutions. Additionally, the campus is centrally located amidst a changing residential and commercial corridor. ICP invites inquiry into how connection to these institutions and neighbourhoods inform curriculum development. And importantly, what responsibility do curriculum and curriculum developers have to examine the complexities of this place? These are the types of questions I was already asking prior to this research and I have found that critical PBE has provided a helpful language

and direction. As I discuss in the next chapter, critical PBE has also informed my methodological decision to focus on interrogating the complexities of Stó:lō Téméxw in relation to my areas of curriculum research. Throughout this project, my examples of interdisciplinary curriculum and work-integrated learning courses and programming illustrate how critical PBE leads to new ways of connecting curriculum to addressing the complexities of place.

An additional consideration from critical PBE that became important for this project is the distinction between land and place. Where Western epistemology "subordinates place to simplistic conceptualizations of land as divorced from the personal and ontological" (Seawright, 2014, p. 555), critical analysis of place begins with the assertion that connection to the land is essential for a better way of educating in place (Marker, 2006). Seawright (2014) provides a helpful overview of this perspective:

> Educators incorporating place into their pedagogy believe that by tapping into an individual's immediate socioecological world, a healthy, sustainable, and reciprocal relationship with the natural world can be cultivated; a natural world—a place—that includes one's own community, town, city, geography, watershed, bioregion, as well as the natural communities of other places. (pp. 554-555)

It is only recently, however, that consideration of the connection between land and place in critical PBE has begun to give attention to the harmful legacy of settler colonialism on Indigenous people and places. While recognizing the significant contribution Greenwood has made in PBE research, Métis educator Gregory Lowan-Trudeau (2017) notes that critical approaches to PBE have been developed primarily by non-Indigenous scholars. The late Michael Marker (2011), whose work provided extensive commentary on the experience of Indigenous students in places of higher education, calls for "centering the local and spiritual" as the pathway

to recognizing "Indigenous praxis and a decolonized pedagogy" (p. 199). As Greenwood (2019) himself has reflected on this critique of his work, "Writings on place that fail to engage significantly with the difficult issues of colonization, indigeneity, and race can be viewed as reproducing and reinforcing the erasures and silences that surround white, settler cultures" (p. 367). For the places of higher education that are deeply influenced by settler colonialism, including my location in Stó:lō Téméxw, I take Greenwood's reflection seriously as a settler researcher situating my work in critical PBE. As I examine in each of the chapters on Stó:lō Téméxw, this research has involved opening myself up to interrogating the settler assumptions of my work (Regan, 2010) and learning from the gift of Indigenous ways of being and knowing, in my case Stó:lō people and land. Throughout this project, then, it has been important to consider how Indigenous LBE relates to critical PBE and offers important direction to the practices of unlearning and relationality (Donald, 2022) as I explain below.

2.2.2 Indigenous LBE

If common approaches in PBE view place as the realm of peoples' cultural and ecological situatedness, Indigenous views unsettle this human-centered perspective by centering land. This unsettling involves addressing historical injustices of land dispossession and calls for Indigenous self-determination and land claims, an approach related to PBE, but commonly referred to as Indigenous land-based education (Bowra et al., 2020; Calderon, 2014; Tuck et al., 2014; Wildcat et al., 2014).[3] Land is not simply the place *for* education, but land is a place of connection *in*

[3] In my survey of the literature for Indigenous LBE, I noted a focus on Indigenous students and communities as the primary beneficiaries of this approach (Alfred, 2014; Corntassel & Hardbarger, 2019; Simpson, 2014). The purpose of Indigenous LBE in these cases is to foster Indigenous self-determination through reconnection to ancestral knowledge and land. While not working directly with a specific Indigenous community or school, I have been able to learn from and explore ways to support these initiatives within my research on curriculum and pedagogy as many of my curriculum examples in later chapters will illustrate. I also realize, however, that my work as a settler

education, a perspective from the wisdom of Indigenous peoples and places (Marker, 2006). As Mexican and Tigua educator Delores Calderon (2014) suggests,

> If as place-based education models purport, we are to teach through schooling how to promote models of sustainability and community, we also need to understand how sustainability and community cannot be achieved if the communities Indigenous to place are not central in this formulation. (p. 26)

Trends in land-based education, Calderon (2014) continues, can help prioritize the Indigenous connection to land in PBE. PBE that is conscious of relationship to land will address the ongoing conflicts of the land that are part of the legacy of settler colonialism. As Calderon (2014) pointedly reminds, "All places were once Indigenous lands and continue to be" (p. 27).

As I consider the role of critical PBE and Indigenous LBE in my own research, two areas of emphasis are important to keep in mind: decolonization and Indigenous knowledge.

2.3 Unlearning: Decolonization[4]

Centering decolonization in both critical PBE and Indigenous LBE is a primary way to interrogate the complex historical and political realities of place. Both approaches emphasize reckoning with the legacy of settler colonialism, a "coloniality" that signifies the ongoing "patterns of power that emerged from colonialism" (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, p. 243). PBE

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researcher is not the same as Indigenous approaches, and so I will focus my engagement with Indigenous LBE as an important source of wisdom and relationship, while also recognizing the broader aims of the movement are outside the scope of my study based in predominantly settler and colonial institutions (i.e. public and private universities and colleges in Stó:lō Téméxw).

[4] I am aware of the debates about terminology on this topic (e.g. decolonial vs. anticolonial), particularly in emphases on the land and the ongoing legacies of colonialism. Educational researcher Leigh Patel (2014), for example, suggests that the term anticolonial can "draw into relief the ways in which decolonial should always speak directly to material changes, specifically to land" (p. 359). Where decolonization implies a stripping away – a freeing from the grips of colonial injustices – anticolonial names the need for interrogation of the ongoing phenomenon that is colonialism. This is an important distinction that I have tried to include throughout my project, but because decolonization remains the more prominent term in PBE, I have chosen to use it here.

research needs to “confront this haunting” (Greenwood, 2019, p. 366), or what Donald (2022) describes as the practice of “unlearning colonialism” (para. 5). To clarify the role of decolonization (i.e. unlearning) in my ICP research, here I briefly describe how critical PBE and Indigenous LBE understand decolonization.

2.3.1 Critical PBE and Decolonization

Critical PBE researchers tend to focus on the theoretical aspects of decolonization (Greenwood, 2019; Seawright, 2014). They concentrate on articulating the ethos of settler colonialism through critical analysis of its dynamics, a process that Seawright (2014) helpfully describes as “critical epistemic interrogation” (p. 556). Outlining “settler traditions of place” (p. 557), Seawright (2014) then identifies that settler domination is ongoing and decolonization needs to address cultural assumptions of violence that are embedded in place (e.g. racism, sexism, and classism). And these assumptions, Seawright (2014) challenges, are propped up by a Western body of knowledge that is anthropocentric and hierarchical, resulting in a “fetish of ownership” (p. 559). Similarly, Greenwood (2019) explains this ethos in outlining a persistent devotion to the “unholy combination” (p. 373) of militarism, science, and global capitalism. For both Greenwood (2019) and Seawright (2014), decolonizing settler colonialism in PBE requires clear analysis and repudiation of this ethos of domination, a direction aligned with this project, although the scope of my work is narrower, focusing on specific examples of settler possessiveness and superiority in Stó:lō Téméxw. The way this looks in the practice of PBE, however, is not always clear for critical PBE theorists. In a way, the analysis itself is how they practice repudiation of settler coloniality. Prioritizing local knowledges, then, while still theoretical, is meant to redirect education away from the settler ethos. The ways that ICP research has led to an interrogation of settler assumptions found within the Doctrine of

Discovery, as I discuss below in Chapters 5 and 7, highlight how decolonial analysis figures prominently in this project. Critical analysis, however, is only one aspect of decolonization as Indigenous LBE suggests.

2.3.2 Indigenous LBE and Decolonization

While sharing the critique of a settler ethos, Indigenous LBE emphasizes the importance of addressing the consequences of this ethos, namely, the ongoing legacy of settler colonialism on Indigenous people and land. Contrary to what some have suggested is an overly theoretical decolonial analysis from critical PBE scholars (Lowan-Trudeau, 2017), Calderon (2014) points out the implications of such analysis by acknowledging settler territoriality "that is most simply characterized as settlers' access to territory and the resulting elimination and removal of Indigenous peoples enabled by both legal and ideological mechanisms of removal" (p. 29). Territoriality points to the history of settler erasure of Indigenous peoples and land. Calderon (2014) then suggests that if PBE does not explicitly address this harmful legacy of settler colonialism it risks perpetuating a settler ethos itself. Ongoing conflicts over land as illustrated by the Land Back movement call for attention to ongoing harm for Indigenous people and their land when coloniality is left unaddressed. Criticizing common approaches to PBE, as I outlined above, Calderon (2014) states, "While place-based education models emphasize community needs and engagement, they do not go far enough to promote decolonizing goals that should be included in any place-based education" (p. 26). Greenwood (2019) is aware of this critique, and although he stops short of offering concrete solutions to it, he accepts the challenge of continuing to grapple with decolonial research and references as a non-Indigenous researcher. Tuck and Yang's (2012) provocation is that decolonization is not a metaphor; it must be practiced to account for the legacy of dispossession of Indigenous peoples and land. I think that Greenwood's

(2019) lack of solutions, which he acknowledges, capture the current state of critical PBE. My research addresses the need to extend theory to practice, away from the problematic prioritization of generalized knowledge and towards a more integrative view of knowledge and practice together (Guile, 2010).

As a settler researcher educated primarily within Eurocentric structures of education that prioritize theoretical and scientific knowledge (Battiste & Henderson, 2009), I admit that the challenge to move beyond decolonial analysis and address the concrete political realities of Indigenous people and land has been one of the most difficult and unsettling aspects of my research. I am much more comfortable writing about decolonization than I am implementing decolonial directions in curriculum and pedagogy, due in part to the institutional constraints of my previous educational context in resisting decolonial directions as well as my own educational background in theoretical research. Naming these tendencies has been an important step in my journey of interrogating how my own assumptions are embedded within "colonial frontier logics" (Donald, 2012, p. 92). Throughout this project I reflect on areas where my assumptions are challenged. Along with reflection on these areas, however, I have been challenged to action by the Indigenous LBE critiques of education and calls for "decolonial praxis" (Gahman & Legault, 2019, p. 57). The calls to action have been motivation to support areas of Indigenous self-determination and resurgence (Corntassel, 2012; Simpson, 2016) within my own institutional and community context as I share in several of the curriculum examples in later chapters.

2.3.3 Self-reflection in Decolonial Praxis

Another aspect of learning how to include decolonial directions in my research has been attending to the limits in my own experience and understanding as a settler. This has meant that

repeatedly, and in relationship, I have been assessing my motives and practices for ICP research in my work in Stó:lō Téméxw within higher education. Early in this project I was challenged by this question from the authors of *Developing Stamina for Decolonizing Higher Education* when they pointedly ask, "How much effort are you, and others in your institution/office/department, willing to put into your own learning (and unlearning)?" (Stein et al., 2021, p. 33). In my commitment to remain open to this unsettling responsibility throughout this project and beyond, I have returned to this question regularly. For me, this has involved returning to the unsettling aspects of this research, not seeing this question as resolvable, but illustrating the "decolonizing journey" of my work (Regan, 2010, p. 12). Throughout this project, then, there are areas where I note the ways in which the research is a work in progress, which instead of viewing this dynamic as areas of incomplete research I have used it as a reminder to foster a posture and practice of research in what settler researcher Robyn Heaslip (2017) refers to as an "unsettling, complicating sense of responsibility" (p. 17).

2.4 Relationality: The Gift of Indigenous Knowledge

The process of decolonization in critical PBE and Indigenous LBE has directed me to focus attention on critiquing the ongoing legacy of settler colonialism, as it should. Yet in the needed attention given to the past and present harms of settler colonialism, a parallel need looks at how decolonization shapes present and future engagement with place, what Donald (2022) describes as learning from "kinship relationality" (para. 10). Parallel to the decolonial directions that I have included within ICP comes a commitment to relationality, and specifically the ways in which I am learning from the gift of Indigenous knowledge, people, and land. Here, then, I discuss how relationality has become an essential component of my ICP research.

2.4.1 Reinhabitation and Indigenous Knowledge.

In critical PBE, Gruenewald (2003b) suggests that an important correlate to decolonization is reinhabitation, which involves "unlearning much of what dominant culture and schooling teaches, and learning more socially just and ecologically sustainable ways of being in the world" (p. 9). While movement has already occurred in this direction in K-12 curriculum in British Columbia, such as the recent addition of a grad requirement for Indigenous perspectives, histories, and cultures (Ministry of Education, 2022), there is a need to continue this work in higher education (BCcampus, 2024; Pidgeon, 2014). This was certainly true in the private religious institutional context of my previous work where there was considerable leeway in curriculum. In these situations where educators have freedom in developing curriculum, as is the case in many higher education contexts (e.g. course content), intentionality in engaging Indigenous ways of being and knowing is needed. As Indigenous educational researcher Michelle Pidgeon (2014) challenges, this "necessitates moving from rhetoric to actually designing and implementing policies, programs, and services and changing practices" (p. 24). And for Greenwood (2019), this reinhabitation is shared by all participants in PBE as they reflect on the decolonial critiques and commit to relate to place in a better way moving forward. This broad approach to reinhabitation also leads Greenwood and others (Lowan-Trudeau, 2017; Trinidad et al., 2016) to learn from the wisdom of Indigenous people and places as an essential part of this reinhabitation. Connection with Indigenous knowledge, people, and land is a critical correlate to decolonization. As I outline further in the next chapter, this has involved connection with Stó:lō teaching, people, and land in my commitment to practice research that is "specific to place and local knowledge" (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015, p. 101). In conversations with Stó:lō individuals, attending Stó:lō community events, and learning from Stó:lō teachers and

researchers, this project has been as much a relational journey as an intellectual journey (Gaudry, 2018). I am wary, however, that naming relationality, while an important signal of my priorities for ethical relationship with Indigenous knowledge, community, and land, requires acknowledgement of the ways Indigenous knowledge has been used in research in problematic ways. Next, I offer a brief comment on important epistemological considerations within my research.

2.4.2 Epistemological Considerations.

Engaging Indigenous knowledge, people, and land in PBE, as I am doing in this project, raises epistemological challenges in traditional educational settings that have typically prioritized Western knowledge and structures of education (Donald, 2020). Rather than an approach to knowledge that prioritizes universal, objective truths over and against other forms of knowledge, Greenwood (2019) suggests learning from Indigenous knowledge as a way for people to better reinhabit place. For example, Greenwood (2019) cites Kimmerer's (2013) well-known book, *Braiding Sweetgrass* in which she utilizes the concept of braiding to connect Indigenous knowledge of land to environmental studies to foster students' relationship to land. Similarly, Lowan-Trudeau (2017) invites consideration of Indigenous métissage, a concept proposed by Dwayne Donald (2009) and others (Chambers et al., 2008) that suggests a critical examination of Indigenous and Western perspectives of place with the aim of ethical relationship between Indigenous and settler people and knowledges. This project seeks to engage unlearning and relationality that attends to the complexity of both settler and Indigenous sources of knowledge and these various concepts of complicating diverse sources of knowledge have helped direct my engagement. Instead of pushing myself to conclude on topics in universalized ways that accept epistemological hierarchies so common in Western education, concepts like métissage and

braiding have helped me see the value in wrestling with the tensions that emerge within diverse sources of knowledge.

As I hold these tensions within my research, I resonate with Martin Nakata's (2002, 2007) reflections on the complex cultural interface of knowledges. When Indigenous knowledge encounters Western knowledge in education, the cultural interface is the "complex set of intersections of interests and contestations" of different knowledges (Nakata, 2007, p. 9). Instead of orienting Indigenous knowledge to fit within the categories of Western knowledge, recognizing the cultural interface challenges educators to identify complexity in education rather than seek simplified solutions that prioritize one source of knowledge. Donald (2012) suggests that navigating the cultural interface as educators can be a generative space for creativity as "entities, worldviews, and knowledge systems perceived as oppositional are held together, side by side, and in relation to each other" (p. 105). Decolonization, then, includes educators refusing to accept the hierarchies of knowledge so common in Western education, instead choosing to "develop their scholarship in contested knowledge spaces of the cultural interface (Nakata, 2007, p. 13).

This emphasis on the complexity of both similarity and difference when bringing together complex knowledges and experiences is how I understand the concept of "integrative" in ICP research. The term integrative can refer the relationship between a range of methodologies in mixed methods research (Niaz, 2008). It can also mean the unification of knowledge and experience into a singular perspective of clarity in complexity, an approach that often results in more dominant knowledges taking precedence. This uniform approach to knowledge perpetuates what Indigenous educational researcher Rauna Kuokkanen (2008) describes as "epistemic ignorance…ways in which academic theories and practices ignore, marginalize and exclude

other than dominant Western European epistemic and intellectual traditions" (p. 6). In this project, however, I am using the term integrative in a way that echoes Pinar's (2012) definition of curriculum as "complicated conversation" (p. 198). My use of integrative refers to ways of approaching complex knowledges in history, culture, experience, and land, diverse sources of knowledge brought into conversation with one another. Educational researcher Mordechai Gordon (2007) describes integrative research as "a form of scholarship that transcends the requirement to stick to a single disciplinary boundary, reaching out across fields in order to make connections and interpret ideas in a broader, more holistic context" (p. 196). This integrative approach to complex knowledges frames how I approach the particularities of place within Stó:lō Téméxw and informs how I consider ways that education can navigate this complexity in curriculum.

Such an approach to the complexity of knowledge involves acknowledging the validity of diverse sources of knowledge. As someone who has worked in various forms of experiential learning as an educator, I want to comment on how I understand knowledge in education. I have been long interested in the topic of integrative education and ways curriculum can attend to the various forms of knowledge in curriculum and student experience. For example, my work has been informed by Barber's (2014) conception of the integration of learning to include a combination of connection, application, and synthesis and Biesta's (2020) description of educational purposes as qualification, socialization, and subjectification. Both writers highlight the complex multifaceted nature of knowledge and experience in education that I have tried to incorporate in my own work. As I found myself learning various Indigenous perspectives on the holistic nature of knowledge and experience, I realized the resonance of Barber and Biesta with Indigenous teaching on the four directions of the medicine wheel; intellectual knowledge (mind)

is just one aspect amongst many forms of knowledge, such as experiential knowledge (body), relational knowledge (heart), and spiritual knowledge (spirit) (Andrews, 2023). Each of these sources of knowledge are part of the complex reality that makes up human experience within the interrelatedness of life. Within most Indigenous worldviews, all sources of knowledge are valid within the journey of education. For this project, then, while recognizing my educational context remains steeped in Westerns forms of knowing, the wisdom of holistic knowledge in Stó:lō teaching, communities, and land is a gift for understanding knowledge in education that I can learn from and share with others.

It is important to note how there are limits to simply stating an approach to curriculum research that views knowledge as complex and holistic, especially when initiated by non-Indigenous researchers such as myself. In the context of critical PBE, I worry that Greenwood's lack of local examples and relationships overtheorizes Indigenous knowledge (Calderon, 2014) and thus risks undermining his desire for reinhabitation in right relationship. As Indigenous researcher Shawn Wilson (2008) challenges, while anyone can align with Indigenous knowledge – what he refers to as an "Indigenist research paradigm" – "this knowledge cannot be advanced from a mainstream paradigm. That would simply be mainstream knowledge about Indigenous people or topics" (p. 194). Critical reflection on the systems of knowledge in education (e.g. (Biesta, 2010) resists accepting the concept of mainstream knowledge, instead inviting educators to accept the complexities of knowledge. Part of this complexity in knowledge, then, is the relational contexts in which Indigenous knowledges are encountered, what Robin Kimmerer (2024) describes as realizing one's place in the "web of reciprocity" (p. 20). Such reciprocal relationship invites giving back to the people and land we are in relationship with. By remaining with generalized conceptions of reinhabitation, I think Greenwood and other non-Indigenous

researchers, such as myself, need to constantly ask: Where is knowledge in relationship with Indigenous people and land? How does PBE practice reciprocity to people and land amidst the complexity of Indigenous knowledge alongside educational structures of Western knowledge (Marker, 2006)? As I discuss in the next chapter, these questions have been important guides to my own relational approach to research in the methodologies of this project.

2.4.3 A Caveat: Wrestling with Ongoing Settler Colonialism.

Recognizing the need for settler researchers to engage well with Indigenous knowledge highlights my observation about critical PBE in my work in recent years. I have had a sense that critical PBE is still missing something, including in my own work. To simply add Indigenous perspectives as a logical next step, as critical PBE alludes to, risks disingenuous appropriation by including Indigenous theory outside of relationship (Ahenakew, 2017; Wilson, 2008). And incorporating Indigenous knowledge outside of relationship also risks perpetuating settler superiority by not dealing with the socio-political realities of place represented by Indigenous people and land (Calderon, 2014; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Relating the incorporation of Indigenous knowledges in education to the science of transplanting one organism into another, Indigenous educator and researcher Cash Ahenakew (2016) uses the image of grafting to highlight the problem:

> Grafting, in this sense, can further contribute to the elimination of Indigenous peoples as distinct Indigenous peoples both in their relationship with the state, in their relation to the land, and in terms of the perceived worth of their knowledge. (p. 324)

Acknowledging this risk is one step, but relationships with local Indigenous people and land, particularly when they follow protocols for engaging knowledge and land, can shift knowledge as something that is taken to something that is received (L. T. Smith, 2012). In these directions,

receiving the gift of Indigenous knowledge can be a way for the concept of grafting to shift from a negative description to a positive one: connection to the gift of Indigenous knowledge leads to growth together, including ways I can give back as a practice of reciprocity with Stó:lō people and land (e.g. sharing my research with Stó:lō communities as I discuss in the next chapter). For this project, where I have resonated with the trajectory of trends in PBE at the intersection of my own work, I have come to realize that these trends arrive at a place (metaphorically and literally!) that Indigenous peoples have been all along. PBE's call for decolonization and reinhabitation (Greenwood, 2019) and taking responsibility for relational connection to place (Orr, 2013; Smith & Sobel, 2010), while recent additions to trends in educational theory and practice, have always been part of Indigenous ways of being and knowing (Donald, 2009). While I continue to situate this project within critical PBE, I view this research alongside other critical PBE researchers (e.g. Greenwood, 2019; Seawright, 2014; Webber et al., 2021) in wrestling with the implications of Indigenous LBE for my research. As my later chapters on Stó:lō Téméxw will indicate, such wrestling involves ongoing attention to the legacy of settler colonialism and emphasizes the importance of recognizing Indigenous self-determination and rights to land.

Part my research journey has also included learning from how educational researchers provide guidance for considering Indigenous perspectives on the land as essential to the future of PBE (Shannon & Galle, 2017; Tuck et al., 2014; Webber et al., 2021). These perspectives call for cognitive justice (Santos, 2014), a respect of Indigenous knowledge, support for self-determination and sovereignty, and recognition of Indigenous land rights. Coulthard (2014) challenges that this inclusion needs to go beyond a politics of recognition and grapple with lived realities of Indigenous peoples and places in practice. As a settler educator and researcher, therefore, I have tried to be cognizant of the challenges associated with my choice of critical

place-based and Indigenous land-based education. I have had to recognize the risk of over-theorizing place and perpetuating settler colonialism if this project does not address the current lived realities of the Stó:lō people in Stó:lō Téméxw. I also risk appropriation and neglect of my own ongoing complicity in settler education and culture without an ongoing willingness to experience the unsettling nature of my project (Regan, 2010). It was important to acknowledge these risks early in my research, and in conversations with teachers and Elders they encouraged me to embark on this journey in the tension of the complexity of the various sources of knowledge and relationship in my place. Indigenous and non-Indigenous educational researchers who have navigated this tension in their own work have been important sources of wisdom for this journey (e.g. Ahenakew, 2016; Chambers et al., 2008; Donald, 2009; Kerr & Adamov Ferguson, 2021; Nakata, 2007; Regan, 2010). Throughout this project I share some of the important lessons I have learned from their examples. But in addition to learning from examples of educational research, part of supporting the contextual ways Indigenous knowledge is embodied in local contexts (Coulthard, 2014), such as Stó:lō Téméxw, is relating to Indigenous communities and land in ethical ways.

2.4.4 Ethical Relationality.

With an interest to integrate Indigenous knowledge in this research, I have been challenged to practice what I have learned from Donald (2009) as ethical relationality:

> Ethical relationality is an ecological understanding of human relationality that does not deny difference, but rather seeks to more deeply understand how our different histories and experiences position us in relation to each other. This form of relationality is ethical because it does not overlook or invisibilize the particular historical, cultural, and social contexts from which a particular person understands and experiences living in the world.

> It puts these considerations at the forefront of engagements across frontiers of difference. (p. 6)

My commitment to ethical relationality in my work emerged out of my response to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015c), leading me to consider how my teaching and curriculum development can support reconciliation in my own particular context as Donald's (2009) description of ethical relationality invites, which for me is specifically with the Stó:lō peoples and places of Stó:lō Téméxw. Reflecting on my various experiences of personal learning from Stó:lō people and land in this project as I do in each chapter has been a journey of sitting with the stories of Stó:lō Elders and educators that challenge the settler narrative of Stó:lō Téméxw that I grew up with and was educating in. This process of unsettling my understanding of and participation in Stó:lō Téméxw was highlighted by a challenging comment made by the late Stó:lō Elder Ray Silver when he visited the campus of my work and pointedly remarked, "This was our backyard" as he told stories of hunting deer on that land (Silver, 2016). And I have been moved by the stories of the damning legacy of the draining of Sumas Lake as recounted by Stó:lō Elder Rena Point Bolton (Point Bolton & Daly, 2013) and more recently lived out in the devasting floods in November, 2021 (Olsen, 2021a). A motivation for this project has been my desire to continue learning ways Stó:lō knowledge teaches connection to the land and challenges the settler narrative of Stó:lō Téméxw as a place. As I discuss in later chapters, exploring changes in my areas of curriculum responsibility is one way I have practiced reciprocity in this research, returning the gift of my learning by developing new approaches to education that prioritize connection to both people and land. The methodological directions outlined in the next chapter will discuss how learning from other

examples of complex Stó:lō and settler history and storytelling has been instrumental in the directions of this project.

2.5 Conclusion

The theoretical directions of ICP guide my research priorities to engage the complexities of Stó:lō and settler history and experience in Stó:lō Téméxw through understanding and practices of unlearning and relationality. This approach informed how I proceeded in curriculum research in Stó:lō Téméxw as I outline in the following chapter on methodology.

But first, I want to pause and consider the wisdom of Stó:lō Elder and educator Switametelót, Patricia Victor from the Xwchíyò:m First Nation. In conversation about settler approaches to Indigenous ways of being and knowing in educational research, Switametelót reminded me that this type of research is a relational journey that cannot be pre-determined or easily controlled; research unfolds in the complexity of relationship and place. As I discuss in the next chapter, the methodology for my curriculum research did not emerge as a settled plan but was part of this unfolding and unsettling journey. It is to discussion of these unfolding methodological directions of my curriculum research that I now turn.

Chapter 3: A Relational Approach to Synoptic Text Inquiry and Curriculum Praxis

In determining the methodological directions for an Integrative Curriculum of Place (ICP) in this project, I situate my research within the field of curriculum theory as I described above. In the diversity of curriculum studies (Wearing et al., 2020), I view my ICP-informed approach to curriculum research as contributing to efforts to navigate the tensions between theory and practice, knowledge and experience, and individual and community (Pinar & Grumet, 1982). There is not one straightforward methodology or direction for ICP curriculum research. Rather, the relational and contextual nature of ICP as a theoretical framework aligns with the concept of bricolage (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005). As I explain in this chapter, I use a combination of methodologies including a relational approach to synoptic text inquiry, supported by curriculum reflections and examples that connect this theoretical inquiry to my place of praxis. In outlining these directions, I introduce the rationale for relational synoptic text research with a brief description of both relational research and synoptic text inquiry. I introduce how I approached relationality in practice, including some of the challenges I faced. I then situate my use of synoptic text inquiry in the field of curriculum research followed by an overview how relationality and synoptic research go together for this project. In describing how these methodologies interrelated in researching dynamics of Stó:lō Téméxw, I discuss how I decided on specific areas of relevant knowledge as my focus. I conclude with a brief overview of how curriculum examples have been a way to experiment in my own curricular praxis in the areas of interdisciplinary community-based curriculum and work-integrated learning.

3.1 Connecting Methodologies: Moving Towards a Relational Approach to Synoptic Text Research

With the ICP focus on unlearning (i.e. decolonization) and relationality (i.e. engaging Indigenous ways of being and knowing), I have combined the emphases on relationality (Donald, 2022) in critical place-based and Indigenous land-based education with synoptic text research (Pinar, 2006b), an approach to curriculum research that examines relevant knowledge (often interdisciplinary) in order to study an important present topic in society (e.g. Pinar, 2006a). As my primary method of investigating ICP directions in higher education curriculum in Stó:lō Téméxw, synoptic text inquiry involves examining select historical and cultural topics and discussing key areas of decolonization. Research conversations with Stó:lō individuals practice ethical relationality (Donald, 2009) as I include their insights to my presentation of Stó:lō knowledge. Combining synoptic text inquiry with ethical relationality, this project contributes to curriculum research framed as "complicated conversation" (Pinar, 2012, p. 198), a view situated at the intersection of student experience, social realities, and academic knowledge. In terms of an appropriate methodology for my ICP research, a relational synoptic text provides direction for answering the research questions in my second area of inquiry: What does the ICP emphasis on engagement with both Indigenous and settler knowledge and practice imply for curriculum research in higher education in Stó:lō Téméxw? How does a focus on unlearning and relationality foster connection to this place? What kind of relationship with local Indigenous communities is required for this research to be conducted in ethical and relational ways? And, what key aspects of Stó:lō Téméxw as a place are relevant for me to consider in this research?

I now turn to explain how I approached relational synoptic text inquiry as a methodology, first describing my approach to relational research followed by a description of how I am using synoptic text.

3.1.1 Relational Research

From the outset of this project, I have been committed to the values and practices of relationality in my ICP research. I first introduce how this commitment informed my methodology, and then below I outline the specific relational practices in the project. Because there is considerable variety in how relational and collaborative research can be understood and practiced, my approach is not based on one prescribed model but is focused on incorporating key principles and practices of relationality and collaboration that will benefit the particularities of my project. I resonate with how Facer and Pahl (2017) summarize their understanding of collaborative approaches to research as "messy, contingent on practice, uncertain, embedded in stories and histories that could be dismissed as 'anecdotal', and located in events and practices that are themselves ephemeral and lacking disciplinary anchorage" (p. 11). The iterative and practice-based nature that characterizes collaborative methodologies has come to describe my approach, as I explain further below in the details of my relational practice and synoptic text inquiry. My approach also prioritizes engagement with Indigenous and decolonial methodologies, which while having similarities to collaborative research, has given attention to the "complex maze of ethical, social, and political considerations" (Gaudry, 2015, p. 243) essential to inclusion of Indigenous people and places in research. Key for my approach to relational research in Stó:lō Téméxw, then, has been centering local relationships in my place of research (Donald, 2009; Gahman & Legault, 2019). Contrary to extractive approaches to community-engaged research (Gaudry, 2015), the relational approach of decolonial and

Indigenous methodologies invites ongoing reflexivity around colonial influence (L. T. Smith, 2012; Stein et al., 2021) along with guiding principles for relationship (Archibald, 2008; Donald, 2009).

As I share below in describing the research conversations that emerged during my research, these relational connections have informed my ongoing experience of unsettling (Regan, 2010) during my research journey as I interrogated and disrupted (Heaslip, 2017) my work as a white settler educator and researcher. Local relationships have also been a way to acknowledge how my own subjectivity (Kincheloe & Pinar, 1991) has informed and been informed by the people and place of my research. Connecting to this autobiographical aspect of synoptic text research (Pinar, 2006b), I include reflection on my experience of learning in relationship during this unfolding research journey as I approach the decolonial and relational dynamics of my ICP project. Including these personal reflections has been a helpful way to connect the values and aims of research with the educational experience of the research (Skilling & Stylianides, 2019). Sharing personal reflections of my unsettling research journey also reflects the suggestion that settler storytelling, within the context of relationship with Indigenous community, can be an important way to "teach about processes for working through settler ignorance" (Rice et al., 2020; see Dion, 2022). Other examples that include narrative reflections within research have been helpful guides for how I have tried to practice ethical relationality within this project (e.g. Heaslip, 2017; Parent & Kerr, 2022).

My interest in relational research resonates with aspects of Community-Based Research (CBR) and Participatory-Action Research (PAR). The inspiration of these approaches was especially evident in the specific curriculum examples that have involved partnership with local communities and institutions. In considering how to approach curriculum development related to

ICP research in higher education, CBR was helpful in its emphasis on connecting education to social change within the structures of education, and doing so through community partnership (Francis et al., 2017; Stoecker, 2003). In discussing curriculum examples, I show how the ICP emphasis on attending to settler dynamics of place is just such a structure of education that I had to navigate developing curriculum in Stó:lō Téméxw. PAR complemented these directions by highlighting the importance of community-oriented change that supports freeing individuals and communities to participate within the knowledge systems of their local communities (Lykes et al., 2018). As some of the curriculum examples illustrate in later chapters, ICP research has led me to connect the practical process of curriculum development alongside unlearning the settler barriers that exist, a process of discovering ways of freeing curriculum to renewing engagement with Indigenous ways of being and knowing. As I note further below, while I did not include CBR and PAR as formal methodologies, the principles they offer inspired this project as well as ideas for future research beyond the scope of this study. While relational connection has been a formative for attending to my own experience of connection to Stó:lō Téméxw, synoptic text research as a method of curriculum inquiry has been a way of analyzing the intersections between relevant knowledge of Stó:lō Téméxw and possibilities for curriculum and pedagogy.

3.1.2 Synoptic Text Inquiry

Developing this project, I knew I wanted to learn from the dynamics of Stó:lō Téméxw as a unique historical-cultural place in developing curriculum. To this end, synoptic text research became a methodology that aligned with the iterative and contextual directions of ICP research. Building from other examples of synoptic text curriculum research (Kridel, 2010; Pinar, 2006b, 2006a), this approach examines critical issues in society today utilizing interdisciplinary inquiry beyond the limited purpose of knowledge production or academic expertise. This form of

curriculum research invites educators to participate in the public aspects of education, to consider what it means for educators and students to see themselves as "active participants in complicated conversations" (Pinar, 2006b, p. x) that occur at the connections between knowledge, context, and educational experience. I was drawn to this approach as it aligns with ICP in providing a model of inquiry that does not view the complexity of context and the intersection of theory and practice as problems to be solved. Rather, this approach views the process of contextual inquiry as the site of creative personal and social learning. By inviting research to discern "what knowledge is most worth" (Pinar, 2006b, p. 2), synoptic text provides a clear but adaptable approach to the decolonial analysis and practices of relationality that ICP calls for.

I outline the specific topics below, but the general directions for synoptic text inquiry in this project orient around decolonization and education in Stó:lō Téméxw. In examining historical cultural snapshots of Stó:lō Téméxw as a place, I reflect on how interdisciplinary inquiry informs examples of curriculum that I work with in this place. My vision for this synoptic text research has been to contribute to and participate in a greater connection to place in higher education in Stó:lō Téméxw, and to do so in ways that reflect the framework and practices of ICP research. As I outline further below, a combination of preliminary research conversations, historical research, interviews with Stó:lō individuals, and incorporation into my own curriculum practice contributed to the content of synoptic inquiry as I discerned relevant knowledge that aligned with the theoretical directions of unlearning and relationality.

I relate my approach to the example of educational researcher Reta Ugena Whitlock and her project on a curriculum of place in the American South. Whitlock (2007) outlines the purpose of her project as follows: "Examining Southern place and conventional traits of Southern identity reveal a greater complexity to feeling Southern, which in turn further

complicates the conversation of a curriculum of place" (p. 6). Such examination, continues Whitlock (2007), can inform the way curriculum contributes to a "progressive transformation of Southern place" (p. 7). While there is not the same ethos in Stó:lō Téméxw as compared to notions of "Southern" in the context of American history and culture, there are elements of Stó:lō Téméxw that form its own sort of ethos that this project suggests are worth examining (e.g. notions of "Bible Belt." See Dart, 2012; Olsen, 2019). I am hopeful that my research provides a contribution to the ongoing transformation of Stó:lō Téméxw.

In terms of structure for my synoptic text, I was drawn to the dynamic nature of this approach to curriculum research. As Pinar (2006b) explains, this type of synoptic text research examines the "'throughlines' along which subjectivity, society, and intellectual content in and across the academic disciplines run" (p. 2). For my project, then, key to the process was discerning what to include in researching the complexity of decolonization and Stó:lō Téméxw. This involved surveying a broad range of sources in determining what knowledge is relevant to my inquiry, such as the categories that educational researcher Sharon Stein suggests for decolonization in higher education. Stein (2020) outlines the following five interconnected dimensions of coloniality: historical, political, economic, epistemological, and psycho-affective. While not comprehensive, I had these types of categories in mind as I reflected on, researched, and discerned what to include in this synoptic text of decolonization and education in Stó:lō Téméxw.

In examining these categories as part of the unsettling nature of this research, I was also interested in challenging the common ways history has been recounted and understood in Stó:lō Téméxw from a Eurocentric settler perspective. For example, Balzer et al. (2023) challenge educators to include post-colonial texts in curriculum, sources that recount "known stories in

new ways" to invite students to engage "uncomfortable conversations" when confronted by experiences of people "often ignored by world events and their own presuppositions" (p. 30). By including my learning from Stó:lō accounts of history and culture, I am inviting a similar "pedagogy of discomfort" (Balzer et al., 2023, p. 43) as I engage Stó:lō stories.

As I went about researching and writing on the topic, there has been an open-ended aspect to the process. Research and writing have not involved a linear process of knowledge production. The process was much messier than that, and it was important realization that the iterative elements of my project were okay. In fact, according to educational researchers Eve Tuck and Marcia McKenzie (2015), methodological flexibility is an important element in researching place. They quote Kullman's (2012) research on methodological inventiveness, an approach does "not to take the improvisatory and uncertain quality of research as a methodological failure, but as an inspiration to think about method more inclusively by considering all modes of relating to the world as potentially suitable methods" (Kullman, 2012, p. 5 as cited in Tuck & McKenzie, 2015, pp. 124-125). This type of research accepts that methodology emerges iteratively in the midst of practice, a methodological flexibility that characterizes how this project has developed. This iterative aspect to synoptic inquiry relates to what David Greenwood (2019) describes as examining the "dimensions of place" (p. 364). By including a combination of reading, relationships, and experiences – all related to these dimensions of decolonization in Stó:lō Téméxw – alongside the actual writing process, each aspect of the research contributed to what I have written here. Engaging these various sources of knowledge and experience, I also include several longer quotes to preserve the voices and experiences that I am interacting with as part of the complicated conversation this research invites.

While the research journey has been iterative, relational, and contextual, I did have clarity for my general directions of synoptic text inquiry. Following Pinar's (2006a) example, I focused on interdisciplinary knowledge, which in my case included areas of history, Indigenous ways of being and knowing, cultural studies, and other relevant sources that arose during my research. Additionally, I have included what a Western University research team (Brunette-Debassige et al., 2022) describe in their survey of decolonial and Indigenizing curriculum in Canadian higher education as "grey literature" (p. 2). These sources of knowledge are not often found in published research but contain important insights from historically marginalized perspectives, such as Indigenous people (e.g. policy documents, blogs, websites, etc.). I outline the specific directions for my synoptic text research below, but first I describe in more depth the process of engaging relational research that would inform the synoptic text inquiry on Stó:lō Téméxw as a place of higher education curriculum research., as well as comment on how curriculum examples provided opportunity to experiment in related areas of curriculum praxis.

3.2 The Role of Research Conversations

Seeking to explore the characteristics of settler history and culture in Stó:lō Téméxw, the primary methodology of this project is synoptic text inquiry. Unique to this use of synoptic text research, however, is my practice of relational connections in supporting how I discerned and interpreted the relevant knowledge to include. In particular, research conversations with Stó:lō individuals – a combination of Elders, leaders, and educators – played an important generative role in the directions of the synoptic reflection as I outline here.

My initial plan was to organize a group of people from a variety of places and perspectives within Stó:lō Téméxw who could provide input on my synoptic text directions, a sort of place-based community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Smith, 2022). I imagined a

group of research collaborators that would include both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people within my network of educators and community members and with connections to the topics of my synoptic text research. What I quickly realized, however, was that relational connections would evolve in emergent ways that required flexibility and revisioning. In what follows, then, I outline the process of how I developed relational research, while also acknowledging some of the challenges and limits to my initial vision of relational synoptic text inquiry. These practices included preliminary conversations, accountability to Stó:lō research ethics, approval of UBC's research ethics, research conversations with Stó:lō individuals, and connection to community in the curriculum areas within my areas of work.

3.2.1 Preliminary Conversations

The process of relational synoptic text research began with a series of preliminary conversations regarding my developing research design. The conversations were with people were already within my network of teaching and researching who met with me to discuss questions I had about research design and potential synoptic directions for studying decolonization and education in Stó:lō Téméxw. Knowing that I would be relating to Stó:lō individuals as part of my project, these conversations were part of the important process of pre-ethics engagement that the University of British Columbia (UBC) requires for any research involving Indigenous communities (University of British Columbia, 2024). I interacted with a combination of Indigenous and settler educators, researchers, and community members who had experience and wisdom in areas of decolonization, higher education, and Stó:lō Téméxw for me to learn from in establishing my own research directions. These conversations put into practice the themes of unlearning and relationality that I had already encountered in developing ICP theoretical directions. These interaction taught me to embrace the iterative, relational approach to

unsettling research in Stó:lō Téméxw. I was encouraged to view my research with a posture and practice of listening and learning before jumping ahead to finalizing the specific directions of my research plan, particularly the topics of synoptic text inquiry that I would eventually focus on.

An important emphasis that emerged throughout the preliminary conversations was to approach my research respectfully and relationally with Stó:lō communities and with Stó:lō Téméxw. This instruction directed me to accept invitations to participate in Stó:lō gatherings and ceremonies, as well as to learn about Stó:lō protocols for types of Stó:lō knowledge and culture that I would research in this project. The preliminary conversations also helped inform initial ideas for what to include in my project, specifically the general topic of connection to the land. As I note below, however, it was the research conversations with Stó:lō participants that brought further insight and experience to specific areas of my examination of connection to the land.

While respecting Stó:lō teaching, people, and land has been a personal commitment throughout my project – part of viewing my research as a witness as settler historian Keith Carlson (1997, 2007) both models and teaches – Stó:lō Nation has established a formal pathway of research accountability that I also went through out of my commitment to ethical relationality (Donald, 2009). This process is called the Research Registry operated by the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre (SRRMC) as part of their responsibility to "support and encourage all the Stó:lō to re-establish, protect and assert self-government through research, documentation and communication of Stó:lō rights and title" (Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, 2016b). In supporting these aims of Stó:lō self-determination, the Research Registry is designed to

> protect Stó:lō history and culture to ensure that Stó:lō knowledge and intellectual property is being incorporated into research projects appropriately, that this knowledge

> and intellection property is being properly credited, and so that the Stó:lō community is aware that the information is being used for which research purposes. (Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, n.d.)

The application process involved submitting an application form that included general research details (e.g. Institutional affiliation, research focus, discipline/field of research, project format) along with a series of questions about the purpose of the research, how Stó:lō individuals will be involved, and what future plans there may be for the research. The application also required my agreement to submit a copy of my dissertation, along with copies of any interview materials (recordings and transcripts) to be added the body of researched housed by the library and archives for potential future use by the Stó:lō community. Following these protocols is one way I can practice reciprocity as I contribute my learning to the body of knowledge on Stó:lō Téméxw that SRRMC is responsible for. Upon submission in May 2023, the application was reviewed by a group of SRRMC staff, including the Stó:lō Cultural Advisor/Historian and the Archivist/Librarian, receiving approval in August 2023. Approval by the Research Registry, in addition to a key step of formal support within Stó:lō research protocols, allowed me to proceed with conversations with Stó:lō community about my research design, followed by UBC research ethics approval for a project that involves Indigenous people and knowledge.

3.2.2 Research Conversations

Joining the SRRMC Research Registry and getting university ethics approval allowed me to proceed with formal research conversations with Stó:lō individuals as well as utilize the resources available in the SRRMC library and archives. While the iterative nature of ICP research has made it difficult to separate my project into categories like theorizing, data collection, and writing, approval by SRRMC and UBC did provide space to move into a season

of more formal research on various aspects of Stó:lō Téméxw history and culture through historical research and community conversations. As a result, a focus to the synoptic text research directions began to emerge, which looking back, involved the following important steps. First, I had a meeting with Si:yémiya Albert (Sonny) McHalsie, Stó:lō Elder, knowledge keeper, and cultural educator who works with SRRMC. I had already interacted with Si:yémiya in a variety of land-based education tours, including as a guest teacher as part of my previous teaching, and his wisdom and expertise about Stó:lō knowledge, people, and land continues to be source of significant learning in my journey as an educator in this place. My conversations with him, first in my preliminary ethics phase and then as one of my formal research conversations, brought important insights into the particularities of Stó:lō knowledge and connection to the land. While I had heard him say the phrase before in his teaching, he shared with me different aspects to the Stó:lō teaching that forms the basis of his work as a Stó:lō educator: *S'ólh Téméxw te íkw'élò. Xólhmet te mekw' stám ít kwelát.* (‘This is our land. We have to look after everything that belongs to us’) (Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, 2016a). Central to my learning was the importance of Stó:lō beliefs and practices of connection to the land, a theme that came up in each of my research conversations and would be the orienting focus of my synoptic text research as I note below.

Along with my learning from Si:yémiya, I began historical research on Stó:lō Téméxw within the ICP concepts of unlearning and relationality. In reading various sources on Stó:lō and settler history and culture in Stó:lō Téméxw in the SRRMC archives/library and other sources of scholarship on this place, again the topic of connection to the land showed up repeatedly within Stó:lō history and knowledge. When considered alongside accounts of settler history in Stó:lō Téméxw, my research revealed complex and often contested snapshots into the diverse ways

Stó:lō and settler communities related to the land. This history included many examples in which the growing settler community in Stó:lō Téméxw displayed a connection to the land that had many detrimental impacts on Stó:lō communities and land. I knew quickly in the process of learning about the particularities of place in Stó:lō Téméxw that opportunities to examine unlearning and relationality in the complexity of this history would be plenty. My challenge was discerning which topics within this history I would focus. I was asking, what is the relevant knowledge for this ICP synoptic text research (Pinar, 2006b)? I gained clarity for the research directions through the additional community conversations I was able to have.

3.2.2.1 Critical Reflection on the Nature of Collaboration

In addition to research conversation with Si:yémiya, I met with three other Stó:lō individuals who represent a variety of experiences and roles in Stó:lō community, teaching, and leadership that could inform the directions and content of my synoptic text research. Although my initial goal was to engage a small number of people as collaborative partners for my project, providing feedback/challenge/suggestions at various points of my research, I quickly realized that this was infeasible. Instead, it was more realistic to frame these connections as conversations that did not require participants to commit for more than one meeting. This meant that my research shifted from the original vision for collaborative research guided by priorities and directions of Stó:lō community to a more open-ended approach to conversations that would inform my research. I admit, this pivot was not an easy decision for me to make at first as it meant acknowledging that my project, while still contributing to important decolonial directions for education in Stó:lō Téméxw, would not include the depth of connection to Stó:lō community that I had originally hoped for. It was continued learning from decolonial researchers, however, that challenged me to recognize the problematic nature of my original vision and accept this

change in direction. My original vision for collaborative research, modeled after other projects I had learned from (e.g. Chambers et al., 2008; Stein et al., 2021), required a team of community members, educators, and researchers committed to developing research together over the course of time, often years. In addition to logistical constraints, my longing for collaborative research risked being a way I could assuage my settler discomfort without actually dealing with that discomfort. In their influential article, "Decolonization is not a metaphor," educational researchers Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang (2012) describe this tendency that I observed in myself as part of "settler moves to innocence" in which

> those strategies or positionings that attempt to relieve the settler of feelings of guilt or responsibility without giving up land or power or privilege, without having to change much at all. In fact, settler scholars may gain professional kudos or a boost in their reputations for being so sensitive or self-aware. (p. 10)

As I reflected on my own vision for collaborative research, this idea of settler moves to innocence forced me to assess my motivations and realize that I was getting ahead of myself and my connection to Stó:lō community and land in my place. Yes, I had relational connections and was exercising respectful relationship with Stó:lō teaching, community, and land by following proper protocols within my developing research, but my experience was still limited. To claim collaborative research was an overstatement, a claim that wanted to benefit from Stó:lō teaching and land in my work in ways to went beyond my connections and experience, risking what Tuck and Yang (2012) critique as "a fantasy that an individual settler can become innocent, indeed heroic and indigenized" (p. 14). Collaborative research spoke more to my desire to get decolonization right than describing the current place in my journey as a researcher and educator in Stó:lō Téméxw. As Stó:lō educator Switametelót, Patricia Victor instructed me during a

conversation early in my research design, I needed to move at the pace of relationship. As a result, I decided to shift my focus from collaboration to relationship, not to diminish the importance of collaborative research with Stó:lō community within higher education, but to accept the limits of my research as just one step in much longer journey of connection to Stó:lō community and land in my work.

3.2.2.2 Stó:lō Participants

In discerning who I invited to participate, Si:yémiya's role as Cultural Advisor/Historian with SRRMC provided helpful direction by suggesting several possible Stó:lō Elders and community members, and then I also made connections within my own networks in Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia and as an employee at the University of the Fraser Valley. Within my network of existing contacts, and with the support SRRMC in contacting potential participants who I had not previously met, I had a list of approximately 20 potential participants that represented a range of roles within Stó:lō community such as Elders, leaders, knowledge keepers, educators, and community members. In consultation with Si:yémiya and SRRMC staff, I ended up inviting 10 individuals to participate, and three more people in addition to Si:yémiya agreed to participate in a 60-120 minute research conversation with me. Availability was a barrier to involvement as many of the potential participants are active in supporting a variety of Stó:lō communities and initiatives and were not able to participate. I am grateful to all of them for considering my request and I was excited to proceed with learning from the four individuals who agreed to participate.

Here is a brief introduction to each of the Stó:lō participants in this project:

Si:yémiya Albert (Sonny) McHalsie: Member of the Shxw'ow'hamel First Nation. Cultural Advisor/Historian of the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre. Si:yémiya

has researched and taught in Stó:lō Téméxw for over 30 years with an expertise in Stó:lō place names in which he aims to educate Stó:lō and settler residents to live in connection and responsibility with the specific places on the lands of Stó:lō Téméxw (see Carlson & McHalsie, 2010; Carlson & Naxaxalhts'i, 2021; McHalsie, 2001, 2018).

Grand Chief Clarence Pennier: Member of Sq'ewlets First Nation. Member of the Stó:lō Tribal Council. Grand Chief Pennier has been involved with Stó:lō politics and leadership focused on Indigenous Rights and Title in Stó:lō Téméxw and has been instrumental in many agreements with provincial and federal governments regarding land use. He has also been actively involved in initiatives coming out of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada in which the history of Stó:lō residential survivors and their families can be remembered and honoured in respectful ways.

Q'um Q'um Xiiem Jo-ann Archibald: Member of the Soowahlie First Nation, Professor Emeritus of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia (UBC). Q'um Q'um Xiiem has been involved in Indigenous education for most of her career as an educator as she was instrumental in establishing Indigenous education programming at UBC and contributing to Indigenous educational scholarship internationally. She is well-known for her Indigenous storywork methodology (see Archibald, 2008, 2023) that emerged from her learning relationships with Elders and Cultural Knowledge Holders, as well as her connection to the land as Stó:lō.

Dr. Lolehawk Laura Buker: Stó:lō, member of the Lake Babine Nation, and Scottish background. Assistant Professor and Co-chair of Indigenous Studies at the University of the Fraser Valley. Lolehawk's teaching and research centers Indigenous education on connection to

the land and language, which in Stó:lō Téméxw is oriented around the river and Halq'eméylem (see Buker, 2012).

3.2.2.3 Research Conversation Focus

In my request for participation with each of these individuals, I provided a written summary of my project directions as well as my intentions for the research. I communicated my commitment to practice ethical relationality and my willingness to step into the risk of unsettling educational research, inviting their honest feedback and critique and indicating my desire to learn from and support the wisdom and rights of local Stó:lō people and land. I sent a research introduction by email to potential participants that invited a 60-120-minute conversation on the topic of connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw and outlined the focus of my project (see Appendix A).

Once the individuals agreed to participate and we arranged a time for our research conversation, I prepared a more in-depth outline for the conversations that reflected the directions of my ICP research by inviting comment on Stó:lō insight and experience related to topics of synoptic text research and to areas for unlearning and relationality for higher education curriculum. The types of questions I developed arose out of my commitment to ethical relationality (Donald, 2009) and were informed by Archibald's (2008) storywork (see Appendix B). The questions invited participants to reflect on their understand and experience of connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw, and then moved to their insights on the legacy of settler colonialism in society and education in particular.

While the questions provided a helpful guide for the conversations, each meeting had the flexibility to focus on areas of discussion that emerged in the moment. The meetings were unique experiences of discussion on these general topics with the participants. The knowledge and

experience that was shared by each participant has been a gift in my own journey of learning from and with Stó:lō teaching, community, and land. With a combination of personal stories, historical and cultural commentary, and insights into the directions of my project, each participant reflected the relationality that I myself was hoping to embody in the process of this research. Their insights also helped me discern what topics of Stó:lō history, culture, and experience to include in the synoptic inquiry on Stó:lō Téméxw, offering important suggestions, clarifications, and even challenges to what I was proposing. For example, I met with Si:yémiya as part of my preliminary conversations and then as a research participant. His emphasis on the importance for settler researchers to respect Stó:lō paradigms for knowledge challenged me to engage Stó:lō perspectives and voices on history, culture, and experience in more holistic ways than historical summaries. The inclusion of Stó:lō stories and experience, including some of the sections with longer quotes, is a way I have entered into dialogue with this learning in the project. Reference to relevant topics and examples in the conversations is included in Chapters 4-7 and have been approved for inclusion here by each of the participants.

The research conversations took place over a period of six months between January-June 2024, each conversation ranging from 60-120 minutes. Two conversations were conducted in person and two were via online video meeting. With the consent of each participant, the conversations were recorded and transcribed, with copies to be held in the SRRMC archives as a contribution to the collection of Stó:lō knowledge that supports the preservation of Stó:lō history and culture as practice of reciprocity within the research process.

The wisdom and input in the relational connection that occurred in these research conversations along with the historical and cultural research that was part of my inquiry into relevant knowledge of Stó:lō Téméxw, combined to form my directions for ICP research on

unsettling education in Stó:lō Téméxw. Focused on an ICP approach for higher education curriculum research in the Stó:lō Téméxw, these questions guided my discernment for what relevant knowledge to focus on: What key aspects of Stó:lō Téméxw as a place are relevant for me to consider in this research? And, how does a posture and practice of unsettling research inform unlearning and relationality in curriculum? I outline here how the developing focus on my synoptic text research emerged as I began to answer these questions.

3.3 Synoptic Text Research Topic: Stó:lō and Settler Connection the land

As my focused research began, these questions invited an iterative and subjective approach to a curriculum of place, what curriculum theorist Cynthia Chambers (2008) describes the practice of "knowing as you go" (p. 6). By necessity, then, this approach to synoptic text research required me to accept that inquiry is a process, a journey of discovery as knowledge of the past is considered in relation to education in the present, hence the focus on relevant knowledge not comprehensive knowledge (Pinar, 2006b). Pinar's (2006b) questions of synoptic inquiry in reference to race in the West represent the type of questioning I used to guide my work on Stó:lō Téméxw: "What can the study of this primal scene provide us who teach in the present? What can be the pedagogical point of recovering a lost origin, except to enable us to understand more fully whom we have already become?" (p. x).

In exploring these questions through research, experience, and conversations, it became clear that the concept of an ethos of connection to the land was a fundamental idea related to decolonization in Stó:lō Téméxw. As I embarked on the process of relational synoptic text research, informed by an ICP lens of unlearning and relationality, I considered how an ethos of connection to the land is evident in both Stó:lō and settler history and culture in this place. This inquiry revealed that an ethos of connection to the land is informed by the foundational origins

and ongoing practices of responsibility evident in both Stó:lō and settler people and culture. Before I get to these areas, the following provides some background to how I arrived at examining an ethos of connection to the land as the framing emphasis for research on decolonization and education in Stó:lō Téméxw and what it this inquiry involved in my research practice.

3.3.1 Exploring the Ethos of a Place

In looking at the concept of "ethos" in relation to a specific place, in this case Stó:lō Téméxw, I am referring to the complex, dynamic, and often fluid aspects of this place (McLaughlin, 2005). Discussing the range of meanings for a concept like ethos and its relevance for education, Terence McLaughlin (2005) suggests that

> an ethos can be regarded as the prevalent or characteristic tone, spirit or sentiment informing an identifiable entity involving human life and interaction (a 'human environment' in the broadest sense) such as a nation, a community, an age, a literature, an institution, an event and so forth." (p. 311)

In this sense, ethos is multifaceted, capturing the range of characteristics – both visible and invisible – that a place is composed of. The contextual aspects of Indigenous ways of being and knowing are similarly multifaceted (Woynarski, 2015). As my synoptic text inquiry will show, there is no one dominant ethos of connection to the land in the Stó:lō Téméxw; rather there is a range of perspectives within the diverse Stó:lō population.

In her research on the social location of writing, Nedra Reynolds (1993) suggests that "ethos, like postmodern subjectivity, shifts and changes over time, across texts, and around competing spaces" (p. 326). Along these lines of an iterative and contextual description of place I am using ethos to describe the dynamics of Stó:lō Téméxw as a place that has formational

qualities. Reynolds (1993) expands this idea by offering these helpful definitions: “Careful attention to the etymology of ethos – its connections to space, place, or location – helps to reestablish ethos as a social act and as a product of a community's character” (p. 327).

Related to ethos as a formational quality of place, I align my project with the critical historiography of the late curriculum theorist Joe Kincheloe (1991) when he invites educators to “understand the conventions of our place, and how they have shaped us” (p. 125). Following these directions, my synoptic text examines Stó:lō Téméxw as a complex ethos for curriculum research, a place in which a variety of beliefs, traditions, and practices combine to foster an ethos of connection to the land that contextualizes the competing and integrated perspectives of Indigenous and settler people and cultures. Dwayne Donald comments on the possibility that emerges when educators engage these complexities of place: “A pressing curricular and pedagogical challenge faced by educators in Canada today is how to facilitate the emergence of a new story that can repair inherited colonial divides and give good guidance on how to proceed differently” (Donald, 2021). My hope is that by exploring the topic of connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw this relational approach to synoptic text inquiry can be one such story.

3.3.2 Articulating an Ethos of Connection to the Land

Focusing on an ethos of connection to the land in the place of Stó:lō Téméxw expresses what educational researcher Sandra Styres (2019) refers to as the “Literacy of land” or “the philosophies embedded in our places where land, learning, identity, and education intersect” (p. 24). It is these embedded philosophies in Stó:lō Téméxw that my synoptic text examines as a practice of curriculum research in which “understanding the intertextual relations among idea, self, and society is our primary work” (Pinar, 2006b, p. 10). And this interdisciplinary and experiential journey is an approach to history and culture, people and place, education and

experience that, as Pinar (2006b) describes regarding synoptic research, “does not simply repeat, but reconstructs, subjectively, socially, intellectually” (p. 12). By reflecting on the ethos of connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw, I view this project as entering this space of reconstruction, including practices of unlearning and relationality (Donald, 2022). Similar to the way the Southern US has a “distinctive way of knowing” (Kincheloe & Pinar, 1991, p. 12), I am considering how curriculum research in the Stó:lō Téméxw “must possess a particularistic, social theory, grounded view of the world in which education takes place” (p. 5). There are several reasons I have picked the topic of connection to the land to guide this synoptic text inquiry into Stó:lō Téméxw. First, I encountered the phrase repeatedly in research and conversations on Stó:lō ways of being and knowing in Stó:lō Téméxw. Connection to the land forms a sort of shorthand for how Stó:lō teaching and culture views relationship and responsibility to the land.

Second, the phrase also captures both the relational and contextual aspects of ICP research – connection and land. Connection speaks to the priority to research in relationship (Donald, 2009) and land invites recognition of the tangible place in which relationship exists and which decolonial directions in research and education can be enacted (Tuck & Yang, 2012)

Third, the phrase is multifaceted, giving space to consider a variety of directions for how connection to the land intersects in contextual knowledge, social issues, and practices (Pinar, 2015). Analyzing the complexity of the phrase provides opportunity to examine various angles to an ethos of connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw, supporting the iterative and contextual process of ICP research. I do this by examining both Stó:lō and settler histories, a way to include the disruptive directions of ICP research in challenging common settler assumptions about history. As Lenape-Potawatomi educational researcher Susan Dion (2004) observes, “Canadians

have told and retold themselves a particular story; hearing our stories disrupts their understanding of themselves" (p. 59, see Dion, 2009).

In practice, discerning the relevant knowledge for a synoptic inquiry on connection to the land involved consideration of several intersecting sources. First, I was guided by my theoretical directions for unlearning and relationality. I included examples of Stó:lō and settler history that informed necessary unlearning of settler coloniality and pointed towards ways of relating with respect and reciprocity to the people and land in Stó:lō Téméxw. Second, the preliminary research conversations provided critical direction on the broader themes of decolonization and education in Stó:lō Téméxw. It was here that I kept hearing the phrase "connection to the land," which became the orienting topic for this project. Third, as I began to outline potential topics, research on existing sources on Stó:lō and settler history and culture revealed various stories to highlight the complexity of history in Stó:lō Téméxw. As I discuss below, this research highlighted repeated examples of both Stó:lō and settler origin stories and practices of responsibility to the land, the two main topics of connection to the land in this project. Fourth, as these topics were emerging into focus, my research conversations with Stó:lō individuals brought additional stories and perspectives on the historical topics, at times confirming my conclusions (e.g. the importance of Stó:lō self-determination) and other times challenging them (e.g. Stó:lō views of Christianity). Lastly, my own experiences and perspectives as a resident, researcher, and educator in Stó:lō Téméxw, including my work at the University of the Fraser Valley, brought clarity as I experimented with the relevance of the knowledge in application to the specific curriculum projects I was part of during this research.

As a result of these various encounters with Stó:lō Téméxw history, people, land, and education were two ways in which to better understand the ethos of connection to the land: foundational origin stories and responsibility.

3.3.2.1 Foundational Origin Stories

First, it became clear that foundational origin stories shape how an ethos connection to the land is developed and sustained. This is true for both Stó:lō and settler residents of Stó:lō Téméxw. Whether it is Stó:lō stories of beginnings (i.e. sxwōxwiyám) or settler Christian creation theology and political ideology (i.e. Doctrine of Discovery), there are foundational narratives in Stó:lō Téméxw that birthed the various dynamics of an ethos of connection to the land. I begin my synoptic text inquiry, then, asking the question, where does the ethos of connection to the land come from? I answer this question by looking at both Stó:lō (Chapter 4) and settler (Chapter 5) history and culture. In looking at both perspectives, I show how understanding origins of connection to the land can contribute to navigating the complexity of Indigenous-settler relations in education that are so critical to the decolonial praxis of ICP research. In reflecting on my own encounters with this knowledge as I develop curriculum in this place, I note tensions and possibilities for integration as I consider practices of unlearning and relationship.

3.3.2.2 Responsibility to the Land

Second, these foundational stories inform how an ethos of connection to the land is practiced. Both Stó:lō and settler communities exercise contextualized practices of responsibility in Stó:lō Téméxw that extend from their formational stories. Stó:lō ways of being and knowing (e.g. language, ceremony, and land-use) and settler culture (e.g. legacy of Christianity) exhibit practices of connection to the land that reflect the particularities of their respective ethos. A

second question guiding my synoptic text inquiry, then, asks, what does an ethos of connection to the land look like in practice? I answer this question with discussion of Stó:lō ways of being and knowing that reflect their connection to the land in practices of responsibility (Chapter 6). I follow this with examination of Christianity as a formative area of settler practice in Stó:lō Téméxw that informed settler responsibility to the land and its inhabitants (Chapter 7). As with the discussion of origin stories, examination of both a Stó:lō and settler ethos of connection to the land highlights the complexity of engaging place in this way. Through a posture and practice of unlearning and relationship, however, I reflect on ways that understanding difference and similarity can be navigated in ways that inform curriculum research in this place (Donald, 2022).

3.3.3 Connection to the Land in Curriculum

Throughout these chapters of synoptic text research I include reflexive commentary and curriculum examples to examine the implications of this curriculum research in my own educational praxis of higher education in Stó:lō Téméxw. In each chapter of synoptic text inquiry, this question guides my research: How does the ethos of connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw inform curriculum development? Guided by reflection on how the synoptic text research informs unlearning and relationality in curriculum development, I experiment with decolonial praxis (Gahman & Legault, 2019) within my own areas of work in higher education. To conclude this chapter, I introduce these curriculum examples.

3.4 Curriculum Examples: Interdisciplinary Community-based Curriculum and Work-Integrated Learning

While my primary methodology is a relational approach to synoptic text research, the emphasis on practices of unlearning and relationality that are prominent in ICP research have led me to include curriculum examples within my own areas of work in higher education. By

including curriculum examples, I have been able to begin answering my third set of research questions: What does the application of ICP research look like in the practices of higher education curriculum in Stó:lō Téméxw? What postures and practices of unlearning and relationality emerge in my own areas of interdisciplinary experiential education and work-integrated learning?

Towards answering these questions, decolonial praxis (Gahman & Legault, 2019) inspires my own curriculum research to include local connections to people and place. And as Paulo Freire (2005) suggests,

> For apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other. (p. 72)

Including curriculum examples within the synoptic text research connects my theorizing in a way that embraces this path of praxis-based research, connecting theory to practices of teaching and learning in my context of higher education. These practices of ICP also bring Indigenous ways of being knowing into contemporary higher education curriculum (Stein et al., 2021). How I approached including curriculum examples was another area of iterative research that evolved over the course of the project and within the contextual complexities of my work.

3.4.1 The Iterative Process of Researching Curriculum Praxis

Attentive to the complexities of place in my curriculum research in Stó:lō Téméxw, the iterative process of relational connection and synoptic text inquiry determined the specific areas of curriculum I included in this project. This meant that I began my research without specific curriculum examples in mind beyond an interest to survey examples related to the type of

interdisciplinary, experiential, and community-based learning that I am involved with. I was open to examples in the form of curriculum guides, courses, assignments, lecture topics, partnerships, or other curricular outcomes that are appropriate to ICP research in the Stó:lō Téméxw. I relate this approach to how educational philosopher Sam Rocha (2020) discusses syllabi as curriculum, describing them as an "object of intentionality" (p. 27), a reflection of the subjective presence of the teacher in education. I view my curriculum examples in a similar fashion, a way to explore how my presence as an educator shows up in the practices of ICP curriculum in Stó:lō Téméxw. These examples are also an opportunity to imagine possible experiences of students when they encounter this curriculum (Mazawi & Stack, 2020). Within the structure of my dissertation, I include these creative ideas in the form of concrete curriculum examples that may be implemented within higher education curriculum, and in some cases they are. Other examples have been helpful reference along the way, such as syllabi (Rocha, 2020), assignments and/or activities modeled off of similar examples of community-based learning (Taylor et al., 2018), and curriculum based on decolonial praxis (Gahman & Legault, 2019).

The result of this process discerning potential curriculum examples resulted in a variety of areas related to my past and present work in higher education curriculum. In considering different curriculum areas to generate the decolonial directions of my research, my learning from Nis'ga educator and researcher Amy Parent provided an important reminder. As part of a course on Indigenous research methodologies early in my research development journey, I began to think about ways I could implement areas of learning from Indigenous ways of being and knowing in my curriculum work. But I found myself unsure how to proceed when I felt like every aspect of contemporary curriculum needed decolonization. "Where do I begin?" I wondered with uncertainty. As I expressed my concerns with Parent during the course, her

feedback provided an important guide to focus my attention; advice that has stuck with me throughout this project: “Start in the places where you have the most power to make transformative and decolonizing change” (personal communication, December 17, 2021). Applying this advice to my areas of curriculum responsibility, the curriculum examples for this project emerge from two areas within my current work: interdisciplinary community-based learning and work-integrated learning, co-operative education in particular. I briefly outline each area here to provide some clarity for how the curriculum examples shared in later chapters fit within my work.

3.4.2 Interdisciplinary Community-based Learning

Consistent over the course of my career in higher education in the past decade has been developing and teaching interdisciplinary community-based learning curriculum. Interdisciplinarity in my areas of teaching meant that programs and courses I have taught draw from a variety of disciplines to address complex social issues (Ashby & Exter, 2019). Courses have included topics in religious studies, theology, cultural studies, and philosophy. While I have experience in administering interdisciplinary academic programs, such general studies and integrative studies, my main focus in interdisciplinary curriculum has been applying diverse sources of disciplinary knowledge to address specific topics relevant to a particular course or program of study. Within this approach to interdisciplinary curriculum, forms of community-based learning have helped connect the theoretical directions of the curriculum to student experience and practice. As a common approach within place-based education, community-based learning “engages students in projects that require them to apply their knowledge, skills, and energy to community issues or problems (Smith & Sobel, 2010, p. 25). In my case, this has included addressing local social justice within curriculum (e.g. homelessness in Stó:lō Téméxw)

and including various experiential learning activities such as volunteering to foster connection the locations in which interdisciplinary education is occurring. Some of curriculum examples that emerge in this project, such as an outline for an interdisciplinary course on Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw (see Chapter 7), fit within this category of my curriculum work.

3.4.3 Work-Integrated Learning

Alongside my work with interdisciplinary community-based learning curriculum, I have also worked with various forms of work-integrated learning in both program development and teaching. Focused on making connections between academic knowledge and career development, work-integrated learning is defined as a form of curriculum that focuses on "explicitly linking the learning activity to employability outcomes by requiring external stakeholder involvement and authentic practice, thereby allowing students to be part of a relevant professional practice" (Zegwaard & Pretti, 2023a, p. 3). Work-integrated learning can involve full immersion in a workplace (e.g. practicums or co-operative education) or be campus-based in partnership with external partners (e.g. community-based projects) (Zegwaard et al., 2023).

My own areas of work-integrated learning work have included service learning, internships/practicums, and my current area of responsibility, co-operative education (co-op). Because the work-integrated learning curriculum examples that I reflect on in this project are primarily within co-op, I will briefly outline this type of work-integrated learning curriculum here.

While there are a number of ways that co-op has been defined and structured as a form of work-integrated learning (Fannon, 2023), this project references the most common form of co-op in which students alternate full-time semesters of academic study with periods of full-time, paid employment related to their academic program "in appropriate fields of business, industry,

government, social services and the professions" (Anderson et al., 2012, p. 59). This basic co-op structure reflects the definition from Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada (CEWIL Canada, 2021) that informs my own context in a Canadian university:

> Co-op work terms have specific requirements; the student must be engaged in productive work for which they receive remuneration, the student's performance in the workplace is supervised and evaluated by their employer, and that the work term lasts for a minimum of 12 weeks and/or 420 hours. Co-op is intentionally designed to ensure that the skills the student learns are relevant to today's job market. (para. 2)

Aimed at supporting student career development and employability as part of their education, co-op is contributing to ways post-secondary institutions are responding to the ongoing pressure to provide dynamic and evidence-based work-integrated programming (Zegwaard & Pretti, 2023a). It is within this common framework of co-op that I experiment with practices of unlearning and relationality that emerge from the ICP synoptic text research on higher education in Stó:lō Téméxw. This reflection includes interrogating neoliberal assumptions in co-op that prioritize individualistic conceptions of career education that exist to contribute to capitalist economies (J. Johnston, 2011). By including these discussions I am guided by Kincheloe's (1999) vision for critical approaches to vocational education in my examination of the limits and areas for change in co-op: "Critical vocational teachers understand that all knowledge about vocational education is partial and is often shaped by social and economic interests" (p. 198). Building on this approach, I follow the challenge of vocational education researcher Alison Taylor (2022) by considering how changes in co-op curriculum can "both facilitate and disrupt" (p. 431) the student experience of professional practice. Drawing on my learning from Stó:lō ways of being and knowing in this project, I propose co-op curriculum exercises and assignments focused on

holistic approaches to student experience, which foster community connections as part of trends to develop more inclusive approaches to work-integrated learning (Lasrado et al., 2024).

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed how my commitments to unlearning and relationality in ICP research led me to combine methodologies as the appropriate way to investigate the particularities of Stó:lō Téméxw. Researching the ethos of a place is no straightforward task, especially considering the complex and at times conflicting perspectives of Stó:lō and settler history and culture. Synoptic text research provides an interdisciplinary and iterative approach to historical and cultural research that can attend to these complexities of Stó:lō Téméxw while also informing my experience as an educator in this place. Research conversations and curriculum examples provide a relational connection to Stó:lō Téméxw within my own practice as an educator, an attempt to avoid divisions between theory and practice and recognize the experiential and contextual nature of curriculum research. The topics of unlearning and relationality in the synoptic text inquiry, then, correspond to my experiences of unlearning and relationality as an educator. It is in these directions that I turn now to discuss the praxis of ICP research in a relational approach to synoptic text inquiry. With an eye towards contextual curriculum integration, the following chapters share my interdisciplinary research into both Stó:lō and settler history and culture in Stó:lō Téméxw on the topic of connection to the land. My hope is that this project can contribute to the ongoing journey of unsettling education in this place.

II. Foundations: Where Does an Ethos of Connection to the Land Come From?

In his Massey lectures on Indigeneity in Canada, Thomas King (2003) opens each lecture with the phrase, “the truth about stories is that that’s all we are” (p. 2). With each topic, King traces an aspect of Indigenous experience and Canadian culture through the combination of stories and insights. He relates an understanding of contemporary Indigenous experience by repeatedly making the connection between the stories that are told and the complex ways in which Indigenous identity is understood today. Stories, King concludes, orient identity and experience. As I began this research on aspects of Stó:lō Téméxw in practices of unlearning and relationality, King’s statement and reflections on story and identity rang true. Surveying various snapshots of Stó:lō Téméxw history and culture, examples of Stó:lō and settler connection to the land, was an experience of encountering the transformative nature of stories. As Dwayne Donald (2020) observes, “If curriculum can be understood as stories we tell about the world and our place in it, then we need to start telling different stories in order to renew balanced and sustainable relationships with the more-than-human entities that give life” (p. 160). As a way of practicing such storytelling, in this chapter and the one that follows, I discuss how origin stories of Stó:lō and settler experience in Stó:lō Téméxw have informed my curriculum research in this place.

My exploration of an ethos of connection to the land as an area for curriculum inquiry begins by looking at the foundations of the concept from both a Stó:lō and settler perspective. Where does an ethos of connection to the land come from? What are the Stó:lō and settler stories that characterize an ethos of connection to the land? Because my framework for an integrative

curriculum of place (ICP) includes a range of perspectives to consider how unlearning and relationality can inform integrative approaches to knowledge and education – specifically the complex intersections of Indigenous and non-Indigenous sources of knowledge and experience – it makes sense to examine both Stó:lō (Chapter 4) and settler (Chapter 5) foundations.

In both this discussion of foundations and the following section on practices of responsibility to the land I orient the analysis around a central Stó:lō teaching. In Halq'eméylem, the upriver dialect of Coast Salish Halkomelem spoken by Stó:lō people, "*S'ólh Téméxw te íkw'élò. Xólhmet te mekw' stám ít kwelát,*" translates into English as "This is our land. We have to look after everything that belongs to us" (Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, 2016a). I first heard this phrase during a tour of the former St. Mary's residential school led by Stó:lō Elder, knowledge keeper, and cultural historian Si:yémiya Albert (Sonny) McHalsie. Participating in several more tours in recent years, and in conversation with Si:yémiya as part of this research, I have heard him share this phrase repeatedly. The phrase orients how Stó:lō understand and relate to the land. I asked Si:yémiya how Stó:lō understand this teaching in relation to settler colonialism and the many non-Stó:lō residents of Stó:lō Téméxw. Is this relationship and responsibility to the land reserved for Stó:lō people in this territory? Si:yémiya was quick to respond, adamant even, that the teachings are a mandate for all people in Stó:lō Téméxw, not just Stó:lō. He explained that non-Stó:lō community members – settlers and other Indigenous residents – are invited to receive and participate in the Stó:lō teaching of relationship and responsibility to the land. He was clear, however, that the teaching is Stó:lō and to participate in this way of life is to support Stó:lō priorities (i.e. resurgence and self determination) in their territory.

I have chosen to use this phrase as a point of reference to orient my synoptic inquiry on curriculum research in Stó:lō Téméxw with Si:yémiya's invitation and challenge in mind. As a settler resident, educator, and researcher in Stó:lō Téméxw, learning from, being challenged by, and supporting this Stó:lō claim to the land is a way I can practice ethical relationality (Donald, 2009) as I integrate Stó:lō teaching into the theoretical directions of this research. This approach also extends from my ICP lens by examining the intersection of complex knowledge, history, and experience between Indigenous and settler perspectives (Ahenakew, 2016; Donald, 2012a). These first two chapters of ICP inquiry begin this investigation by focusing on the first part of the phrase, S'ólh Téméxw ("our land") and examining how the foundations for connection to the land – beliefs, values, and traditions – of both Stó:lō and settler communities are critical to understand when seeking to educate in ways that attend to the complexities of this place. To begin, as the original inhabitants and caretakers of the land, I examine how Stó:lō origin stories provide the foundations for a Stó:lō ethos of connection to land rooted in relationship. When considered in the context of curriculum research, these Stó:lō teachings offer a gift of wisdom and challenge, as I show in the connections to my own curriculum work.

Chapter 4: Stó:lō Foundations of Connection to the Land – S'ólh Téméxw ("Our Land")

The Halq'eméylem phrase S'ólh Téméxw[5] ("our land") is often used in Stó:lō greetings and land acknowledgements and refers to the fundamental relationship that Stó:lō people have with the land. In considering Stó:lō origins, this chapter represents my journey of learning about how the foundational concept of S'ólh Téméxw came to be in Stó:lō history and culture. The result, as I reflect more below, is a relational understanding embedded in the fabric of Stó:lō identity, a way of being and knowing that has been a gift to my own presence and work as an educator in this place. In what follows I introduce the meaning of the phrase S'ólh Téméxw and reflect on the role of Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám (origin stories) as foundational for Stó:lō connection to the land. I then experiment with specific ways these Stó:lō origins can inform my approach to educational philosophy and curriculum in this place.

4.1 S'ólh Téméxw – "Our Land"

The phrase S'ólh Téméxw speaks to the deep connection with the land for Stó:lō people. As a settler landowner in this territory – I have a piece of property that British Columbia declares as legally mine – to hear "our land" is not a simple correlate to my experience of land ownership. For Stó:lō, land is not an object to possess but a reality to be in relationship with. This does not mean Stó:lō are unconcerned with land ownership, something I note below in discussion of

[5] An important note on terminology before I continue. Because S'ólh Téméxw is a Halq'eméylem phrase for Stó:lō connection to the land, part of my responsibility as a settler is how I use the phrase itself. In most cases, I use the phrase Stó:lō Téméxw in referring to Stó:lō land/territory as a non-Stó:lō person. Senóqw'iye Leanne Joe, a Stó:lō educator and my colleague at the University of the Fraser Valley, has taught me the importance of this distinction as it is a way to practice truth telling and respect to Stó:lō people and land. Stó:lō Téméxw is not my land; it is Stó:lō land.

Stó:lō practices of responsibility to the land. Emphasizing relational connection to the land, however, Stó:lō reference to the land as S'ólh Téméxw refers to the depth of experiential and spiritual relationship to the land that is fundamental to Stó:lō ways of knowing and being. The late Stó:lō educator and researcher Ethel Stelómethet Gardner (2002) states this relational connection to the land well:

> "S'olh Téméxw" is not just words, not simply a representation of the physicality of the World, but a representation of a holistic concept that binds the people spiritually to the physical world, to each other and to all our ancestors, and is expressed best through our Halq'emeylem language. These interrelationships define our culture, define who we are as Stó:lō people, and in other words, define our worldview. (p. 56)

As an educator looking to connect Stó:lō ways of knowing and being to the knowledge and practices of my own areas of curriculum, it has been important to understand the Stó:lō concept of S'ólh Téméxw beyond a statement included in a land acknowledgement or other teaching on the socio-political dynamics of Stó:lō Téméxw. The statement challenges what educational researchers Eve Tuck and Marcia McKenzie (2015) describe as the reality that "humans do not perceive themselves as part of/as shaped by place, or vice versa, as shaping place through our everyday social practices" (p. 32). Instead, referencing a Stó:lō assertion of "our land," points to the relational connection Stó:lō people have to the land, and then raises the question of how I as a non-Stó:lō resident will relate to this land myself.

In the following, I briefly describe the foundational role of Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám for Stó:lō connection to the land, drawing on my own encounters with sxwōxwiyám as a settler educator in this place and how these encounters have informed my own curriculum development research. I show how the beliefs and practices of sxwōxwiyám, when engaged in local relationships with

Stó:lō people and land, offer important wisdom for curriculum development in this place. I conclude with reflection on how this Stó:lō paradigm of connection to the land can inform the necessary unlearning and relationality for educators in this place, reflecting on implications for curriculum theory, curriculum structure, place-based education, and holistic curriculum and pedagogy.

4.2 Stó:lō Origin Stories: Sxwōxwiyám

> "Sxwōxwiyám are our origin stories. Through sxwōxwiyám, we are all connected."
>
> –(Sq'éwlets First Nation (2016)

Relational connection to the land is fundamental in Stó:lō stories, particularly stories of Stó:lō origins or beginnings known as sxwōxwiyám. As Stó:lō researcher and educator, Dr. Lolehawk Laura Buker (2012) notes, "The oldest Stó:lō stories invite the listener to dwell in a place of knowing. There might not be immediate understanding for the meaning of the story. It is affirmed, understood and encouraged that the listener 'be' with the story" (p. 25). It is in these practices of oral tradition that the foundations for a Stó:lō ethos of connection to the land is clear. As part of a display on sxwōxwiyám in partnership with The Reach Gallery Museum Abbotsford, Stó:lō Nation, and the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre (2012) sxwōxwiyám is described as follows:

> Sxwōxwiyám are the stories about a long time ago when the Elders explained that the world wasn't quite right. It was a time when animals and people could talk to each other and could transform from one to the other. Through sxwōxwiyám we are all connected.

My understanding of sxwōxwiyám has occurred through a combination of reading and listening to Stó:lō community members, research on Stó:lō history and culture, and a variety of my own learning experiences with Stó:lō Elders and communities where sxwōxwiyám were shared. It

was clear to me that sxwōxwiyám invite reflection on Stó:lō history and tradition in order foster ongoing relationship to the land and one another. I will share an example of one of my encounters with sxwōxwiyám below, but first I will outline a few key characteristics of these stories within Stó:lō tradition.

The general focus of sxwōxwiyám is on Stó:lō origins. And while there are many variations of the same story depending on to whom and where it is being told (Stó:lō Nation, 2016), there is a common pattern to these origin stories. Sxwōxwiyám recount a time when people were not following connection to the land but instead living in ways contrary to the reality of Stó:lō Téméxw. The stories speak to a time or situation that was out of balance and people or places were not living out the commitments of connection to the land and one another that characterizes Stó:lō ways of being and knowing. Stó:lō teaching on sxwōxwiyám include an understanding of Xexá:ls, powerful beings sent by the Creator to correct the imbalance in the land and people:

> Xexá:ls (the Transformers) were given the responsibility to walk through S'ólh Téméxw and make things right. In walking through S'ólh Téméxw they were confronted a number of times by people and different situations that were going against the laws of the land and the rules received from the Creator. Xexá:ls were given the task of making those things right, turning those people into stone. (Stó:lō Nation et al., 2012)

Sxwōxwiyám, then, in describing the role of Xexá:ls in restoring balance and connection, retell these beginnings as a way to remind the listener of the importance of respecting that place. In addition to the role of Xexá:ls, there are a few other elements of sxwōxwiyám that are helpful for understanding the formative role these stories have in Stó:lō Téméxw.

4.2.1 Sxwōxwiyám and Place Names

The role of sxwōxwiyám cannot be understood apart from the places in which they are rooted. These origin stories highlight the importance of place names in Stó:lō teaching and culture. Sxwōxwiyám connect Stó:lō people to the land, literally, in specific locations throughout Stó:lō Téméxw (McHalsie, 2001).

Place names are vital to Stó:lō connection to the land. In describing Stó:lō place names, I am drawing from Stó:lō Heritage Policy Manual that was developed by Stó:lō Elders, leaders, and knowledge keepers in 2003 as a way to connect Stó:lō ways of being and knowing to practices of self-determination in protecting the land from a Stó:lō perspective. In defining place names, the Stó:lō Heritage Policy Manual states that they are

> the Halkomelem name(s) of a place or places in the landscape of S'ólh T'éméxw. Place names are particularly important because they may indicate the significance of a place, whether it is a sacred place, and what oral histories are tied to or come from the place. (Stó:lō Nation Lalems ye Stó:lō Si:ya:m, 2003, p. 11)

Place names include both prominent Stó:lō sites, but also lesser known and in some cases private locations in which sxwōxwiyám relates the story about the importance of a specific landmark. Prominent examples in which the sxwōxwiyám are publicly available, one of which I share and reflect on below, are Lhilheqey (also known as Mt. Cheam) and Xá:ytem (also known as Hatzic Rock). The lesser known sxwōxwiyám, however, are passed on through the teachings of Stó:lō Elders and knowledge keepers, such as Si:yémiya Albert (Sonny) McHalsie and his research and teaching as Cultural Advisor/Historian with the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre and Stó:lō Tourism.

Si:yémiya has been researching and educating on Stó:lō place names for nearly 40 years (since the 1980's). Through extensive relationships across Stó:lō territory, Si:yémiya relates the wisdom of Stó:lō Elders and their oral histories in establishing connection to the land through the wisdom of place. For Si:yémiya, paying attention to the wisdom of the land that place names represent, is a way of practicing connection. One cannot understand the paradigm of Stó:lō teaching without understanding and experiencing Stó:lō Téméxw. Sharing with me about his work as an educator in Stó:lō Téméxw, Si:yémiya emphasized how important respect for Stó:lō paradigms of land is – "learning the Stó:lō way" (personal communication, January 22, 2024). The land-based education tours that Si:yémiya runs through Stó:lō Tourism educate both Stó:lō community members and the broader community on the importance of connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw. The importance of place names, both in Si:yémiya's teaching and in the commitments of the Stó:lō Heritage Policy Manual, highlight how the foundational teaching of sxwōxwiyám are embedded in the literal places of Stó:lō Téméxw. And because these places are the Xexá:ls transformations, these places carry life. Stó:lō people relate to these significant places in living relationship with the land as part of their connection to ancestors. This understanding that life resides in specific places on the land is known as shxweli, another important element of sxwōxwiyám.

4.2.2 Sxwōxwiyám and Shxweli

The Halq'emeylem word shxwelí speaks to the life that resides in specific things, the spirit of a place. As the Stó:lō Heritage Policy Manual describes in relation to specific places throughout Stó:lō Téméxw,

> Due to the way our family tree connects the past and future generations, we regard these transformed ancestors as still living with and amongst us. In today's world as in the

> distant past, their shxwelí – spirit or life force – inhabits the resources in our territory. Before we change or alter our environment we must consider the way our actions will affect these resources - the living spirits of our ancestors. The way we use the landscape must be consistent with our beliefs, our relations and our general world view. (Stó:lō Nation Lalems ye Stó:lō Si:ya:m, 2003, p. 1)

And this life force extends beyond specific place names in Stó:lō Téméxw, but is a belief that all things contain a life force. "Shxwelí is the life force that exists in all things. Since all things are alive with shxwelí, they must not be taken for granted" (Stó:lō Nation Lalems ye Stó:lō Si:ya:m, 2003, p. 5). Connection to the land, shxwelí teaches, is relational. This relational connection is an essential element to how Stó:lō Elders speak about land, suggests Si:yémiya:

> I went to see the late Rosaleen George and I said, "what is shxwelí?" I've never forgotten her answer, and I always tell people because I think it's probably the best way to explain it. She put her hand on her chest and she said, "shxwelí is inside us here." And she put her hand in front of her and she said, "shxwelí is in your parents. She raised her hand higher and said, then your grandparents, your greatgrandparents, it's in your great-great-grandparents. It is in the rocks, it's in the trees, it's in the grass, it's in the ground. Shxwelí is everywhere. (McHalsie, 2007, p. 104 quoted in Buker, 2012, p. 58)

Si:yémiya's description highlights an additional element of wisdom within sxwōxwiyám, and that is the role of generational knowledge and responsibility. Stó:lō teaching guides people to relate their lives to past, present, and future generations, captured by the Halq'eméylem word tómiyeqw.

4.2.3 Sxwōxwiyám and Tómiyeqw

This reality of relationship to the land through shxwelí comes with responsibility in Stó:lō teaching. Not only does life (spirit) reside in all things, Stó:lō believe there is connection to this life – tómiyeqw – a connection that extends across generations past, present, and future. As the Stó:lō Heritage Policy Manual (Stó:lō Nation Lalems ye Stó:lō Si:ya:m , 2003) describes,

> In our Stó:lō culture a special link exists between the past, present and future. We express this connection in many ways. In our Halq'eméylem language, for instance, we have the word tómiyeqw which translates into English as both great-great-great greatgrandparent and great-great-great-great-grandchild. The relationship expressed in this word connects people seven generations past with those seven generations in the future. The connection between the past and future rests with those of use living today, in the present. (pp. 1-2)

In Stó:lō teaching and culture, paying attention to specific places in Stó:lō Téméxw, through sxwōxwiyám and acknowledgement of shxweli, is a practice of relational connection, a recognition of tómiyeqw in the present. Throughout Stó:lō Téméxw there are local examples of sxwōxwiyám that each Stó:lō community relate to in their ongoing practice of connection to the land and their ancestors. In representing these various elements of Stó:lō teaching – place names, sxhweili, and tómiyeqw – sxwōxwiyám are stories that inform a way of living in relationship to the land and one another. When it comes to educators, sxwōxwiyám also have an important role in bringing this connection to the land to education. This has certainly been true in my own experience.

4.2.4 Sxwōxwiyám Example: The Story of Lhilheqey

As I reflected earlier, developing curriculum that connected learning to the places of Stó:lō Téméxw has been a key priority for me throughout my career as an educator in this place.

Early in this process I encountered Stó:lō people and perspectives as part of my development of place-based curriculum. And sxwōxwiyám, specifically, played an important role in highlighting the importance of connection to and care for the land as foundational to an experience of place in education. Learning from Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám has helped me view the land as teacher, not just a context for learning. Here I share an example where sxwōxwiyám have informed my own connection to the land, and subsequently, my approach to curriculum in this place.

I begin with the transcript from the digital version of the Lhilheqey sxwōxwiyám from the research of historian Oliver Wells and reproduced by the Sq'éwlets First Nation (2016a):

> This is the story of Lhilheqey, or the Legend of Mount Cheam. This story was told by Mrs. Cooper to Oliver Wells. Mount Cheam is a lady, and Mount Baker is a man. This is an old legend. So Mount Baker, he comes over, and he looks for a wife. And he finds a nice looking girl. So he takes her over to the state of Washington. They live there, and they have three boys. Mount Hood, Mount Rainier, and I can't tell you what the other one is. And they have three girls, but the boys are the oldest ones. After the boys grew up and she had three little girls, she says, "I had better go back home", she says, "to my people, to the Fraser River". So she comes back and she says, "I'll stand guard", she says. "I'll stand and guard the Fraser River that no harm comes to my people". "And no harm comes to the fish that comes up to feed them".
>
> That's the legend. And then she takes her three children and she stands up there, and coming down from up the road there's three little points, and those three little points are her children. They say she holds the smallest one in her hand. Behind her, toward this way, is the head of the dog that followed her. And she told the dog to go back home, and

it stood there, and stayed there. So I guess right now there, if the snow isn't all off, you can see that dog head playing.

This sxwōxwiyám highlights the ways Stó:lō connection to ancestors is experienced in connection to the land. The land is not an object but an ancestor. Now, Lhilheqey, commonly known as Mt. Cheam, is a prominent marker of Stó:lō Téméxw landscape and popular site for outdoor recreation, such as 4x4ing and hiking. The mountain can inspire awe and wonder in its presence, magnitude, and beauty as it towers over the Eastern valley in Stó:lō Téméxw. In the Lhilheqey sxwōxwiyám, there is an experiential connection to ancestors and land when the sxwōxwiyám is remembered in this prominent landmark. For Stó:lō, the way Lhilheqey keeps watch over the river and the people, reflects the Stó:lō commitment to care for the land and exercise responsibility for everything in it. "Do we pay attention to the land?" asked Stó:lō educator and researcher Dr. Lolehawk Laura Buker in our conversation (personal communication, May 21, 2024). She urges all residents of Stó:lō Téméxw to pay attention to the land around us, noting that Lhilheqey and the Fraser River are landmarks that remind us of our relationship to the land. This recognition invites Stó:lō people in the present to both express respect and thanks to their ancestors for watching over them while also challenging them to follow in the path of the ancestors in carrying forward the responsibility to care for the land and the river.

As a settler, the sxwōxwiyám of Lhilheqey provides a new way of seeing and engaging with the landscape. When I look at Mt. Cheam now, having heard the story of Lhilheqey, I get a visual reminder of Stó:lō wisdom that invites connection to the land, along with respect of the land as a living being not just an inanimate object. The story challenges me to find ways that I

can support this connection in my own presence here, something I reflect on more below in discussing connections to my work as an educator.

To summarize, sxwōxwiyám, these stories of beginnings, are reminders that Stó:lō live in connection to the land represented in the important place names throughout Stó:lō Téméxw. These stories of transformation highlight that the life of Stó:lō ancestors resides in these places (shxweli), connected to the belief that Stó:lō are connected to their ancestors past, present, and future (tómiyeqw). As a curriculum researcher in this place, these Stó:lō origin stories provide an opportunity to consider how these Stó:lō teachings can inform my work. In the remainder of this chapter, I offer reflections on how my own journey of learning from Stó:lō origin stories has brought insights and practice in my curriculum research and work in Stó:lō Téméxw.

4.3 Curriculum Considerations

In my conversation with Dr. Lolehawk Laura Buker, she noted the relational purpose of sxwōxwiyám: "Old stories guide us to connect to one another" (personal communication, May 21, 2024). In the rest of this chapter, I discuss how my encounters with Stó:lō wisdom in sxwōxwiyám have been a source of guidance in my own journey of connection to Stó:lō Téméxw as an educator in this place. A phrase I have heard repeatedly at Stó:lō gatherings is the invitation to "walk in a good way" as people relate respectfully to one another and the land in Stó:lō Téméxw. I am committed to walking in a good way, then, in ethical relation (Donald, 2012a) as I learn ways the wisdom of connection to the land in Stó:lō origin stories is informing my work as an educator. In the remainder of this chapter I explore the question: how do Stó:lō foundations of connection to the land inform my own practices of unlearning and relationality in curriculum research?

In reflecting on this question by connecting Stó:lō history and culture to present day educational concerns, I align my approach with what Dwayne Donald (2009) describes as an "ethic of historical consciousness" (p. 7). As Donald elaborates,

> This ethic holds that the past occurs simultaneously in the present and influences how we conceptualize the future. It requires that we see ourselves related to, and implicated in, the lives of those who have gone before us and those yet to come. It is an ethical imperative to recognize the significance of the relationships we have with others, how our histories and experiences are layered and position us in relation to each other, and how our futures as people similarly are tied together…Any knowledge we gain about the world interweaves us more deeply with these relationships and gives us life. (p. 7)

As an educator in Stó:lō Téméxw, my encounters with Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám lead to me to consider practices of this type of relational connection to Stó:lō people and land. This is an approach to curriculum research that recognizes the historical connectedness that Donald describes, and then examines ways that this connectedness informs a curricular praxis of unlearning and relationality. In practice, as the remainder of this chapter reviews, this approach to curriculum research has involved learning from Stó:lō teaching, interrogating my own assumptions and context as a settler educator in Stó:lō Téméxw, and experimenting with new directions in my approach to curriculum and pedagogy. As these stories of Stó:lō connection to the land inform the context of my own work and connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw, four areas in particular have been informed by my encounters with Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám: curriculum theory, curriculum development, place-based education (PBE), and holistic pedagogy.

4.3.1 Curriculum Theory: Métissage and Stó:lō Teaching

As a curriculum researcher and developer, I have come to appreciate the role of curriculum theory in developing curriculum. The theoretical framework for curriculum shapes the form and structure of the pathway of educational experience (Pinar, 2012), including everything from curricular content to pedagogical practices.

The theoretical framework for this dissertation is an example of how the conception of curriculum theory informs an approach to curriculum research and development. The ICP lens of unlearning and relationality has led me to learn from Stó:lō wisdom within my own context and experience as a settler educator. But this is not a simple task as it involves examining complex and intersecting sources of Indigenous and settler knowledge and experience within education in Stó:lō Téméxw, what Donald (2009) describes as métissage, the "cultural mixing or the hybridization of identities as a result of colonialism and transcultural influences" (p. 7). As I engage the teaching of Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám I am quickly struck by how my own understanding of knowledge and responsibility is shaped by assumptions I bring as a settler educator. For example, the intergenerational connectedness of Stó:lō teaching on tómiyeqw reflects a relational conception of time that is also in Donald's (2009) suggestion for an ethic of historical consciousness. This relational temporality differs from the ways my default understanding of time prioritizes the relevance of knowledge and responsibility in generalized terms (i.e. "Western education's tendency to universalize knowledge," Marker, 2011) and in connection to the present moment, or perhaps the near future. Whereas Stó:lō conceptions of time prioritize relational connection across the seven generations of the past, present, and future (i.e. tómiyeqw). An important step in my own journey to learn from Stó:lō wisdom of sxwōxwiyám has been to recognize my own assumptions and those of settler education within the curriculum theory I

bring to my work as an educator. As Donald (2009) suggests, encountering different perspectives "can complexify understandings of the significance of living together that traverse perceived frontiers of difference" (p. 8). How do I relate these differing conceptions of time and relationship in my approach to curriculum? Recognizing this complexity surrounding the context of knowledge and experience has been part of my unsettling research experience. For example, in teaching an interdisciplinary course on social justice issues, the major assignment involved a collaborative approach to researching and responding to a complex social issue in Stó:lō Téméxw from a variety of perspectives. The issue selected by the students was homelessness in Stó:lō Téméxw. With a combination of individual assignments, class presentations, and lectures, the intent was to experience the process of engaging homelessness from a range of ideas, not just as a topic that I presented on within the curriculum of the course. As the course began, however, as the teacher I was immediately confronted by own assumptions for what a successful course project would like, including the process of discerning how to best navigate the complexity of homelessness in Stó:lō Téméxw, such as the causes, experiences, and solutions that could be considered in the course. While I had some understanding of curriculum as a pathway for educational experience (Pinar, 2012), which was partly what motived this idea to begin with, I had not considered my role in constructing a curriculum pathway and the context in which the curriculum was developed. In developing an iterative and complex research project, I realized I may not have been as flexible as I had imagined when developing the course. I was still operating within the curricular assumptions of contemporary education, what educational researcher Sharon Stein (2019) refers to as "the house modernity built" (p. 669), the structures of education that include a view of knowledge that

> promises certainty and knowability: that there is one universally relevant truth and a moral code, and those who access and adhere to this truth and these values will be empowered and qualified to describe, predict, and control the world and shape the future. (p. 671)

These assumptions still informed how I assessed student success, so while the assignment was designed with flexibility in mind, I still thought the outcome was clear (to me at least). But as I began to assess students' work in this social justice project, I had to adjust my expectations for what success would involve. And this adjustment was not because of a low quality of work. In fact, the creative and collaborative ideas that emerged in the assignments reflected an energy, insight, and depth of engagement that remains one of the highlights of my teaching experiences. No, the adjustment was in my previously unacknowledged assumptions for success that were implicit to my approach to the curriculum. For example, I extended timelines for completion to allow for more space for students to learn about local dynamics of homelessness. I also adapted some of the assignment requirements to provide more flexibility for how students could present their conclusions in ways that recognized the limits of a one-semester course. While I was able to navigate my way through this experience of curricular and pedagogical adjustment, I do wonder what could have been different if I had encountered Stó:lō teaching in sxwōxwiyám prior to this experience, a type of contextualized development of curriculum theory that this project overall is seeking to explore. In hindsight, I would have spent more time framing the iterative nature of the assignments in the syllabus and course introduction so that students could have had a better understanding of the intention for this experience. I also would have invited more guest speakers to represent the broader range of local perspectives on homelessness to spark the type of creative engagement with place that I had envisioned for students.

This curriculum example highlights how an encounter with different perspectives can be an important step in imagining alternative directions in curriculum. Learning about the purpose of sxwōxwiyám within the context of Stó:lō teaching and land has been such an experience in my own understanding of educational purpose. Sxwōxwiyám reflect the holistic purpose of Stó:lō education in their role of fostering connection to the land for Stó:lō people. As I have learned from Indigenous colleagues at the University of the Fraser Valley, holistic education and pedagogy (Andrews, 2023) describes how a Stó:lō paradigm envisions the purpose of education in the seamless combination of theory (i.e. meaning/values) and practice, and which is often evidenced in the transformative role of story as a practice (Archibald, 2023). The formative role of Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám would be a case in point. Sxwōxwiyám are stories of purpose. As Si:yémiya describes, "The sxwoxwiyám are grounded right here in S'ólh Téméxw (our land), and they explain who we are and why we are the way we are." (McHalsie, 2018, p. xii). Similarly, the Stó:lō Heritage Policy Manual talks about how sxwoxwiyám and their associated stories "bear witness to the unique and long-standing relationship between the Stó:lō and the land and resources in Stó:lō Territory" (Stó:lō Nation Lalems ye Stó:lō Si:ya:m, 2003, p. 37). Considering the intersections between Stó:lō origin stories and curriculum theory, as I am doing here, is a practice of engaging how the contextual complexities of Stó:lō Téméxw inform unlearning and relationality in curriculum theory within this place. As I think about other ways that Stó:lō foundations intersect with curriculum research, as I do below, Donald's (2009) concept of métissage that he developed collaboratively with other educators (Chambers et al., 2008) is a helpful orientation with its emphasis on the importance of relational and contextual approaches to complexity in education. As I introduced above, métissage refers to the bringing together of complex knowledges and experiences into conversation with one another. An

important element of métissage in research, however, is not just the collision of different ideas and experience, but the relational experience of wrestling through these ideas and experiences "in such a way that highlights difference (racial, cultural, historical, socio-political, linguistic) without essentializing or erasing it, while simultaneously locating points of affinity" (Chambers et al., 2008, p. 142). As a settler educator, then, hearing and learning from sxwōxwiyám in relationship with Stó:lō community has been part of my encounter with métissage. As I continue with discussion of curriculum development, place-based education, and holistic pedagogy in what follows, this theoretical orientation towards collaboration and engaging complexity informs how I learn from Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám and Indigenous educators and theorists such as Dwayne Donald.

4.3.2 Relationally Rooted Curriculum Development

The emphasis that métissage places on navigating complexity rather than removing it has informed my approach to curriculum development by learning from the contextual wisdom of Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám. This learning has brought new insight and practice to my work in higher education in Stó:lō Téméxw. Considering how curriculum development often mirrors the values and conception of its institutional and geographical context, understanding these dynamics in their unique complexities within my own context has been a way to "write from this place, of this place, and for this place" according to Canadian curriculum theorist Cynthia Chambers (1999, p. 7). Learning from Stó:lō wisdom about connection to the land has been an important part of my journey in what Chambers describes. No longer only informed by settler history and knowledge, my encounter with Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám has broadened my understanding of education in this place. But similar to my discussion of curriculum theory, this approach to Stó:lō Téméxw as a context for curriculum development has not been a simple or straightforward

experience. Rather, another element of unsettling research has meant wrestling with the complex ways both Stó:lō and settler perspectives on education in Stó:lō Téméxw will intersect and relate to my work in curriculum development. Part of this wrestling has been acknowledging how curriculum development in Stó:lō Téméxw is part of the broader context of education in neoliberal society and then consider ways that Stó:lō foundations for connection to the land offer alternative perspectives on curriculum development.

Across North America, in publicly funded K-12 and post-secondary contexts, there are ongoing debates about the purposes of education and curriculum, what it should focus on and how to determine success. Whether it is new investment in career-oriented curriculum in parts of Canada, or debates about the role equity, diversity, and inclusion in areas of the United States, or debates about the role of technology (e.g. Artificial Intelligence or smartphones) as tools for learning and curriculum development, the broader North American socio-economic neoliberal context of education has a complex influence on curriculum development in local contexts of this society, including Stó:lō Téméxw. Politicians and bureaucrats develop policies and distribute budgets, educational administrators strategize vision and plan programs to reflect the policies and funding from government, and then all sorts of other contributors, such as professors, teachers, counsellors, and staff navigate the realities of conducting education within these educational contexts, including the development of curriculum. Now, there are important conversations about how the purposes of education can persist within and even bring challenge to society and the structures of education. And as I am exploring in this project, I think directions in critical place-based and Indigenous land-based education provide important theoretical and practical directions towards the ends. With this in mind, it is notable how the socio-political context of education in North America, in which it is common that colonial and "bureaucratic

structures govern education" (Spector, 2023, p. 3), can lead to curriculum development that is often more concerned with following formulaic procedures (i.e. "technologization," Pinar, 2022, pp. 124ff) than creating contextualized experiences of discovering knowledge, self, and relationship (Pinar, 2012).

Within this context, curriculum policy and structure is the map, and educators developing curriculum have to navigate the pathways laid out for them. For example, I can remember developing courses with a sense that content and institutional priorities are like a puzzle I am trying to solve within my mind, which then shows up on paper in the form of a course syllabi or program inventory, this object educators create as a key part of our work (see Rocha, 2021). Just execute the policies and procedures, I thought, and curriculum will be successful. Or, following the analysis of policy researcher Stephen Ball (2006), curriculum development is about adapting to the "policy technologies" of education (p. 145). And because I was developing curriculum with place in mind, place was part of the formula for success, showing up in specific courses or assignments. Engaging place was a strategy for successful curriculum development not part of the fundamental relationship with the context in which curriculum is developed within.

Such formulaic and instrumental approaches to curriculum development have been critiqued in a variety of ways. Paolo Freire (2005), for example, described and lamented the "banking concept of education" for fostering a consumeristic approach to education in which students are passive recipients of curriculum, a situation "in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits" (p. 72). Critiquing the lack of depth in contemporary education, Gert Biesta's (2010) critique outlines the problem of "learnification" (p. 18) in which education prioritizes the individual process of learning, where it is the job of curriculum to support this learning process, but has little contribution of content or

experience in that process. One more relevant critique is William Pinar's (2022) description of the problem of "technologization" in which education attempts to fulfill the types of promises often found with technological advances. "Technology promises to predict, indeed produce, outcomes," notes Pinar (2022, p. 123), where in curriculum, the priority is providing what is most appealing to the students who are simply consuming education as a product.

This contemporary educational context also impacts Indigenous control and experience of education against a backdrop of assimilationist tendencies within settler approaches to education. Indigenous communities in Canada have been fighting for control of education for many decades, with the legacy of the 1972 Indian Control of Indian Education policy still relevant to efforts in Indigenous self-determination in education today (Pidgeon et al., 2013). Stó:lō communities, for example, have worked hard to develop Stó:lō pedagogies and knowledge to include in K-12 curriculum in Stó:lō Téméxw in a contemporary educational context where historically little attention was given to the "goals or aims of school curricula in relation to cultural differences, or the influential curricula decisionmakers" (Archibald, 1995, p. 288).

Considering these critiques alongside the teaching of Stó:lō foundations for connection to the land, Stó:lō teaching in their sxwōxwiyám provides a contrast to the formulaic, instrumental, and assimilationist tendencies in contemporary curriculum development that others have criticized. But this alternative vision for education within Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám is not focused directly on addressing the critiques of education that I outlined here. Rather, sxwōxwiyám provide a model that invites educators to start in their own place, an approach to curriculum development that begins rooted in relationship to the land and the people of that land. The critiques of curriculum development, then, can still be addressed, but this work emerges out of the journey of connection within Stó:lō teaching. As I account for these critiques of curriculum

development within the broader context of my work in later chapters, how is this learning from sxwōxwiyám informing my approach to curriculum development?

In my own experience, paying attention to this impulse to view curriculum development as merely formulaic and instrumental has been an important step of unlearning, which has then led to incorporating new practices of connection to the land in my own rhythms of curriculum research, not just in the curriculum itself. Through being on the land and being with Stó:lō people, these new practices have been a way to foster relationship with Stó:lō people and land with my curriculum development work. What has this looked like in practice?

To begin, getting out of my indoor office space and physically being on the land has become a regular practice in my process of curriculum research and development. In addition to the literal experience of being on the land, these times involve reflection on my current understanding of the land and its social location, such as important historical events or current social issues. I focus on paying attention to what is notable in my observations, but also where I am sensing areas for engaging in my own curriculum development. There is an intentionality to this practice of being on the land that relates to Donald's (2021) reflections on walking as "an intentional act of relational renewal." "Walking," Donald elaborates, "is an intrinsically relational activity that carefully attunes mind, body and spirit to surrounding life energies" (p. 58). Noting how contemporary education often denies such relational connection to the land "with universalized assumptions of human knowing," Donald's challenge to educators has inspired my own ongoing practice of being on the land: "If we wish to take seriously the task of addressing the most troubling issues we face today, we must be willing to consider insights from knowledge systems that express alternative ways of being in the world" (p. 60).

This type of description of connection to the land was part of my experience of being on the land when I was developing a place-based interdisciplinary cultural studies course on Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw course in the fall of 2021. In a season of research and course development that involved mostly planning meetings and reading relevant research, I spent time in a specific location within Stó:lō Téméxw. The intent was to reflect on how my own experience of connection to the land in that specific location would bring new perspectives to on the variety of topics within the developing course that related to that place. Through the guidance of Nisga'a educator Amy Parent in an EDST course on Indigenous Inquiry and Research at UBC, I spent a full afternoon in a location within the Sumas Prairie of Stó:lō Téméxw. The spot I chose is a popular walking location (McKee Trail), but also at the intersection of Stó:lō presence (i.e. Semá:th First Nation), agricultural industry (i.e. Sumas Prairie), and resource development (i.e. Trans Mountain Pipeline). I already had some knowledge of those complex intersections within the history and culture of Stó:lō Téméxw, but I wanted to experience this historical and cultural knowledge in new ways. So, I walked a loop through a forested trail and dyke with the sole purpose of being present to the land. For the assignment, we were instructed to "to *pause, think, feel and reflect* at a place on the land" with these questions in mind: "How can learning about the 'land' influence educational theory, leadership, and research practice? What can I learn about myself in relation to this land experience?" (Parent, 2021). These questions contributed to the intentionality of the practice, challenging the risk of the exercise simply being quiet walk in a neighbourhood park. Instead, I gained new perspective on the curriculum I was developing.

A significant result of this exercise was what emerged in the literal experience of connection to the land. I saw and heard things that had not noticed before. In observing the various aspects of the land – water, mountains, tress – with a more intentional presence, I sensed

the life of the land emerge all around me, what Donald (2021) eloquently describes as the way in which "the networks of human and more than human relations that enmesh us become vivified and apparent" (p. 55). This experience included a posture of somberness as I began to realize my ignorance this experience of connection to the land revealed as a resident within Stó:lō Téméxw, and in this case Semá:th territory. One way of relating this experience to my preparation of a place-based course on Christianity and place that led me to include content on the physical presence of Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw as part of the course (e.g. the relationship between settler land development and the emerging presence of Christianity). This practice of paying attention to the land in this exercise has inspired an ongoing practice of paying attention to the land in other areas of my life and work, whether that is the spaces I inhabit in my neighbourhood and workplace, or in how I engage social issues in Stó:lō Téméxw, such as politics or socio-economic development.

In addition to my literal experience of being on the land, I was also influenced by my learning from Stó:lō people that had occurred prior to this experience. I had previous experience where I encountered the important role of stories within Indigenous approaches to land, such as the Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám. Prior to my afternoon on the land, I had already encountered the Stó:lō stories, such as those of Semá:th Elder Ray Silver (2016) at an event I had helped host at my college. Silver shared memories of traversing Stó:lō Téméxw hunting deer as well as his own struggles in education and living and working just down the road from the walking trail on which I was spending time on the land. I had also heard other stories with Stó:lō Elders and knowledge keepers at various public Stó:lō community educational events. Yet during my afternoon on Semá:th territory, once I was present on the land, something shifted in how I understood these Stó:lō sources and their role in how I viewed my relationship to the land. I realized how up until

that point, often in preparing the structure of my place-based curriculum, my lens for engaging story and land was still oriented around an anthropocentric narration of land. Beginning with my experiences of sxwōxwiyám and spending time on the land within Stó:lō Téméxw, my question shifted from "What story can *I* tell?" to "What story is *the land* telling?" From where I was located that afternoon I could see Mt. Cheam, the mountain referred to above in the Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám of Lhilheqey. In the other direction was the hillside on which a sacred Stó:lō transformer site known as Lightening Rock is located, the place of another important sxwōxwiyám that points to Stó:lō connection to the land. Having encountered the stories of Lhilheqey and Lightening Rock, I had some context for what story the land was telling from a Stó:lō perspective. At the same time, however, I was confronted by the stories that humans have been telling on that land. I stood at the edge of Sumas Prairie, land that has become rich a source of economic growth within British Columbia's agricultural industry. In addition to the rich farmland, the Trans Mountain Pipeline construction ran right through the fields and up the hillside in the park I was at. While Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám reminded me of connection to the land, farms and pipelines told the story of human control over that same land. As a result of this experience of being on the land, informed by these conflicting stories of Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám and industry, my process of developing the course on Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw highlighted for me how the history of a place has more stories than the ones commonly included in Western approaches to curriculum. This realization informed the inclusion of visiting the land of the former St. Mary's residential school, a key practice in changing my approach to place-based education through my experience with Stó:lō connection to the land.

4.3.3 Place-Based Education: Learning Where Our Feet Are

Where my experience of Stó:lō sxwoxwiyám has informed my overall approach to curriculum theory and development, it has also shaped how I understand and practice place-based education (PBE), which has been an area of educational practice for me. Prior to engaging Stó:lō perspectives on land and place, I approached my work in place-based and experiential education assuming the neutrality of place, this "pedagogy of placelessness" that I discussed earlier (Kitchens, 2009). I have memories of early PBE curriculum in which my main priority as an educator was to get students out of the classroom and connected to the experience of being in a place. My mantra was "just show up and see what happens – there is a magic to place that one can only experience when you are in a place, paying attention to it, and seeing your own connection to that place." This approach has often characterized common definitions of PBE, where the experience of place itself is the primary focus of this curriculum approach (Orr, 2013; G. A. Smith, 2002; Sobel, 2004). To be clear, the practice of paying attention to the experience of place is an important contribution that PBE makes to curriculum, including for the decolonial aims of this project. But it is not the same as connection to the land within Stó:lō foundational knowledge and practice. So, while paying attention is an important practice when examining place, it can limit the purpose to individual experience (i.e. paying attention) without considering the simultaneous experience of relational connection to place, specifically to people and land. Yes, individual experience is a significant part of meaningful education, but if PBE is only framed as the individual experience of place, questions of responsibility and reciprocity are not necessarily included. Visiting places in Stó:lō Téméxw and hearing sxwoxwiyám, then, has pushed me to unlearn this default approach to place as a neutral context for educational

experience. A question for educators seeking to incorporate PBE in curriculum, then, is where does your curriculum risk perpetuating placelessness?

While I cannot answer this question for others, I can speak to how it has been important in my own unlearning in the following example. I included PBE as a framework for teaching interdisciplinary experiential learning courses in Stó:lō Téméxw that examined the intersections of religion, place, and social justice and were taught to mostly suburban Christian college students. The intent of these courses was to broaden these students' understanding and experience of Christianity and culture. While my goal was to introduce students to the complexity of place as part of their learning, in my teaching I defaulted to centering around my own experiences and interpretations of the relevant knowledge of the curriculum. Yes, I would incorporate some diverse ideas and voices related to the topic, but due to limited time, energy, and resources, I facilitated and communicated the majority of course experience and context. I was consistent in representing diverse perspectives, but such perspectives were mediated through my voice. While changing the structure of faculty teaching loads is certainly one solution to free up more time and space for them to research and include other voices in curriculum, there is also a need to be clear on how educators engage Indigenous perspectives. Indigenous educator slínek (Lorna Andrews) (2023), one of my colleagues at the University of the Fraser Valley, notes the difference between including Indigenous perspectives (i.e. non-Indigenous interpretation of Indigenous knowledge and experience) and Indigenous voices (i.e. direct representation of Indigenous knowledge and experience). In her work as a Teaching and Learning Specialist focused on supporting Indigenization at a public teaching university, slínek emphasizes the importance for educators to work hard at including Indigenous voice not just Indigenous perspective. In my early attempts at developing PBE curriculum within the structures of Western

higher education curriculum, it was easier for me to interpret and filter the place-based knowledge and experience of others. Yet in learning about connection to the land from Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám, I see how this was a way to perpetuate placelessness even in the midst of trying to practice PBE pedagogy. I am not saying the practice of discerning relevant knowledge and communicating it was the problem in and of itself. In fact, central to this project is how I am articulating a synopsis of connection to the land. By itself, however, such pedagogy risks limiting knowledge to that of one individual representing the relevant knowledge of the curriculum instead of knowledge emerging from relational connection to the land. Considering this, then, my work in PBE risks remaining stuck in what Pewewardy, Lees, and Clark-Shin (2018) describe as the "additive approach" (p. 55) to Indigenous education. As part of their discussion on various directions in decolonization in education, this approach refers to educators who "are beginning the decolonization engagement process, but they still embrace mechanical Eurocentric, colonized thinking with fixed structures, not yet embodying the critical consciousness of Indigenous ideologies that value an interconnectedness of living systems" (p. 55). Without awareness of the limits to my approach to developing a PBE curriculum and pedagogy, I realize my focus was too narrow in scope; place was a topic I could expound on but had limited experience of relational connection within the curriculum itself. Recognizing this lack of relationality in my PBE practice was a key realization in my journey of unlearning as an educator.

Asking this question of where my approach to PBE curriculum has perpetuated placelessness went beyond unlearning my default approaches and led to new ways of practicing relationality informed by the Stó:lō foundational teachings of connection to the land. Viewing connection to the land as a practice of relational connection, like my experience of being on the

land in the fall 2021, has led to practices of listening to land itself and considering how stories, such as sxwōxwiyám, are informing this connection. So, what does being on the land look like in PBE curriculum and pedagogy?

I refer again to my first experience of a land-based educational tour with Stó:lō educator, Si:yémiya. I was teaching the course I mentioned above on contemporary expressions of Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw, which included a section on how churches can practice reconciliation in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action (2015). Out of a commitment to engage Stó:lō teaching and land, part of the course included a visit to the former site of St. Mary's residential school. As someone who had incorporated PBE pedagogy in most of my teaching, I remember being keen to observe and learn from Si:yémiya's teaching. What key lessons will he impart on our class, especially on a topic as important as reconciliation in light of Canada's and Christianity's role in residential schools? I realized almost immediately, however, that the main lesson for our group, was the importance of showing up and being present in that place and on that land. The point was not to glean specific ideas, an intellectual exercise in knowledge accumulation and moral reflection on responsibility in light of what we had learned. Those things were still important, but they were not the primary focus. Rather, as Si:yémiya told stories of that specific land, we learned "where our feet are" (Andrews, 2024), an experience of being present on the land while hearing stories and reflections on the atrocities of residential school experiences. As learners, connection to the land was the foundation for learning about the history and experience residential schools, expanding our engagement from just the knowledge of residential school history to include relational connection to the land within the context of that history. This type of relational approach to PBE relates to my last area of reflection for curriculum in this section: holistic curriculum and pedagogy.

4.3.4 Holistic Curriculum and Pedagogy: Lessons in Interconnectedness

Another consideration that emerges from the wisdom of Stó:lō foundations of connection to the land is how educators conceive of the experience of curriculum itself, particularly in relation to holistic curriculum and pedagogy that is informed by Indigenous ways of being and knowing. Where broader trends in holistic curriculum (J. P. Miller, 2019) explore how "interrelated and dynamic" (p. 5) approaches to education can counter social, ecological, personal fragmentation, the specific wisdom of Indigenous knowledge and practice is being recognized as bringing its own unique contribution to holistic curriculum and pedagogy (see Miller & Four Arrows, 2019). Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám have provided important teaching on holistic approaches to curriculum and pedagogy in my work as an educator in this place.

The holistic nature of sxwōxwiyám as a practice of Stó:lō teaching inspires connection to the land in way that is relational and responsible in deeply contextual ways. As part of her well known approach to Indigenous pedagogy, which emerged from her own journey as Stó:lō, one of Q'um Q'um Xiiem's (Archibald, 2008) characteristics of Indigenous storywork is holism:

> An Indigenous philosophical concept of holism refers to the interrelatedness between the intellectual, spiritual (metaphysical values and beliefs and the Creator), emotional, and physical (body and behaviour/action) realms to form a whole healthy person. The development of holism extends to and is mutually influenced by one's family, community, band, and nation. The image of a circle is used by many First Nations peoples to symbolize wholeness, completeness, and ultimately wellness. (p. 11)

Reflecting on the origins of Indigenous storywork, Archibald discusses how this principle comes from her experience of Stó:lō storytelling (Archibald, 2023): "Holism recognizes that stories can educate the heart, mind, body, and spirit as well as acknowledge how the past, present, and

future influence the storied context of the learner, family, and community" (p. 316). I will reflect on the implications of holism for curriculum in a moment, but it is important to note how these holistic directions are not simply pedagogical in nature, but also challenge neoliberal trends in education and curriculum more broadly and in my own context.

4.3.4.1 Identifying and Challenging Neoliberal Logics

As I summarized in Chapter 1, neoliberalism refers to the ways in which society is structured to sustain a socio-economic arrangement based on liberal values of personal freedom (i.e. individualism) rooted in the structures of capitalism to sustain that freedom. These neoliberal values get embedded in structures of education as "key mythologies and guiding cultural assumptions of education and curriculum today" (Donald, 2019, p. 108). In my context of higher education in Stó:lō Téméxw, which has included work at both private and public institutions, I have observed how neoliberal assumptions are built into the systems of higher education. Rooted in human capital thinking that determines educational purpose in economic terms, strategic plans, budgets, and programs together aim at sustaining the financial viability of institutions in the local community while also producing graduates who will be able to contribute economically to this place. These values were evident in fall of 2024 as changes to Canadian immigration policies reduced the number of International students attending post secondary institutions in the region, putting financial pressures on these institutions' operations, including at institutions in Stó:lō Téméxw (Wong, 2024). As I read news reports and listened to public conversations about the situation, including in my context at the University of the Fraser Valley, the neoliberal system itself is rarely addressed in the public conversations on the sustainability of contemporary education. I return to Ronald Barnett's (2019) comments about a university's responsibility in a neoliberal society to recognize its role within the interconnectedness of its

contexts, “improving and developing all the many ecosystems of the world with which it is entwined” (p. 48). Identifying and responding to the influence of neoliberalism in education, along with learning from Stó:lō teaching, is one way to practice my own responsibility as an educator within the ecosystem of my own educational context. So, where do I view the values of neoliberalism influencing education and curriculum, including in my own context of Stó:lō Téméxw?

Neoliberal impulses orient educational experience around equipping individuals for success within the structures of capitalistic society. As Sharon Stein (2019) notes in her analysis of contemporary higher education, a “(neoliberal) model of *students as customers and entrepreneurs* [emphasis in original]…educated to rationally pursue affluence, maximize utility, and enact seamless progress and development through the supposedly universal governing architectures of the nation-state and global capital” (p. 133). Robert Bellah and others (1996), in their influential book on American society and the cult of the individual, describe how “the self has become the main form of reality” (p. 143). Within this neoliberal individualistic context, educational purpose emphasizes equipping individuals to pursue wealth and happiness along with the rest of society. The reality, however, is that this approach assumes that individuals are fundamentally independent, rather than beings who experience complex interconnectedness to others and society, including a connection to the land.

For example, in my work with co-operative education (co-op) curriculum in Stó:lō Temexw I have noticed a common tendency to view work-integrated learning (WIL) within this lens of neoliberal individualistic success (J. Johnston, 2011). Within this view, the purpose of education is to maximize individual success in ways that contribute to neoliberal capitalist approaches to education, a “human capital perspective that views [higher education] as an

investment which ‘pays off’ in subsequent employment opportunities and earnings” (Burke et al., 2017, p. 89). Curriculum like co-op, then, provides the hands-on work experience that enables to students to experience this sort of value in higher education. I see this in co-op students who enrol with a hyper-focus on the personal benefit of work-integrated learning in their education. “How will co-op help me get a better job?” I hear repeatedly from students as their rationale to join the program. Some even note specific aspects of the socio-economic context of Stó:lō Téméxw as wealthy rural-suburban community, suggesting successful individuals and businesses that they aspire to emulate. Their vision for personal success is informed the examples of their place. Additionally, noting the complexities of employment and economic uncertainty, along with the aspirations to overcome socio-economic barriers that a co-op job can help overcome, it is not surprising that co-op curriculum is viewed in these terms knowing how it is typically viewed within the context of work-integrated learning options as I discussed earlier. As co-op educator Nancy Johnston (2007) summarizes, “co-op programs deliver appropriately skilled and socialized workers to the system” (p. 26) of neoliberal society and education.

As pervasive as neoliberal logics can be in education I do not think these socio-economic trends mean that co-op curriculum cannot be conceived in different ways. While curriculum is informed by its larger context – in this case, neoliberal socio-economics – zooming into the particularities of place (Donald, 2020) can be a way of imagining alternative approaches that reflect the characteristics of context that often get lost in the noise of larger cultural trends.

The holistic pedagogy of Indigenous knowledge and storytelling, including Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám, challenge the assumptions of neoliberalism and individualism with the emphasis on interconnectedness with people and land. Confronting these assumptions, then, is one of ways that holistic pedagogy compels unlearning the disconnection so firmly established in this

contemporary educational context, including in my work with co-op. In my conversation with Q'um Q'um Xiiem about her own journey as a Stó:lō educator, she told me how stories provide a holistic approach to education as “they can help us think, be, and do,” a way in which education is not limited to ideas but leads to action grounded in “reciprocity and responsibility” (personal communication, June 5, 2024). Reflecting on these contrasts between neoliberal individualism in education and Stó:lō teaching on interconnectedness and responsibility has influenced how I approach areas of my own work.

Learning from Stó:lō teaching on interconnectedness and responsibility has been an important way for understanding how the particularities of place can inform other ways of envisioning the purpose of co-op. A part of Stó:lō teaching that emerges from connection to the land is that every individual’s gifts are part of the interconnected relationships between the community and the land. Personal success is measured in terms other than just employability (Burke et al., 2017), focused instead on ways that education can strengthen students’ experiences of sharing their gifts of knowledge and ability within the context of community and land (Andrews, 2023). In review and revision of co-op curriculum, my colleagues and I are asking, how does co-op work experience enable a new or strengthened sense of one’s gifts, the unique skills and characteristics of each person? As a result, we are incorporating the language of gifts in framing the purpose of co-op education and updating some of the terminology in reflection assignments to align with these directions. In the early stages of implementation at the time of this writing, this attempt at an alternative approach to co-op has garnered mostly positive responses from students and employers, something I explore in more detail in Chapter 7.

While experiments in specific co-op assignments has been one area for response to neoliberal logics, I also have lingering questions that remain unanswered: What role does co-op

have to play in addressing the neoliberal influences of human capital thinking and individualism in contemporary education more broadly? Amidst the pressure students face to ascend the capitalist ladder of individual success, are co-op and other forms of WIL left at the whims of these cultural pressures? Or can WIL curriculum confront these assumptions within contemporary education and provide an alternative approach to work education that prepares students to envision and experience work rooted in other values, such as reciprocity and responsibility to both people and land? How are Stó:lō and settler groups responding to realities, if at all? How do Stó:lō communities envision work education for their young people in this context? I pick up some of these questions in my later discussions of curriculum examples and Stó:lō self-determination in Chapters 6 and 7, though I also recognize they remain daunting in scope as these areas of curriculum are so deeply informed by human capital logics. In addition to these responses to neoliberal influences, then, practices of holistic curriculum and pedagogy have been helpful in providing ways to practice relational connection to Stó:lō Téméxw in education more broadly.

4.3.4.2 Fostering Holistic Educational Experience

Engaging holistic curriculum and pedagogy has involved recognizing the holistic nature of human experience as a fundamental part of education. Indigenous educator and researcher, Michael Marker (2004), suggests that incorporating holistic paradigms in education and research can foster an environment of inclusion to Indigenous students, while also challenging the "constrictive and contrived taxonomies" (p. 178) often found in contemporary education. By getting students to experience a holistic connection to the land, educators can attend to emotional, relational, and spiritual experience of education, alongside the disciplinary

knowledge. The question I have been asking as an educator, then, is how can curriculum foster such holistic educational experience?

In my own teaching and curriculum development, answering this question within Stó:lō Téméxw has involved listening to sxwōxwiyám within my own relational journey with Stó:lō people and land, and then incorporating practices of storytelling within educational experience. Within these personal and pedagogical practices, I have seen, as Archibald (2008) states, how "stories have the power to make our hearts, minds, bodies, and spirits work together" (pp. 12).

Engaging sxwōxwiyám myself has become an important part of my own journey of witnessing to Stó:lō people and land in my work as an educator in Stó:lo Téméxw. I should note, however, that my personal encounters with sxwōxwiyám as an educator is not something I take lightly. I am constantly aware of how my approach to sxwōxwiyám risks appropriation (Ahenakew, 2016) and extraction (L. T. Smith, 2012) if my main focus is benefitting my own curriculum research without including intentional ways of connecting my research to Stó:lō community and land. I am constantly reminding myself of what it means to relate to Stó:lō knowledge and land as a witness to Stó:lō wisdom (Carlson, 1997) and not as an authority. As a witness to Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám, this involves following the proper protocols in both listening and sharing about these foundational Stó:lō stories. For listening to sxwōxwiyám, protocols involve listening with respect for the storyteller and context in which the story is being told. Stó:lō educator and Elder, Dr. Gwendolyn Point (2015), describes the teaching quality of sxwōxwiyám: "The respect, reverence, and responsibility for all living things are values that are taught and reinforced through storytelling" (p. 49). Listening to sxwōxwiyám requires an openness to listen towards living responsibly, an invitation to relationship with the land and all generations before

and ahead (Carlson & Naxaxalhts'i, 2021). I explore the implications of such responsibility further in Chapter 6 below.

For incorporating storytelling into my pedagogy, such as learning from sxwōxwiyám, protocols include what Si:yémiya described to me in conversation as verbal footnoting (i.e. citing the Stó:lō Elder who shared the sxwōxwiyám) and ensuring permission is granted to share the sxwōxwiyám (e.g. copyright of digital sxwōxwiyám available online). Personally, I am hesitant to include sxwōxwiyám in my teaching without the presence of a Stó:lō person, such as an Elder. My only exception are digital copies of sxwōxwiyám, such as those developed by the Sq'éwlets First Nation (2016c). My preference, in light of my commitment to witness to Stó:lō wisdom, is hearing sxwōxwiyám from Stó:lō people directly. This has included guest speakers with classes and attending public Stó:lō ceremonies that invite all community members – Stó:lō and settler – to learn from the wisdom of sxwōxwiyám in fostering connection to the land.

4.4 Conclusion

In summary, the Halq'eméylem phrase S'ólh Téméxw ("Our land") is a statement of experience for Stó:lō people, a deep connection to the land that reflects their holistic paradigm what it means to be human and what it means to be in relationship with all things, including the land. For educators seeking to engage Stó:lō Téméxw in practices of unlearning and relationality, these foundational perspectives within Stó:lō teaching, such as the role of sxwōxwiyám, is fundamental and can result in approaches to curriculum research and development that are both unsettling education (Regan, 2010) by challenging settler assumptions and inspiring for change in honouring and learning from this reality of connection to the land. My discussion of curriculum theory, curriculum structure, place-based education, and holistic curriculum and pedagogy, reflects my own journey with Stó:lō foundations of connection to the land in my

work. I will explore additional topics of Stó:lō connection to land, such as responsibility and self-determination, in Chapter 6. An important question, however, is how Stó:lō foundations of connection to the land exist alongside the foundations of settler connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw, including in education. To this topic I now turn.

Chapter 5: Settler Foundations of Connection to the Land

Growing up in Stó:lō Téméxw I can remember from a young age into adulthood hearing some version of the following remarks:

"How big is your property?"

"We are mortgage free. The property is all ours now!"

"How soon until you can buy a house?"

"Getting into the housing market early really got you ahead."

Behind these comments from family, friends, and neighbours in my orbit, was an assumption about land as a possession. Where did this assumption come from? What stories were being told to sustain it? What systems of belief informed this common practice of possessing the land so taken for granted?

In the previous chapter, I began this exploration of unsettling education with reflection on the foundations for Stó:lō connection to the land as a way to give witness to the wisdom and knowledge of the Stó:lō people as the first inhabitants of Stó:lō Téméxw. I quickly noticed in my research and conversations with Stó:lō educators and leaders, however, that it is nearly impossible to separate Stó:lō wisdom and knowledge from the legacy of settler presence. Continuing this journey of unsettling education, then, this chapter shifts the focus to the settler foundations of connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw. Just as there are foundational Stó:lō stories (i.e. sxwōxwiyám) that are formative to Stó:lō understanding and practice, what are the foundational stories that are formative for settler understanding and practice?

I answer this question by providing several snapshots into relevant settler history in Stó:lō Téméxw, stories from the 1800's of initial connection (e.g. Simon Fraser) that led to subsequent settlement (e.g. gold rush). In considering these examples as part of curriculum

research, I include interrogation for how understanding this historical context is a practice of interrogating the settler beliefs and practices that often continue in society today, including in education. Interspersed with the historical survey, then, is discussion of the implications of these stories from settler history in Stó:lō Téméxw. I invite educators to pay attention to the stories we tell in curriculum and to analyze the assumptions we bring to our work. To clarify where I am headed, I begin this survey with a brief overview of how I approach the analysis of settler foundations of connection to the land.

5.1 An Approach to Studying Settler Foundations of Connection to the Land

As discussed in Chapter 2, Indigenous land-based education fosters curriculum and pedagogy focused on Indigenous self-determination and resurgence in the particularities of place, while also contributing to movements in Indigenous-settler reconciliation and decolonization. As Delores Calderon (2014) suggests, land-based education has the "potential for centering Indigeneity and confronting educational forms of settler colonialism" (p. 24). If the previous chapter is the beginning of my attempt to center Indigeneity in my curriculum research, this chapter focuses more specifically on the second part of Calderon's argument: confronting educational forms of settler colonialism. And by continuing to focus on Stó:lō Téméxw as the location of my inquiry, my research in higher education curriculum and pedagogy aligns with other forms of critical research on settler colonialism in this place (e.g. Carlson & McHalsie, 2010; Heaslip, 2017; Oliver, 2022). I resonate with these comments from John Oliver's (2022) research on the social history of landscape in Stó:lō Téméxw:

> Colonial history cannot be divorced from the landscape itself, from the active material and participative character of places, and their role in social and historical transformations. Colonial history looks different through the prism of landscape, an

> approach that respects the locality of the social production ensnaring people in its folds. (p. 204)

In grappling with the truths of settler colonialism in the locality of Stó:lō Téméxw, I hope to avoid the temptation of what Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang (2012) pointedly describe as a "settler move to innocence" (p. 9). This refers to the tendency to acknowledge Indigenous wisdom and presence without really dealing with the decolonial change implied by that wisdom and presence. Toward such approaches, Tuck and Yang (2012) offer this incisive critique: "Settler moves to innocence are those strategies or positionings that attempt to relieve the settler of feelings of guilt or responsibility without giving up land or power or privilege, without having to change much at all" (p. 10). By interrogating the foundations of settler colonialism in Stó:lō Téméxw and considering areas for emphasis and change in curriculum research, I hope to reflect in a way that is cognizant of this tendency to innocence in order to contribute to decolonial change in curriculum.

How will I go about this investigation of the foundations for settler connection to the land? The complexity of settler history and culture in Stó:lō Téméxw highlights a range of interesting angles to consider in everything from politics, to business, to religion, to geography and environmentalism. Where do I begin? Here the focus of synoptic research offers an important reminder and focus for this project by stressing the discernment of relevant knowledge (Pinar, 2006b), what is most important for understanding and engaging the topic of connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw. The synopsis of this chapter, then, is not a comprehensive history on the settler presence in Stó:lō Téméxw. Rather, through snapshots into early settler history – the foundational stories of settler presence in Stó:lō Téméxw – I present a focused discussion on what has contributed to what I am calling an ethos of possessiveness.

I want to be clear on what I mean by an ethos of possessiveness as an idea within settler colonialism more broadly. My primary focus will be on the foundational settler frameworks that informed connection to the land through a lens of possessiveness, and I do this by examining foundational stories of settler colonialism in Stó:lō Téméxw. As Jeff Oliver (2022) notes in his study of colonialism and the landscape of Stó:lō Téméxw, there is a complexity to such history that requires an "awareness of details and nuances, the diverse ways in which people became entangled in transformations whose implications for creating histories, identities, and senses of place complicate" (p. 23) the task of historical interpretation I am offering here. In focusing on an ethos of possessiveness, then, I recognize that the generalizations of settler colonialism contain complexity, something I highlight as a practice of grappling with the implications of my research for education.

By understanding the foundational perspectives that have informed settler beliefs and practices history, I hope these reflections can help educators develop a reflexive awareness in their work in Stó:lō Téméxw, not just in engaging Stó:lō wisdom, but in analysis of themselves and the settler culture in which they are immersed. As Sandra Styres (2019) notes, "It is the philosophies embedded in our places where land, learning, identity, and education intersect" (p. 24). One such philosophy in Stó:lō Téméxw, I am suggesting, is an ethos of possessiveness. However well-intentioned individual settlers were in arriving in Stó:lō Téméxw (e.g. Hare & Barman, 2006) this ethos of possessiveness was a foundational framework in establishing settler connection to the land. For education to attend to these philosophies of place as I am doing here, Styres (2019) suggests that essential to reflexive engagement is "an acknowledgment of the ways one is implicated in the networks and relations of power that comprise the tangled colonial history of the lands one is upon" (p. 29).

What follows, then, is the examination of settler history and culture of my own context. I include reflection that acknowledges my place as an educator within the settler history of Stó:lō Téméxw and I experiment with the implications of this journey in my areas of curriculum and pedagogy. Such inquiry aligns with Avalos' (2023) discussion of ecologies to describe settler colonialism:

> Fundamentally, settler ecologies operate from a specific worldview, Christian cosmo-logics that determine ontological and material relations. In this sense, settler ecologies are an ontological, ethical, political, and economic relation that cannot be dismantled through a change in ethical relations alone. The tacit metaphysical assumptions that sustain these ecologies must be interrogated and denaturalized. (p. 4)

Part of the analysis, suggests Avalos (2023), requires interrogation of the religious assumptions that undergird settler society. With Christianity such an integral part of the larger settler history in North America (Charles & Rah, 2019) along with the influential presence of Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw (Dart, 2012), my interrogation of settler possessiveness considers examples of the enduring legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery, a topic often ignored in common historical accounts of European settlement in Canada (Dion, 2022). I look at ways the Doctrine of Discovery as an enduring authoritative Christian teaching established a foundation for an ethos of possessiveness that influenced early settler contact with Stó:lō communities, settler land distribution laws and policies, and the process of creating of land reserves for Stó:lō communities.

Within these observations of where the key beliefs of the Doctrine of Discovery informed settler connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw, I weave in conversation on the implications for curriculum, raising important questions for settler educators in this place, a valuable contribution

that synoptic text research can bring. Schubert (2010) notes, “Perhaps the future of synoptic work will focus more on questions to be raised than on answers to be purveyed” (p. 834). Taking a similar approach as the previous chapter on Stó:lō foundations of connection to the land, then, the following discussion examines the foundational stories of settler connection to the land as a way to join this exploration of critical inquiry and constructive conversation on the stories of land and place.

5.2 An Ethos of Possessiveness: The Influence of the Doctrine of Discovery

In many ways, Stó:lō Téméxw’s emergence as a place is part of the larger story of Western Canada. Economic priorities informed the development of communities and industry to extend British reign from sea and sea (Barman, 2007; Perry, 2001). Dwayne Donald (2009) pointedly describes this period as “The creation story of the Canadian West,” a story about “the transformation of the land to better serve the needs of market capitalism and the habits and priorities of *Homo Oeconomicus* or ‘Economic Man’” (p. 18). While Stó:lō Téméxw was part of this creation story, like all places, it has its own stories that inform the particularities of settler society in this place (Chambers, 1999). The remainder of this chapter, then, will take up this task by reflecting on snapshots into settler history in Stó:lō Téméxw that reflect the legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery in establishing an ethos of possessiveness. I begin by briefly defining possessiveness within the context of settler and decolonial research, followed by an introduction to the Doctrine of Discovery as foundational for settler connection to the land. I conclude with discussion of snapshots in early settler history in Stó:lō Téméxw and consideration of the implications for my areas of curriculum responsibility.

5.2.1 Defining Possessiveness

European settlement in British Columbia brought about rapid changes that had significant impact on the land and how people related to it (Harris, 1996). The arrival of European settlers included an impulse to possess the land, exercising mastery over nature and consuming the land's resources, an assumption that came from the larger European context in which land was viewed as an object for private ownership (see Görg, 2022; Livingstone, 2023). As historian Cole Harris (2020) notes in his discussion of how Britain influenced Canada's colonial settlement, "Most land was enclosed, the common law was pervasive, market economies were ascendant, and the rights of private property were firmly established" (p. 6). So, explains Harris, when European industrialization and urbanization left many people unable to sustain a life in the British countryside, they came to Canada to seek out a better life on the land. Calderon (2014) describes this settler assumption to seek progress through private land ownership as the "territoriality" (p. 29) of settler colonialism where land is treated as an object for ownership, mastery, and consumption, typically at the expense (i.e. removal) of Indigenous people and land. There is a permanence of settler presence, that unlike extractive colonialism, utilizes land possession to enable settlers to remain in a place (see Greer, 2019; Wolfe, 2006). Now, the process of settler possession was by no means uniform or immediate. Historian Alan Greer (2019) notes, it was not until Canadian confederation in latter half of the 1800's that settler presence shifted from primarily trade relationships to more forcefully exerting power to dispossess Indigenous people from the land. Greer (2019) explains how settler colonialism characterized Canada as follows:

> Formed in the period extending from the 1850s to the 1880s, the Canadian state can be seen in the current context as a settler-colonial machine. As part of their program of

> decentralizing the empire and abandoning their lingering responsibility for Natives, the British turned over "Indian Affairs" to the colonies in 1860 and then, seven years later, enacted the British North America Act containing a crucial clause awarding control over "Indians and lands reserved for Indians" to the new Dominion of Canada. The close linkage of "Indians" and "lands" signalled the new, and explicitly settler-colonial orientation of state practices regarding Indigenous affairs. Whereas discourses, institutions, and practices of the imperial-commercial age addressed Indigenous peoples mainly in the contexts of trade, diplomacy, and military alliances, the new Canadian state would be concerned above all with land. (p. 72)

Considering this Canadian context, my discussion will focus on how the developing settler possessiveness showed up in settler presence in Stó:lō Téméxw. In doing so, I focus on how beliefs and practices, though limited in scope, began the process of establishing a settler ethos of possessiveness that would take root over time. In their book *Place in Research,* Tuck and McKenzie (2015) note the importance of attending to the ways settler views of land and nature inform research, defining possessiveness as follows:

> Through the process and structuring of settler colonialism, land is remade into property, and human relationships to land are redefined/reduced to the relationship of owner to his property. When land is recast as property, place becomes exchangeable, saleable, and steal-able. The most important aim of recasting land as property is to make it ahistorical in order to hack away the narratives that invoke prior claims and thus reaffirm the myth of terra nullius. (p. 64)

What has this possessiveness looked like in Stó:lō Téméxw? Where did the belief and practice of possessiveness come from? Similar to the ways Stó:lō sxwōxwiyám are foundational stories of

Stó:lō connection to the land, investigating these questions lead to settler origin stories that shape their connection to the land, specifically in the impulse to possessiveness. Because of its significance as a religious and political justification for settler possession, the remainder of this chapter will reflect on ways the Doctrine of Discovery has functioned as a framing story for settler origins in Stó:lō Téméxw.

5.2.2 The Doctrine of Discovery

The foundations for settler possessiveness in Stó:lō Téméxw are informed by the significant role of Christianity within settler colonialism more broadly. While Stó:lō Téméxw is commonly referred to as British Columbia's "Bible Belt" for the ongoing presence and participation of Christianity in the community (Dart, 2012; Olsen, 2019), there was a much broader influence of Christianity within settler colonialism that then influenced European settlement in Stó:lō Téméxw. While I will discuss aspects of Christianity in Chapter 7, for now I focus the discussion on the enduring legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery within the foundations of settler colonialism within Stó:lō Téméxw.

The Doctrine of Discovery is a 15th century Catholic teaching that established foundational Christian perspectives and practices that continue to inform the coloniality of settler societies (R. J. Miller et al., 2010). Suggesting that the teaching of the Doctrine of Discovery was foundational for an ethos of possessiveness in Stó:lō Téméxw, I am echoing Maldonado-Torres's (2007) description of coloniality in which settler values became part of the air that citizens breath. Coloniality is beyond the formal structures of colonialism, existing in culture, language, and relationships. As Maldonado-Torres (2007) describes, coloniality is "maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self…In a way, as modern subjects we breath coloniality

all the time and everyday" (p. 243). With this understanding of coloniality, then, I am suggesting that the characteristics of the Doctrine of Discovery were implicit to the ways Europeans settled Stó:lō Téméxw.

I also want to acknowledge concerns with how the legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery is understood. Greer (2019) offers an important caution to overstating the role of the Doctrine of Discovery:

> Scholars speak freely of the "Doctrine of Discovery" and the notion of "terra nullius" as if these were guiding principles of early modern empires, as if they asserted ownership claims rather than a vague imperium, and as if they actually made Indigenous peoples mere occupants of their own lands. But for the most part, such notions are actually inventions of the nineteenth century, devised to justify modern settler colonialism. (pp. 65-66)

By focusing on coloniality, as Maldonado-Torres suggests (2007), I hope to avoid such overgeneralizations by making the argument that it was the implicit ways the Doctrine of Discovery informed settler presence in Stó:lō Téméxw that resulted in settler possessiveness in European settlement in the 19th century. The question I ask, then, is how were characteristics of the Doctrine of Discovery part of coloniality in Stó:lō Téméxw? To answer this question, I provide some historical context for the Doctrine of Discovery.

The Doctrine of Discovery is a foundational religious and legal belief and framework that undergirds the settler relationship to the land in Canada. Historically, the Doctrine of Discovery was established by papal authority in the 15th century as Portugal and Spain sought support for their exploration of what were deemed undiscovered lands across the Atlantic (R. J. Miller et al., 2010). In brief, European monarchs were keen to expand their territory by sending explorers

across the sea, but they needed legal justification to claim the lands the explorers found. Because Catholic papal authority legitimized European governments policy and politics at the time, Catholic teaching became the basis for establishing international law as lands were 'discovered' and claimed by the explorers on behalf of their monarchs.

The mandate to claim the land is clear in the following selection from one of the original Catholic teachings that commissioned explorers in their endeavors:

> "We [therefore] weighing all and singular the premises with due meditation, and noting that since we had formerly by other letters of ours granted among other things free and ample faculty to the aforesaid King Alfonso -- to invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens and pagans whatsoever, and other enemies of Christ wheresoever placed, and the kingdoms, dukedoms, principalities, dominions, possessions, and all movable and immovable goods whatsoever held and possessed by them and to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery, and to apply and appropriate to himself and his successors the kingdoms, dukedoms, counties, principalities, dominions, possessions, and goods, and to convert them to his and their use and profit -- by having secured the said faculty, the said King Alfonso, or, by his authority, the aforesaid infante, justly and lawfully has acquired and possessed, and doth possess, these islands, lands, harbors, and seas, and they do of right belong and pertain to the said King Alfonso and his successors" (Pope Nicholas V, 1917)

These edicts established that once colonial settlers set foot on the land and began to implement European laws, European authority became the new law of the land. In the case of what would eventually become the United States and Canada these laws of land possession and ownership became enshrined in politics and law, informing land use policy and practice up until

this day. The case of the United States Supreme Court case Johnson v M'Intosh in 1823 remains the most prominent and regularly cited basis for the Doctrine of Discovery as an authority for colonial land use (see Kades, 2001; Rana, 2014). Ruling on a dispute regarding the private sale of Indigenous land in Illinois and Indiana, the court ruled that Indigenous lands could not be sold privately due to the US government's "ultimate title to the land" (Rana, 2014, p. 172), a ruling made with explicit reference to the Doctrine of Discovery as its basis. This case was paramount to establishing settler presence in North America and it continues to be referenced as a legal basis for government authority in land disputes in the United States and other countries around the world, such as Canada, New Zealand, and Australia (R. J. Miller et al., 2010). Relevant to my conversation here, the basis for the ruling in Johnson v M'Intosh was citation of the Doctrine of Discovery in granting European countries the right to govern the land (Kades, 2001). R. J. Miller et al. (2010) describe in their helpful book *Discovering Indigenous Lands: The Doctrine of Discovery in the English Colonies* that the legacy of this decision carries forward to this day:

> This case was, and still is, a very influential and important precedent around the world because it has been heavily relied on by the governments and courts of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States in devising and developing their laws, policies, and opinions regarding Indigenous peoples. (p. 3)

With examples from Stó:lō Téméxw, below I discuss that it was through beliefs within the Doctrine of Discovery, such as the right of first discovery, right to occupation and possession, and terra nullius, that the authority of the Catholic teaching formed the basis and sustained international laws for discovery and land use. As R. J. Miller et al (2010) describe in their analysis of this legacy, the religious teaching of the Doctrine of Discovery provided the foundation for international law: "The idea that the Doctrine granted European monarchs

ownership rights in newly discovered lands and sovereign and commercial rights over Indigenous peoples due to first discovery by European Christians was now established international law, at least to Europeans" (p.12). With this basic summary in mind, I now turn to understanding and interrogating (Avalos, 2023) historical examples of settler presence in Stó:lō Téméxw that illustrate this fundamental teaching of the Doctrine of Discovery.

5.3 Examples of Settler Connection to the Land in Stó:lō Téméxw

The remainder of this chapter surveys how characteristics of the Doctrine of Discovery framed settler colonialism in early decades of presence in Stó:lō Téméxw. As Calderon (2014) directs for the task of decolonization in place-based education, "We decolonize the 'local' in order to understand how settler colonialism is currently enacted and taught…assessing how different colonial processes impacted a place and subsequently shaped it, informing the notions of territoriality present in that space today" (p. 28). In tracing historical examples of settler connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw, I view the following as the type of decolonial assessment Calderon suggests. How do the foundational settler beliefs that come from the Doctrine of Discovery play a formative role in settler presence in Stó:lō Téméxw?

I focus this survey of the Doctrine of Discovery on how its legacy has implications for education and curriculum development. In his analysis on how the structures of settler society inform curriculum, Dwayne Donald (2009, 2012) suggests that Canadian forts, constructed throughout the period of settler expansion across Canada, represent settler values and practices in their physical and social presence. The ways in which settler colonialism established a literal presence in Canadian landscape with the construction of forts, Donald (2009) notes, has had a direct impact on how education is structured around "colonial frontier logics" (p. 20) that perpetuate divides between settler and Indigenous people and knowledge.

The result of these colonial frontier logics of Canadian forts, suggests Donald (2012), is a settler "pedagogy of the fort" (p. 100), where the purpose of the forts' constructed walls is mirrored in the ways that education fosters separation between settlers and Indigenous people, something Stó:lō communities have endured in Stó:lō Téméxw with residential schools in the past and in ongoing struggles to teach their knowledge and culture in public education (Archibald, 1995; Point, 2015). Learning from history, Canadian forts are an artifact of ongoing settler-Indigenous separation. In looking at examples of early settler-Stó:lō contact in Stó:lō Téméxw, I take a similar approach. I am examining ways that settler history and culture established foundations for an ethos of possessiveness in Stó:lō Téméxw inspired by the characteristics of the Doctrine of Discovery. And paying attention to these examples can be a way to see how this ethos continues in education today. Curriculum research that understands the formative nature of society's dominant structures and worldviews is a critical task for educators to find new ways of educating today (Donald, 2012). I return to Donald's (2021) insights into the role of stories as part of this task in education:

> Educational jurisdictions across Canada have slowly come to realize that the stories that have been told in Canadian schools have left out critical considerations, including the memories, experiences, and foundational knowledges of Indigenous peoples. A pressing curricular and pedagogical challenge faced by educators in Canada today is how to facilitate the emergence of a new story that can repair inherited colonial divides and give good guidance on how to proceed differently. (p. 57)

Following Donald's example, then, I examine historical events in Stó:lō Téméxw alongside the structures of the Doctrine of Discovery with the hope to exhibit a similar type of generative and contextual curriculum reflection. And along the way, I reflect on examples within my own

curriculum work and raise questions that could spark response for educators in Stó:lō Téméxw whatever their discipline, role, or educational context.

To guide this critical investigation of the Doctrine of Discovery in settler history in Stó:lō Téméxw I reference R. J. Miller et al.'s (2010) summary in *Discovering Indigenous Lands: The Doctrine of Discovery in the English Colonies*. In surveying various elements of the Doctrine of Discovery that were used to justify settler expansion and possession of the land, the authors' discussion highlights how the Doctrine of Discovery was an essential part of establishing coloniality on the land on which settlers established their presence. In what follows, I discuss the formative role of the Doctrine of Discovery in Stó:lō Téméxw in two categories: 1. Initial settler connection (examples of first discovery, occupancy and possession) and 2. Settling in (examples of terra nullius). By discussing these snapshots of settler history, I show how engaging the colonial frontier logics (Donald, 2012a) of a specific place is an important practice for developing curriculum and pedagogy. Drawing on relevant examples in settler history, I consider how these characteristics inform an ethos of possessiveness in settler connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw. Each topic will include reflection and examples on the implications for curriculum research.

5.3.1 Initial Settler Connection.

This section discusses stories of the initial arrival of settlers in Stó:lō Téméxw. These stories reveal some of the values that motivated settler explorers, while also highlighting areas where the larger narrative of settler expansion is complex, including examples of relations with Stó:lō communities. Discussion of these early settler encounters will be framed by the Doctrine of Discovery characteristics (R. J. Miller et al., 2010) of first discovery, occupation, and

possession, where despite examples of settler-Stó:lō relationships, these foundational stories of settler presence in Stó:lō Téméxw inform an ethos of possessiveness.

5.3.1.1 First discovery

> The first European country to discover lands unknown to other Europeans gained property and sovereign rights over the lands. First discovery alone, however, was often considered to create only an incomplete title to newly found lands. (Miller et al., 2010, p. 6)

The concept of first discovery as part of the Doctrine of Discovery's influence on settler history is important to understand as it highlights the central way settler narratives were formational in guiding settler beliefs and behavior. The stories that get told, as I outline below in considering connections to curriculum, are important to pay attention to. So, what are some of the key stories of first discovery in Stó:lō Téméxw and how was it understood? The characteristic of first discovery carries the assumption that European contact itself provided an initial basis for possession, meaning that any non-European people on the discovered lands (i.e. Indigenous people) did not negate the law of first discovery. The question, then, was not determining whether or not people were present on the land, but whether or not other Europeans had been there before. In early exploration, for example, this led to the practice of explorers leaving evidence of discovery on the lands they had encountered (e.g. burying bottles filled with coins) even if they were not staying to settle on the land, as was the case with Captain Cook when he visited modern day British Columbia on behalf of the British crown in the late 1870's (R. J. Miller et al., 2010, p. 20).

This law of first discovery informed how the western regions of North America were allocated between the emerging United States and what was then still a British colony as they

determined rights to what would later become Canada's western province of British Columbia. Earliest explorations, first by Captain Cook and Captain Vancouver in the late 1700's and later by Simon Fraser in the early 1800's, exhibited this impulse to be the first to discover the land, particularly through efforts to map the region (Oliver, 2022). Beginning on Pacific Northwest coastal regions, Britian's Cook raced against Spanish explorers to secure British claim to imperial and commercial rights in the region when he arrived in Nootka Sound in 1778. Following the negotiation of a treaty agreement between Spain and Britain to cede the region's land to Britain, Captain Vancouver expanded on Cook's initial claims for Britain by creating a detailed survey of the coastline. Vancouver's mapping became renowned for the way his detail "turned the chaos of wilderness into stability, while its mapped inscription allowed his discoveries to be returned to Britain and incorporated in the geography of empire" (Oliver, 2022, p. 84). Cook and Vancouver's legacy inspired further exploration and claim to the land into the 1800's, with Simon Fraser one of the most prominent settler explorers to support British possession of the region, including Stó:lō Téméxw.

Where Cook and Vancouver's discoveries provided initial rights for Britain of the Northwest coastal region, it was Simon Fraser who extended these claims of first discovery inland with his 1808 expedition from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Coast, a journey whose legacy is the mapping of what is now known as the Fraser River (see Oliver, 2022, pp. 90-98). Fraser's journey reflects the law of first discovery in that during his trek, though he interacted with and sought help from the Indigenous communities along the way, in no way did their presence alter the claims to the land for the British crown. Indigenous presence, while certainly beneficial to Fraser's progress as noted by his own detailed records of interactions with them (Fraser, 1960), was not viewed as reason to reconsider British claims to the land. In fact, Fraser's

own interactions with Indigenous people during his journey reflect an ethos of possessiveness that characterized both initial settler exploration and the subsequent settlement of the land in the years that followed. In line with the law of first discovery, it was clear he viewed Indigenous presence not as authoritative in their own right, but beneficial only insofar as they served Fraser's mission, as this journal entry reflects:

> I applied to the Chief in consequence of his promise of yesterday for his canoe, but he paid no attention to my request. I, therefore, took the canoe and had it carried to the water side. The Chief got it carried back. We again laid hold of it. He still resisted, and made us understand that he was the greatest of his nation and equal in power to the sun. However as we could not go without [the canoe] we persisted and at last gained our point. (Fraser, 1960, p. 124)

Fraser would go on to reach the mouth of the Fraser at the Pacific Ocean, though he swiftly turned around due to conflicts with and between Indigenous groups in the area. Fraser retreated from the coast back towards the Rocky Mountains, with the formal reports of his journey contributing to realizations that routes to the Pacific coast were by no means easily accessible. The result of Fraser's expedition was initially viewed as underwhelming in its contribution to British colonial expansion – all he discovered was a dangerous and unpredictable route for traveling to the coastline. For an empire seeking to expand its commercial presence in these newly discovered lands, such news was helpful, but certainly not lucrative. Yet Fraser's trek was still significant, as not only was he the first to traverse the route and provide important information for future travel and colonial expansion, he established relationships with Indigenous people and land along the route, including Stó:lō communities. These relationships, characterized by Fraser's resolute commitment to the mission of mapping the river and his pragmatic reception

of Indigenous hospitality to support this mission, illustrate how the framework for first discovery meant that while Indigenous populations were recognized, such recognition was for the purpose of colonial expansion, a belief and practice that would continue in the occupation and possession of the land as I discuss below. Before I discuss examples of occupation and possession, however, I want to pause to reflect on the role of formative stories in settler history, and how such reflection can support the practice of unlearning colonialism (Donald, 2022) for curriculum research in this place.

5.3.1.2 Curriculum Considerations: The Stories We Tell

A relevant consideration for how these stories in early setter history in Stó:lō Téméxw relate to curriculum research is to understand the role of story in human experience and education (see Donald, 2021; Fowler, 2020). Returning to Donald's (2012) commentary on Canadian forts and education, his note on the role of colonial history as a formative story is worth noting:

> The historical significance of forts has been interpreted based on this assumption that the Christianizing and civilizing impetus justifying EuroCanadian settlement was an inevitable result of superior peoples asserting their rightful claim to virgin lands occupied by primitive peoples. This teleological vision, akin to the doctrine of Manifest Destiny, requires that all peoples and events encountered conform to meet the needs of the story being told of nation and nationality. (p. 100)

How the stories of European explorers mapping Stó:lō Téméxw get told, including the story of Simon Fraser, is one way an ethos of possessiveness becomes normative. For example, Fraser's utilitarian approach to engaging Indigenous groups as recorded in his journal entries (Fraser, 1960) was driven by the need to establish settler-Indigenous trade relationships in Stó:lō

Téméxw (Oliver, 2022). As these stories are told, settler ways of relating to land are established, a pattern of possessiveness that began in first discovery, and as we will see, continued into occupation and possession of the land. Such is the case in these stories of first discovery in British Columbia where the beginnings of an ethos of possessiveness gets fostered where the land is viewed as right of settler first discovery. Needed in curriculum, then, is the inclusion of stories beyond the dominant settler perspective. While my discussion of Stó:lō connection to the land is one attempt in this direction, I can also learn from others doing this important work already.

Historian and educator Keith Carlson is an example of a settler researcher doing the work of storytelling in Stó:lō Téméxw in ways that go beyond the dominant paradigms of Western history and education. Carlson has spent his career researching Stó:lō stories of settler contact, working in conjunction with Stó:lō individuals and communities out of a commitment to witness to and advocate for another way of being in relationship with Indigenous people and land (Carlson, 1997). Carlson's observations of Stó:lō reaction to settler first discovery, such as Simon Fraser's expedition, is an example of telling another side of the story. Carlson (1997) notes that while Fraser has become known as the first of the xwelítem (i.e. "hungry people," p. 51) to visit Stó:lō Téméxw in 1808, followed by the subsequent fur and fish trade, these examples of settler presence in the region "did not usher in an era of xwelítem domination of Stó:lō people…Instead, xwelítem explorers and fur traders were far more dependent upon the Stó:lō. This was evident in the way fur traders adapted to Stó:lō social and economic patterns" (p. 60). This analysis in Carlson's research challenges overgeneralizations of settler history, including my focus on the ethos of possessiveness. Learning from Stó:lō oral history, knowledge born out of his community-based connections with Stó:lō people, Carlson's observations

highlight how the law of first discovery was not immediate or straightforward in Stó:lō Téméxw. In the first decades of European contact in Stó:lō Téméxw, Stó:lō presence, traditions, and practices persisted in a way that Stó:lō continued to exercise connection to the land in their own ways; the imposed walls between settler and Indigenous people and knowledge (Donald, 2009) were not immediately experienced in the years of first discovery. This realization raises important questions: In considering other angles to the settler stories of Stó:lō Téméxw, what was it about these first decades that resulted settler-Indigenous partnership? Are there historical lessons to be learned that can inform efforts of decolonization and reconciliation in curriculum today?

The factors that allowed for this season of settler-Indigenous partnership in Stó:lō Téméxw was likely a combination of low settler population, the necessity to establish positive trade relationships, and the consistent Stó:lō generosity and hospitality. As Carlson (1997) summarizes in reference to the decades following Simon Fraser's initial visit,

> In the Fraser River region the establishment of Fort Langley certainly did not result in the *Stó:lō* radically altering their lifestyles to suit the Hudson Bay Company. On the contrary, the officers and men at the fort were quick to adopt *Stó:lō* cultural traditions, including those associated with inter-family marriage ties. These indigenous customs so heavily imprinted themselves on the HBC, that the *xwelítem* were forced to accept *Stó:lō* in-laws as middle-men in their trade with the broader Aboriginal communities. (p. 51)

These examples provide an opportunity for unlearning ways that contemporary education has traditionally understood settler-Indigenous relationships in history, which may involve Indigenous experiences being "erased from conversations and … framed in deficit theorizing models and re-represented back as something unrecognizable and stripped of cultural integrity"

(Styres, 2020, p. 158). By including Stó:lō accounts of early settler contact, as Carlson has done by engaging Stó:lō oral history in his research, the foundational stories of settler presence in Stó:lō Téméxw are unsettled. A lesson, then, is that by including more comprehensive histories of settler presence in Stó:lō Téméxw, we see that Stó:lō self-determination and rights to exercise connection to the land are not just modern concepts of Indigenous resurgence (Simpson, 2016), but reveal ways of relating that highlights Stó:lō gifts of hospitality and wisdom in connection to the land.

This type of learning from Stó:lō people and stories has been part of the journey I am on with colleagues at the University of the Fraser Valley's Centre for Experiential and Career Education. In our areas of program and curriculum development, such as co-operative education (co-op) and community-based experiential learning initiatives, we have engaged Stó:lō colleagues whose role is to teach and facilitate in areas of Indigenization and decolonization in locally contextualized ways. For example, one of the workshops they have led our team on focuses on developing land acknowledgements rooted in Stó:lō knowledge and teaching, with the aim of equipping individuals and departments to develop a connection to the land that emerges from respectful relationship with Stó:lō people and wisdom. Rather than using an institution-wide scripted land acknowledgement, the workshop invited us to journey as individuals and as a department in considering how connection to Stó:lō Téméxw informs our work. This follows Grand Chief Clarence Pennier's guidance to me about land acknowledgements in Stó:lō Téméxw during our research conversation. A guiding question, suggested Grand Chief Pennier, is "What do you know about the people?" (personal communication, May 30, 2024). In the workshop, then, we were encouraged to develop a contextualized land acknowledgement framework that reflects our own journey of relational

connection to the land and Indigenous communities within our specific areas of work at the university. This framework will then get used to inform how we relate to Stó:lō Téméxw in particular times and places, such as workshops, classes, or public events. While our department is still developing a shared land acknowledgement framework, I have developed the following guide for how connection to land informs my work with co-op:

> The UFV co-op Office is located on Stó:lō Tém:éxw, the territory of the Halq'eméylem-speaking Stó:lō peoples [offer a more specific reference to the location, including a note on what I am feeling and thinking about my connection to that land in the moment]. In supporting co-op students and community partners, I seek to walk in a good way with the people and land of Stó:lō Tém:éxw [relate comment to the specific people/context].

While paying attention to the stories that get told is an educational practice to address the legacy of first discovery, this is not the only element of the Doctrine of Discovery that informed foundations for an ethos of possessiveness. What happened after first discovery was an increasing presence of settler people and society, where the initial claims to the land by explorers evolved into more permanent presence occupying and possessing the land. I turn now to this second aspect of initial connection.

5.3.1.3 Occupancy and Possession

> Elizabeth I and her advisers added an element to the definition of Discovery that a European country had to actually occupy and possess newly found lands to turn a first discovery claim into a claim of complete title. This was usually accomplished by building a fort or settlement, for example, and leaving soldiers or settlers on the land. Physical possession had to occur within a reasonable length of time after the first discovery to create a complete title to the land for the discovering country. (Miller et al., 2010, p. 7)

Where examples of settler occupation and possession extend the way settler stories sustained an ethos of possessiveness, the early decades of European settlement highlights how amidst the growing settler population was a Stó:lō presence and independence that saw Stó:lō paradigms of living in connection to the land persist. Reflecting on snapshots of early settler occupancy and possession and the relationship to Stó:lō people and land, then, offers important direction to restore a relational connection to Stó:lō and settler communities, an idea I discuss below in considerations for curriculum. But first, a snapshot of early settler occupancy and possession, beginning with Fort Langley.

Settler possession of British Columbia and Stó:lō Téméxw initially centered around the construction of Fort Langley along the shores of the Fraser River in 1827 (Carlson, 1997). The fort serves a prime example of settler presence confirming settler occupation and ownership of the land. This established presence of British traders and explorers became a base from which possession of Stó:lō Téméxw expanded in later years to include the region on both sides of the Fraser River from Langley to Hope.

Accounts from the settlers who established Fort Langley reflect the importance of solidifying possession through permanent presence on the land. For example, in the official Hudson Bay Company journal, as recorded by George Barnston who was a member of the group who built the first fort, the task of building this first fort was one "destined to form an Establishment at the Entrance of Fraser's River" (Maclachlan, 1998). Establishment was exactly the goal. Building a commercial presence via the Hudson's Bay Company was a way to establish occupation and possession. While Hudson's Bay Company could be viewed strictly as a commercial enterprise amidst British settler expansion, particularly with its focus on the fur trade, historians Bradford and Connors (2020) argue that the company exerted authority in

Western regions of Canada by acting as "a loyal and honourable representative of the Crown" (p. 176). Granted legal and political authority in newly acquired British territories, the presence of Hudson's Bay Company sealed occupation and possession of the land.

Returning to Carlson's (1997) important observations on this era of settler occupancy and possession, settler relationships with Stó:lō communities and land at this early stage of contact still allowed Stó:lō independence on the land. Similar to the earlier encounters with explorers like Simon Fraser, settlers living at Fort Langley relied on the generosity and trade of Stó:lō communities for survival (Ishiguro, 2016). For example, many of the Hudson's Bay Company representatives intermarried with Stó:lō women as part of their strategy for personal wellbeing and access to resources and trade, but these relationships were not necessarily incongruent with Stó:lō values of connection to the land. Carlson (1997) notes, "The Stó:lō likely saw Fort Langley as a resource similar to a family-owned rock. HBC employees at the fort were likely viewed as representatives of the families who controlled the fort's resources" (p. 50). As a result, the success of Fort Langley trade was contingent upon Stó:lō presence and participation in the community as partners in European occupation. This is not to say it was a partnership of respect, as one trader's journal entry makes clear in reference to Stó:lō people: "We Cannot undertake to Control them So effectually, and must take them as they Come" (quoted in Harris, 1996). Harris (1996) notes an acceptance of their circumstances by the settlers, as "traders did not attempt to change Native values, they did not actively interfere with the Native subsistent economy, and they did not begin to control Native territory" (p. 78). This assessment relates to Jean Barman's (2007) observation within the larger history of British Columbia as a whole:

> The dominant motif of the Europeans was disregard rather than conquest or elimination. As a consequence, Native peoples in British Columbia were never completely stripped of

> their self-respect. They were able to retain some elements of their ways of life while adjusting to the new social and economic order. (p. 163)

The circumstances of these early settler-Stó:lō relationships did not display explicit exercise of force against Indigenous communities. These examples of early partnership between European settlers and Stó:lō community offer intriguing insights into the possibility of cooperation between settler and Indigenous communities when the settler culture is not exerting itself by force onto the Indigenous community. Do these early examples of cooperation offer lessons for settler-Indigenous relationship in Stó:lō Téméxw today, including within higher education?

5.3.1.4 Curriculum Considerations: Engaging Stó:lō Paradigms

This question was addressed in my research conversation with Si:yémiya as I asked him what he thinks is needed for settler educators to better engage with Stó:lō ways of being and knowing in connection to the land. He noted the importance of approaching Stó:lō paradigms with respect and to learn Stó:lō history and culture on Stó:lō terms not categorized from within settler educational paradigms. This approach can foster the type of respect that Stó:lō people and land deserve, he concluded, not as illustrations of settler knowledge, but as valuable perspectives in their own right, history and knowledge to be learnt, wrestled with, and applied in how people live in this place today and in the future.

An example of this type of settler engagement with Stó:lō people, land, and culture was recently initiated by the Peace and Reconciliation Centre (PARC) at the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) in partnership with several Stó:lō communities and organizations. The name of the program is Xwelítem Siyáya: Allyship and Reconciliation Building. Open to the public, the purpose of the program is to “help build people’s capacity for reconciliation-building by teaching the importance of authentic allyship and providing skills for building relationships between

colonial settlers and Indigenous communities here in Stó:lō Téméxw and beyond" (University of the Fraser Valley, 2024c, para. 1). Through a combination of presentations, workshops, and experiential land-based activities, participants learn from Stó:lō teaching and culture as a way "to embrace the goal of being in a constant state of learning and unlearning, relationship building, and transformative action" (para. 2). Central to the program is the inclusion of Stó:lō people and communities representing their own wisdom, knowledge, and practices of connection to the land. By fostering space for people to learn from Stó:lō paradigms, as Si:yémiya encourages, this program is an example of how Stó:lō teaching and culture remain a significant presence in Stó:lō Téméxw. Where early settlers received Stó:lō hospitality to meet their physical needs, this program illustrates ways that Stó:lō hospitality continues to be exercised in relational ways, in this case education and community.

The practice of engaging Stó:lō paradigms in education and community aligns with movements in education and curriculum that emphasize Indigenous resurgence and self-determination (e.g. Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Corntassel, 2012; Simpson, 2016). Indigenous resurgence and self-determination require both the recognition of the ongoing legacy of settler colonialism alongside the presence of Indigenous community and knowledge. I speak to some of the socio-political implications of resurgence and self-determination for curriculum research in a later chapter, but here I want to emphasize the role of relationship with Indigenous communities and knowledge as an essential step. Commenting on the ways that relationality can inform research, political scientists Matt Wildcat and Daniel Voth (2023) suggest that

> relationality is not a simple matter of creating good relationships but thinking about how we create relationships that are capable of making judgements and decisions that have the power to further Indigenous self-determination. Here, it helps to speak of relationality at

> a general level because it links people of like mind who want to remodel the world away from the destructive tendencies found within the various systems of hierarchy and oppression we live within. (p. 480)

Within curriculum in Stó:lō Téméxw, such as the Xwelítem Siyáya community-based course at UFV, fostering relationship with Stó:lō land, communities, and knowledge offers a different mode of education than the destructive legacy of settler possessiveness. Instead, Stó:lō ways of being and knowing are presented as essential to building the capacity for allyship and reconciliation.

An area of my work that is being influenced by Stó:lō paradigms is in developing work-integrated learning programming, specifically co-operative education (co-op) as I discussed in the previous chapter. Where I see opportunity to support Stó:lō self determination came to my attention when I was confronted by the "significant disparities in Indigenous student access, retention, and success in work-integrated learning (WIL) programs" in British Columbia as outlined in a recent study from the University of Victoria (Nielsen et al., 2022). As I reflect on Stó:lō paradigms in relation to this situation, Michael Marker's (2004) analysis of the way career development is often presented in universities offers important insight:

> An emphasis on preparing students for careers in a globalized marketplace has frequently rendered the place-based knowledge and identity of Indigenous people to be an antiquated and contentious voice, listened to only in the most nonchalant fashion…Indigenous place-based knowledge requires an understanding of the moral proportions of oral traditions and long sustained relationships with the land. It implies and prescribes particular forms of restraint and responsibilities from communities and individuals who have a sense of belonging to the land. Industrial and post-industrial

> society replaces traditional cultures that are oriented around this sacred sense of place with an individualized identity that is malleable and transportable throughout a global marketplace. Such dominant perspectives on identity and economics rush past and push aside Indigenous patterns of knowledge. (p. 172)

Relating these observations to the structure and requirements of co-op has provided direction to note obstacles that Indigenous students face navigating co-op. For example, co-op program requirements, such as having a paid, full-time job, do not account for the rules related to funding support that many Indigenous students have to meet with their own communities in order to maintain funding. While addressing work-integrated learning beyond co-op, the findings by a research group at the University of Victoria are relevant for this discussion (Nielsen et al., 2022). For example, their research notes that in addition to barriers in access and funding, limited tracking of Indigenous student numbers at institutions, university preparation and skill gaps, and intergenerational trauma arising from the residential school legacy are significant barriers faced by Indigenous students in work-integrated learning, including co-op. Additionally, as I discuss further in Chapter 7, co-op learning outcomes often focus on individual career and skill development without accounting for the social responsibility that many Indigenous students bring to their education (Carr-Stewart et al., 2013). Participation in co-op, like many of the structures of universities (Marker, 2011), can pull these students away from connection to their own communities and land.

Noting these barriers to co-op participation, I am examining possible ways to address Indigenous student participation in co-op. While early my journey as a co-op educator, addressing Indigenous student participation is one of my priorities as I approach this work. Early steps have involved meetings with Stó:lō Elders and Indigenous Student Centre staff at the

University of the Fraser Valley to begin from a place of relational connection with Indigenous colleagues and students. Still in the early stage of developing these relationships in my role with co-op, the encouragement I got in my research conversation with Grand Chief Clarence Pennier was to focus on local connections – "building a relationship…getting to know them better" – which is motivating my journey (personal communication, May 30, 2024). I hope to learn from current examples of programming partnerships in UFV curriculum, such as Halq'eméylem language courses with local Stó:lō communities and pre-apprenticeship programing for Stó:lō community members. Discussion in later chapters on practices of responsibility to the land will examine other ways that education and curriculum can support these directions.

While the early period of contact between settlers and Stó:lō communities allowed for aspects of reciprocal relationship to exist, settler assumptions from the Doctrine of Discovery influenced settlers' presence in Stó:lō Téméxw. Despite examples of settler-Stó:lō relationships, the assumptions that came with settler occupation and possession, represented by the construction of Fort Langley, initiated patterns of possessiveness that while not yet overrunning Stó:lō communities and land, set a precedence for later developments.

5.3.2 Settling In

As I have shown in the examples above, the settler impact on the land was initially quite limited, and allowed for continued Stó:lō connection to the land. Yet the Doctrine of Discovery characteristics of first discovery, occupation, and possession that motivated European contact in the first place set a trajectory towards an ethos of possessiveness in Stó:lō Téméxw. The foundations for possessiveness would become more firmly established through ongoing settler presence in Stó:lō Téméxw as seen in specific events during the latter half of the 19th century and early 20th century. Continuing to discuss how the Doctrine of Discovery (R. J. Miller et al., 2010)

informed the foundations for settler presence Stó:lō Téméxw, this section examines how the principle of terra nullius was evident historically in stories of the gold rush, land allotments, and reserves. I suggest that examining these pivotal moments in Stó:lō Téméxw history in which a settler ethos of possessiveness became further entrenched leads to interrogating assumptions within the legacy of terra nullius that persist in education. Following these historical examples I ask, how can interrogation of these foundational stories inform curriculum development that is attentive to the ways that history informs education today? Towards answering this question, I discuss ways that placelessness, dispossession, and dehumanization are assumptions within terra nullius that need to be addressed in my areas of educational work.

5.3.2.1 Terra Nullius

> This term means a land or earth that is empty or null or void. The phrase *vacuum domicilium* was also sometimes used to describe this Discovery element. It literally means an empty or vacant home or domicile. Under this element, lands that were not possessed or occupied by any person or nation, or were occupied by non-Europeans but not being used in a fashion that European legal systems understood and/or approved, were considered to be empty and waste and available to be claimed. Europeans were very liberal in applying this definition to the lands of Indigenous peoples. Europeans often considered lands that were actually owned, occupied, and being actively utilized by Indigenous peoples to be vacant and available for Discovery claims if they were not being properly used according to European laws and cultures. (Miller et al., 2010, pp. 7-8)

What kind of society would allow the complete disregard of Indigenous peoples present on the land to conclude that the land was empty and available for taking? What kind of stories

would perpetuate this assumption of superiority and possessiveness? As sociologist Matthew Unger (2023) notes in his discussion of the legacy of colonial law in British Columbia, it made sense because terra nullius was a formative framework that informed how society viewed Indigenous people and land:

> Terra nullius means "empty land," which signified the colonial interpretation of a territory, in that if the land was unclaimed by a sovereign state, it could be claimed by another government. Together, these discourses comprise what Frichner (2010) called more broadly a "Framework of Dominance" wherein these conceptions of law/nature allowed for widespread occupation, dispossession, and genocide of Indigenous populations around the world. These theological, legal, and philosophical understandings of nature prefigure a politics of recognition that saw non-Western subjects and cultures as less than human (or not human at all), and that constituted a narrative of the proper relationship to land and space." (p. 625)

The ethos of possessiveness in the Doctrine of Discovery characteristics of first discovery, possession, and occupation are sustained by this fundamental assumption of the land's emptiness apart from European presence. In the settlement of Stó:lō Téméxw, the disregard of Stó:lō connection to the land became common practice during the population boom of the Gold Rush, in determining land allotments, and through mapping reserves. Where the early 19th century saw the small number of European settlers remaining close together at Fort Langley and interacting with Stó:lō communities and land through trade partnerships, the scene shifted dramatically as population increased in the latter half of the 19th century and a growing settler possession of the land took place. Commenting on the entire region now known as the Lower

Mainland, including Stó:lō Téméxw, historian Cole Harris (1996) summarizes the shift in settler-Indigenous relations during this period:

> After 1858, effective Native control of the region collapsed very quickly. In 1881, when peoples were first enumerated in a Canadian census, power lay squarely with governments and their representatives, the courts, the owners of sawmills and fish canneries, and, to an extent, local white leaders. Natives had been allocated small reserves where, their numbers much reduced and their voices unheard, they lived at the margins of a non-Native world. The state, industrial capital, and the cultural values of an immigrant population of predominantly British origin dominated a remade and renamed place, the Lower Mainland. (p. 68)

Against the backdrop of terra nullius informing settler policy and practice, including formative developments in Stó:lō Téméxw, the following discusses three examples where this settling in took place. Following a brief survey of these three foundational stories in settler history in Stó:lō Téméxw, I outline how these historical examples offer important insights for curriculum in Stó:lō Téméxw.

5.3.2.1.1 British Columbia and the Gold Rush

Two significant events occurred in 1858 that shifted the tide of colonial settlement in British Columbia, including Stó:lō Téméxw. First, in the spring 1858 rumours of gold sparked a rush of people to the region in search of wealth (Harris, 1996; Oliver, 2022). Thousands of prospectors ascended into the British Columbia's southwestern region in search of gold. And then only months after the initial wave of prospectors, the second major event of 1858 occurred as British Columbia became an official colony of the British crown in the late summer (Harris, 1996). This declaration shifted the settler presence from primarily economic (e.g. Hudson's Bay

Company) to political as social structures began to be established, such as the formation of cities (e.g. New Westminster as first capital city of British Columbia) and laws (e.g. land allotments). Assessing the impact of this moment in history, Harris (1996) summarizes as follows:

> With these developments, the exclusive trading regime of the [Hudson's Bay Company], the relationships between Natives and Europeans on which it rested, and Native control in their own territory all began to wane. British civil and criminal law suddenly began to be enforced in the colony. (p. 80)

Oliver (2022) makes a similar conclusion: "The establishment of the colony signaled the beginning of the end of Stó:lō Téméxw as a largely Native place and the making of a predominantly European one" (p. 19). Following initial European contact in the region and the establishment of Fort Langley as a centre of commerce and colonial presence, the gold rush, along with the authority of the British crown, represents a foundational story in Stó:lō Téméxw history for framing an ethos of possessiveness in new and expanding ways. This shift was evident in two ways: population increase and land use.

The significant increase in people flooding the region is one way an ethos of possessiveness became more established in Stó:lō Téméxw. As mentioned above, prior to 1858, settler-Stó:lō relationships were focused mostly on trade and allowed Stó:lō communities freedom to continue relating to the land in their own ways. But a primary reason for this dynamic was the small settler population in the region, including at Fort Langley (Carlson, 2001). While Fort Langley established colonial presence along Stó:lō Téméxw and set the stage for later developments in land use and community development, it was the influx of people with the gold rush that opened the door for British migration and settlement, land possession and imposition of colonial law in the region. To put the population increase into perspective, prior to the Gold

Rush, Fort Langley had a few dozen Hudson Bay Company employees. In the spring and summer of 1858, however, some 30,000 people descended on British Columbia, with the majority traveling through Victoria and then onto Stó:lō Téméxw to search for gold in the upper Fraser River and beyond.

How these new arrivals treated the land as an empty frontier to mine for gold is another way an ethos of possessiveness was evident. As Carlson (1997) describes, the gold rush "sparked off a massive migration and set in motion a series of events which profoundly affected the Stó:lō people's ability to interact with their natural environment" (p. 60). Miners took over many important Stó:lō sites, causing no shortage of difficulties for Stó:lō communities. The extent of the changes in land use through the gold rush is captured by Carlson's (1997) description of the situation:

> Many disputes stemmed from the xwelítem desire for land. When miners arrived, they were issued 25 square foot claims upon application to the Colonial government. While this may seem like an insignificant amount of land, it becomes less so when one considers the thousands of people involved, and that all the land considered valuable was along the banks of the river and streams and therefore was the most heavily used land by the Stó:lō. Furthermore, beyond the individual mining claims, entire towns sprung up overnight, complete with court houses, post offices, hotels and supply stores. Trees were cleared and Stó:lō settlements and land use patterns marginalized. (p. 62)

And while it turned out that the "promise of gold" used to promote the region was greatly exaggerated (Oliver, 2022, p. 113), the lure of wealth was motivation enough to persuade thousands of American and British people to make their way to the region. In his study of colonialism during the British Columbia gold rush, historian Christopher Herbert (2012) notes,

> The status of British Columbia as an imperial colony seems to have added to its appeal among some migrants, placing it within a larger discourse of imperial expansion and migration...migration to British Columbia represented a chance for British men to take part in the imperial project. (p. 96).

The appeal to benefit from British colonial expansion was certainly the case by 1870, where despite the reality of limited gold and subsequent departure of most miners, Carlson (1997) notes that the door for migration into the area had been opened and Europeans came to claim the land as their own. If gold was the lure for settlers to come to British Columbia beginning in 1858, it was the possibility of land possession that made them stay.

5.3.2.1.2 Land Allotments

As the focus shifted away from the search for gold, the laws of the newly formed colony of British Columbia facilitated possession of the land for new arrivals. In his book *Landscapes and Social Transformations on the Northwest Coast: Colonial Encounters in Stó:lō Téméxw*, Jeff Oliver (2022) analyzes maps and surveys to illustrate the important role that land distribution played in the early years of settlement in Stó:lō Téméxw following the gold rush. Oliver (2022) describes how "surveying helped physically and symbolically construct a landscape that could be possessed by newcomers, a geography it infused with terms of reference commensurate with the ideals of capitalism" (p. 130). Combined with policies of pre-emption, newcomers could claim 160-acre plots of land on the condition of their commitment to improve the allotted land for agricultural purposes. Oliver (2022) notes the importance placed on agricultural development within the scheme of social development in this era: "No longer inhibited by the disorienting characteristics of wilderness, the new spatial geometry anticipated the enabling powers of agriculture and its rewards of social improvement" (p. 130).

This process of allocating land to settlers was sustained by the belief that the supposed empty land was best used for agricultural purposes and other ways that supported the establishment of European-style communities. This belief saw the policies and practices of land allocation as one of fair distribution that allowed settlers to flourish and the land to be used. Oliver (2022) summarizes the basis for distribution of land, suggesting that "colonial policy aimed to transform what was considered wilderness into a productive landscape of private landholders, the purported social and economic base of a civilized society" (p. 128). Harris (2002) makes a similar observation about what drew people to British Columbia, drawing on the appeal of land within the larger narrative European settler values:

> A pioneer farm was much more than a unit of production. It was intended to provide livelihood and security for a family, some measure of social standing, and some opportunity for social reproduction. It responded, on one side of the Atlantic, to a deep craving for land, and with it security and social standing, emanating from the other. Land itself was the means to other ends: the well-being of the patriarchal family, social standing, prosperity, here and there a Utopian vision. (p. 51)

Because the Stó:lō presence in the region not viewed through the European impulse for land ownership, the process of allotting land in Stó:lō Téméxw serves as primary example of how an ethos of possessiveness was sustained by the myth of terra nullius. As land policies were developed, "the proposition that almost all provincial land was unsettled and unused - or used slightly in ways that deserved to be replaced by more intensive, modern land uses - was not debated" (Harris, 2002, p. 46). The partnership of early contact, through trade and Stó:lō hospitality, diminished as settler possession of the land through allotments began to put limits on Stó:lō land use. Newly allotted property became off limits for Stó:lō use (Harris, 2002). These

changes, Harris (1996) describes, made sense in the settler mindset: “Most immigrants believed in progress, private property, and the superiority of British civilization. Thousands of miles from home, they defended such assumptions with the vigour of those who are dislocated, yet have the power of government at their disposal” (p. 81). While I discuss assumptions of settler superiority further in Chapter 7, it is important to note Harris’s commentary on the role of racism in carrying out these policies of terra nullius. The land could be viewed as empty because Indigenous people were viewed as inferior and incapable of contributing to settler society due to the underlying racism within settler colonialism (Dua et al., 2005). As historian Adele Perry (2001) notes in her commentary on race and gender in British Columbia settlement,

> A new land policy would not only draw white settlers, but also encourage them to adopt nuclear families and become permanent, agricultural settlers. An effective program of assisted immigration would provide the white bodies upon which any orderly settler society was premised. (p. 138)

Part of the broader colonial ethos, educational researcher Lynette Shultz (2012) notes that “dehumanization was the process that opened the possibility for the destructive economic, social and political pieces of colonialism” (p. 32). These assumptions supported the initial government policies for assigning land to newcomers. And then it was these same assumptions that disregarded the presence, values, and practices of Indigenous communities in British Columbia, leading to the creation of reserves that would have an immediate and long lasting impact in the latter half of the 19th century, including for Stó:lō communities in Stó:lō Téméxw.

5.3.2.1.3 Reserves

Land allotments were a way for the government to provide support for incoming settlers, allowing them to participate in the newly developing colony of British Columbia. But the

government had to deal with the question of where Stó:lō communities fit into the developing practice of land use and distribution in Stó:lō Téméxw. It was clear that Stó:lō ways of connecting to the land were different than the settler vision of personal ownership and agricultural development. Because Stó:lō communities were scattered throughout the region in often overlapping and fluid ways, the lines drawn through land allotment did not easily translate into the varied ways that Stó:lō communities were connected to the land (Oliver, 2022). It was in this context that Stó:lō people were not allowed to receive individual land allotments themselves, the reasons being they did meet the criteria for land use that was considered adequate for settler land use and development, such as European style agriculture (Carlson, 1997).

Instead of participation in land allotments, then, Stó:lō communities were given land reserves, a process that evolved in the latter decades of the 19th century. The creation of reserves involved the government designating land to Stó:lō communities on which they were expected to be able to both carry on their Stó:lō ways of life and adapt to the emerging settler culture by adopting agricultural practices and other socio-economic systems of cultural engagement. The settler idea for Indigenous communities that was being exercised across Canada was also adopted in Stó:lō Téméxw. The belief was that reserves would help Stó:lō people adapt to the emerging settler ways of being on the land.

A key part of the history of reserves in British Columbia, including in Stó:lō Téméxw, was the absence of treaties. Unlike other parts of the landscape in the emerging country of Canada, Indigenous groups in British Columbia never ceded their territory to government. Decisions for land use and land allotment proceeded without the consent of Indigenous people, instead imposed by government officials seeking to efficiently establish colonial presence on the supposedly empty and unused land. The result was an inconsistent and seemingly arbitrary

practice of reserve allotment, which in the case of Stó:lō reserves, meant that reserves were granted, changed, and in some cases taken away completely. Two examples in the early decades of land allotments and reserve creation reveals how the concept of terra nullius provided a basis for Stó:lō communities being pushed to conform to settler priorities for the land in Stó:lō Téméxw.

The first example is the process of creating reserves in Stó:lō Téméxw, which were part of the initial project of land use and distribution initiated by British Columbia's first governor, James Douglas. Alongside the settler land allotments, Douglas assigned reserve land to Stó:lō communities with an intention to uphold principles of British sovereignty in the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which required recognition of and guarantee to Indigenous rights to land, with treaties as the authorized mechanism for Indigenous communities to relinquish land to the government (Carlson, 1997). Yet unlike much of the rest of Canada east of the Rocky Mountains, such treaties were rarely negotiated in British Columbia, including in Stó:lō Téméxw. The initial creation of reserve land was not from negotiated land settlement, but out of practical necessity as the increasing settler population required organized land distribution.

Historical records show that Governor Douglas thought that Indigenous communities would benefit from incorporation into the emerging settler society. Douglas' own words capture his vision for assimilation as he corresponded with British political leaders overseeing the colonies:

> I conceive the proposed plan to be at once feasible, and also the only plan which promises to result in the moral elevation of the Native Indian races; in rescuing them from degradation and protecting them from oppression and rapid decay...I feel much confidence in the operation of this simple and practical scheme and provided we succeed

> in devising means of rendering the Indian as comfortable and independent in regard to physical wants in his improved condition, as he was when a wandering denizen of the forest, there can be little doubt of the ultimate success of the experiment...Anticipatory reserves of land for the benefit and support of the Indian races, will be made for that purpose, in all the districts of British Columbia inhabited by Native Tribes. Those reserves, should in all cases include their cultivated fields, and village sites, for which from habit and association they invariably conceive a strong attachment, and prize more, for that reason, than for the extent or value of the land. (Douglas, 1859 as cited in Carlson, 1997)

Douglas' vision was to create reserves in Stó:lō Téméxw to support Stó:lō communities in adapting their practices of connection to the land with modern land use practices, namely agriculture. While there was not a uniform reserve size, a guiding principle was to grant land that would allow Stó:lō communities to flourish alongside the growing settler presence throughout the region. In the larger context of settler history, Douglas' approach is an example of "benevolent assimilation," the process in which settler governments created and implemented colonial policies requiring Stó:lō assimilation, but did so with the best of intentions for their well-being (Carlson, 1997, p. 66). Douglas' intention was to give Stó:lō communities the best possible chance to flourish within the burgeoning settler society in the region. This initial creation of reserves is an example of the complicated legacy between settler good intentions and the realities of the impact colonial laws and policies had on Stó:lō land. Another example of such good intentions is role Christian missionaries played in advocating for Stó:lō rights to land (Hare & Barman, 2006) as I will discuss further in Chapter 7. In the case of reserves, with no treaties signed between Douglas and Stó:lō communities, and no compensation ever offered for the non-

reserve lands allocated to settler newcomers, settler possession of the land took precedence over Stó:lō understanding and practice of connection to land. Forced onto reserves and limited to attempts at integration into European agriculture and socio-economic systems, Stó:lō connection to the land suffered from that point onward. Good intentions could not overcome the damage of a system built on the assumptions of terra nullius. As Carlson (1997) concludes,

> Stó:lō oral histories have remained clear and consistent for over 150 years. They leave little doubt that Douglas did indeed intend to recognize the legitimate Stó:lō claims to their traditional land. The Stó:lō permitted xwelítem to settle peacefully in their territory in part because Governor James Douglas guaranteed that Stó:lō people would receive sufficient reserve lands in order to remain a self-supporting community. They were led to believe that they would receive fair compensation for lands and resources outside of their reserves which were occupied and used by settlers. (p. 70)

The second example in the early decades of land distribution reveals the limits to settler good intentions, illustrated most clearly in the influential decisions of government official Joseph Trutch (see Fisher, 1971). If Douglas's good intentions were an example of settler benevolence within the colonial system of settler community development, Trutch's authority in deciding on reserves reveals how settler priorities within this system regularly brushed aside good intentions in the name of progress. Taking over the authority of reserves from Douglas in the early 1860's, Trutch reviewed how reserves were being used by Stó:lō communities and concluded that Stó:lō communities did not need the amount of land that Douglas had originally allotted. Trutch had a drastically different vision for Indigenous people than Douglas: "Whereas Douglas had paternalistically thought that Aboriginal people could be 'saved' through assimilation, Trutch was convinced they were incapable of integrating into the introduced European culture"

(Carlson, 1997, p. 73). For example, in 1864, settler farmers petitioned Trutch to intervene over land they had claimed without due process because they wanted to prevent Stó:lō use of that land, even though it was part of the initial Stó:lō reserve land. Echoing the assumptions perpetuated by terra nullius, Trutch concluded that because the Stó:lō were not using the land for agricultural purposes, they had no right to it. He then implemented new reserves boundaries, drastically reducing the size of Stó:lō reserves that resulted in the removal of 91% of the land Douglas had allotted them and changing the laws to exclude Indigenous people from pre-emption of non-reserve lands (Carlson, 1997). Trutch's rationale was based on the assessment that traditional Indigenous land use practices were irrelevant to settler priorities, operationalizing a belief in empty land regardless of Indigenous presence and practice. In both cases – Douglas' initial creation of reserves and Trutch's significant reduction of reserve sizes – the land use decisions were based on assumptions of terra nullius in which European agricultural practice was the goal. While remaining present on the land, Stó:lō communities were either required to assimilate to European agricultural practices or they were formally excluded from agricultural development altogether.

Considering each of these examples – the gold rush, land allotments, and reserves – as stories that form a settler ethos of possessiveness, how can interrogation of these foundational stories inform curriculum development that is attentive to the ways that history informs education today?

5.3.2.2 Curriculum Considerations: Interrogating Assumptions

To answer this question, I return to Donald's (2009) analysis of settler history exemplifying colonial frontier logics, the idea that various aspects of settler society reflect the values, beliefs, and history from which that society came. These examples in Stó:lō Téméxw

history reveal how conventional stories of exploration, establishing colonial society, and the search for wealth were enabled by a view of the land as an empty canvas for settler creative use (i.e. terra nullius). Through the process of occupying the land, a settler ethos of possessiveness was fostered by a view of the land as a morally neutral object for possession, resulting in the disregard of Stó:lō people already present and caring for the land. Illustrated by these stories in Stó:lō Téméxw history, terra nullius is described by Donald (2022) as denying the relational connection to people and land; instead, connection to the land is viewed through the lens of possessiveness. Donald (2022) challenges educators to consider how these assumptions inform education today: "Unlearning colonial forms of relationship denial does require learning more about colonial worldview and the ways in which the cultural assumptions of that worldview deeply inform the structure and character of the common-sense conventions of educational practices" (para. 7). In the context of this section of my study, then, how is higher education and curriculum in Stó:lō Téméxw informed by the assumptions of terra nullius? While I think this is a question that each educator can consider for their own context, I consider a response by interrogating three characteristics of terra nullius that relate to areas of my own work: placelessness, dispossession of land, and dehumanization.

5.3.2.2.1 Interrogating Placelessness

The terra nullius belief that discovered land was empty regardless of Indigenous presence reflects an assumption about the neutrality of place and land that is important to acknowledge and address in education. In the case of land allotments in Stó:lō Téméxw, the land was viewed as empty despite Stó:lō presence, resulting in policies and laws that disregarded the impacts on Stó:lō people and land as Europeans settled on the land. In education, this assumption that place and land is empty can inform the illusion of placelessness discussed in an earlier chapter, the

idea that education occurs in “empty space ready to be occupied by the anthropocentric imagination” (Donald, 2020, p. 158). Yet the impact of terra nullius on Stó:lō communities as Europeans settled in Stó:lō Téméxw – namely, displacement and pressure to assimilate to settler agricultural practice – highlights how engaging place and land is never neutral. A parallel lesson, then, is that educational spaces – i.e. the literal places in which education is experienced – are never neutral or empty. Interrogating this assumption that the educational places and lands are neutral, then, involves considering the impacts of education within place and land.

Learning from the historical examples presented in this chapter invites educators to examine where curriculum fosters displacement and perpetuates assimilation in their own work. My own work in co-op curriculum provides an example. Alongside this dissertation research I had the opportunity to participate in the review and revision of co-op curriculum at the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV). As a reminder, co-op is a form of work-integrated learning that alternates full-time semesters of academic study with periods of full-time, paid employment related to students’ academic program (CEWIL Canada, 2021). I was part of a team of co-op coordinators who were tasked with renewing UFV’s co-op course outlines, a process of curriculum review and revision that involved aligning the courses with institutional strategic directions, including Indigenization. Related to this discussion on the role of education in place and land, I want to comment briefly on how Indigenization informed this process of co-op curriculum development.

> Indigenization at UFV (University of the Fraser Valley, 2024d),
>
> is a process of naturalizing Indigenous knowledge systems and making them evident to transform spaces, places, and hearts. In the context of post-secondary education, this involves bringing Indigenous knowledge and approaches together with Western

knowledge systems. This benefits not only Indigenous students but all students, teachers, and community members involved or impacted by Indigenization. (para. 1)

Where these institutional directions for Indigenization prioritize curriculum development that connects with Stó:lō land and communities and includes Indigenous ways of being and knowing, there were assumptions within co-op curriculum that needed to be addressed in order to do this work well. Under the direction of UFV's Teaching and Learning Indigenization staff, we examined how common assumptions of co-op would inform our process of updating the courses to include Indigenization. One area of focus was the role of neoliberal capitalist values within co-op and work-integrated learning more broadly, such as the human capital view that student participation is an investment with a return defined in terms of socio-economic benefits to students and society (J. Johnston, 2011). As I noted briefly in the previous chapter, this view contributes to a view of co-op as a way to create workers and maximize individual success, with curriculum focused primarily on supporting the student experience of personal growth towards these ends. Pathways for success in co-op often require high levels of individual determination and focus, that while meaningful for those who succeed, can put immense pressure on students who come from more community-oriented contexts of education and work, such as Indigenous students as I mentioned earlier. Operating co-op in this way risks a similar assumption to terra nullius in which settlers showed up and imposed a way of life while ignoring the wisdom and experience of the people and land already there. Such an approach to co-op may ignore other approaches to personal and professional development and exclude Indigenous students who may experience this pathway for success as another form of assimilation. Noting these assumptions alongside Stó:lō emphases on relationality and responsibility, then, requires shifts in how we define the purposes of co-op. For instance, alongside focus on student growth of knowledge and

skills in a workplace setting, we are developing activities that invite students to reflect on the responsibilities to the land and people in the place of their co-op job. While initially limited to a research and reflective writing exercise, discussion about steps for employer engagement are taking place in our co-op program development. These steps could include, for example, accessible resources and training for employers on Stó:lo community and land taught in partnership with Stó:lō community members and business leaders.

5.3.2.2.2 Interrogating Dispossession

Another area for interrogating the legacy of terra nullius in relation to education in Stó:lō Téméxw is with analysis of the role of education in the

> dispossession of Indigenous bodies and territories as just, certain and inevitable, by portraying Indigenous worldviews and practices as moral and intellectual failures, always waiting for and in need of correction and completion, in the name of spiritual, economic and social advancement. (Schaefli & Godlewska, 2019).

Indigenous scholar Gerald Taiaiake Alfred (Alfred, 2009) incisively notes that "colonialism is best conceptualized as an irresistible outcome of a multigenerational and multifaceted process of forced dispossession and attempted acculturation – a disconnection from land, culture and community" (p. 51). Each of the snapshots of settler history of terra nullius in Stó:lō Téméxw – gold rush, land allotments, and reserves – involved the dispossession of Stó:lō people and land, a reality that still impacts Stó:lō-settler relations today (Carlson & Naxaxalhts'i, 2021).

I have wondered if there is space in work-integrated learning curriculum and programming to interrogate where the legacy of Indigenous dispossession intersects with the field, such as co-op. In my observations, however, work-integrated learning, including co-op, does not typically include analysis of how the business and organizations in which students are

working are embedded within the socio-economic systems of Canada's politics and economy that continue to operate with the ongoing dispossession of Indigenous people from their traditional lands. Part of the challenge is how work-integrated learning is dependent on partnership with employers within various industries that remain quite a distance from discussions about decolonization and the implications for neoliberal capitalist economies (N. Johnston, 2007). While addressing vocational education specifically, Joe Kincheloe's (1999) challenge to consider the purposes of education in a democratic society is relevant for co-op since both emphasize career development: "Without a democratic sense of purpose, vocational educators had no point of view, no criteria for making educational and vocational assessments. Vocational educators must analyze the social, philosophical, and historical foundations of their field" (p. 20). Finding ways to interrogate and respond to the context of co-op, then, is one of the challenges I am exploring here.

Another challenge, however, is the focus on individual student development that is characteristic of work-integrated learning (Zegwaard & Pretti, 2023b), meaning that questions about the role of student work experience in relation to complex issues such as Indigenous dispossession within neoliberal socio-economics are largely lacking. This absence includes questions of how Indigenous communities exercise economic self-determination, which in British Columbia, and Stó:lō Téméxw specifically, is multifaceted with a range of possibilities for how economic trends relate to decolonization (Victor, 2012).

As I consider my role in co-op, reflecting on ways Indigenous dispossession continues in society and in education challenges me to confront areas where curriculum and programming remain rooted in assumptions of terra nullius. In my research conversation with Grand Chief Clarence Pennier, we found ourselves discussing the purpose of education in Stó:lō Téméxw and

he started talking about jobs that gives me ideas for where work-integrated learning could begin to reframe itself as a way to counteract the problems of dispossession:

> Part of the educational system is to teach people a discipline…so they can get a job…and those jobs don't necessarily relate to the use of land and resources…in the end, part of learning should be how do you give back once you receive an education?...What can you do to give back to our future generations? (personal communication, May 30, 2024)

As I develop further in the next chapter, Grand Chief Pennier's comments speak to the way that responsibility is a significant teaching for Stó:lō people. I hear a much-needed wisdom from these Stó:lō perspectives that could inform directions for work-integrated learning within the context of socio-economics in Stó:lō Téméxw. How can co-op programming, for example, learn from Stó:lō priorities and examples of self-determination and responsibility to the land in the types of jobs and employer partnerships that students and the university more broadly engage? In the school year that is just beginning as I write, I will be taking more responsibility to interact with current and potential co-op employers and partners in my role as co-op coordinator at UFV. If I am honest, I am not sure how I will proceed in interrogating the legacy of Stó:lō dispossession in these interactions; it is a daunting task against the backdrop of this settler history of possessiveness. As I interact with Stó:lō colleagues and community leaders, I have important questions that could inform how co-op programming and employer partnerships are developed: What are Stó:lō priorities in socio-economic development alongside settler society in Stó:lō Téméxw? How do issues related to historical land dispossession (e.g. land claims and treaty negotiations) inform present day Stó:lō relationships with settler institutions and businesses? What role does education play in these Stó:lō priorities, both for Stó:lō communities and for public institutions such as the University of the Fraser Valley?

In asking these questions I am provoking important learning from Stó:lō communities that could involve change and challenge to co-op programming. I recognize what Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang (2012) describe as the "necessary unsettling" (p. 7) that comes with acknowledging Indigenous dispossession within settler society and supporting Stó:lō self-determination. But I also recognize my own hesitation, personally and professionally. Am I ready for the disruption of this unsettling as I continually reflect on my own location as a settler working at a public university in Stó:lō Téméxw? Is co-op compatible with these directions considering its role supporting neoliberal capitalist values that are part of settler possessiveness ? Will I face resistance from colleagues or community members? Yet I hear Grand Chief Clarence Pennier's voice ringing in my head: "What can you do to give back to our future generations?" (personal communication, May 30, 2024). I am realizing, then, that while these questions are much bigger and more complex than a few changes in co-op curriculum can address, Grand Chief Pennier is reiterating the Stó:lō invitation to settlers like me to keep going in the direction of relational connection. I am grateful to be able to learn from the wisdom of someone like Grand Chief Pennier, Stó:lō colleagues, and the team of researchers and leaders with Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre. I will certainly seek their guidance in exploring my questions in this season of unsettling work.

5.3.2.2.3 Interrogating Dehumanization

The reality of dehumanization towards Indigenous people is another aspect of terra nullius that is relevant to interrogate within education in Stó:lō Téméxw. Racist laws and policies reflected the dehumanization of Indigenous people within terra nullius that resulted in the refusal to allow Stó:lō individuals to claim land allotments and the exclusion of Stó:lō communities from the decision-making process of mapping reserves. Dehumanization leads to exclusion and

disrespect, experiences that Indigenous people have continued to endure in Canadian society, including in education (Schaefli et al., 2019). As Stó:lō educator and researcher Shirley (Swelchalot Shxwha:yathel) Hardman (2024) notes in her study on Indigenization in higher education, "racism is about the presumption of superiority. Alternatively, relationships rely on mutual respect. Our colonial history since confederation has robbed Indigenous peoples of self-respect" (p. 52). Stó:lō researcher Winona Victor (2012) makes a similar observation about the dehumanization faced by Indigenous people in colonization:

> In order for colonialism to occur, colonizers must have a firm belief in their superiority in order to feel justified in oppressing, subjugating, dislocating, alienating, dispossessing and even exterminating the "inferior" Indigenous peoples...This is not to be thought of in only historical terms. Alfred and Corntassel (2005) identify the contemporary process as Settlers try to eradicate Indigenous "existence as peoples through the erasure of the histories and geographies that provide the foundation for Indigenous cultural identities and sense of self" (p. 598). (p. 163)

As I think about the Indigenous students in my own areas of education in co-op and experiential learning, I view this analysis of ongoing dehumanization of Indigenous people a challenge to continue the necessary unlearning of these colonial frontier logics (Donald, 2012a). For my work in co-op, for example, I return to the common assumption that individual determination and hard work is the model for success within the requirements of the curriculum. The way this vision for success is communicated, whether in formal co-op curriculum or in general attitudes and behaviors from educators, employers, or other students, can perpetuate dehumanizing attitudes towards Indigenous students – and any other students for that matter – who do not fit the model for success. This is particularly troubling when research points out a

British Columbia higher education context of "significant disparities in Indigenous student access, retention, and success in work-integrated learning (WIL) programs" (Nielsen et al., 2022, p. 139).

In looking to respond to these risks of dehumanization in work-integrated learning, including my area with co-op, I resonate with the recommendations of work-integrated learning educators Julianna Nielsen, Renée Livernoche, and Karima Ramji (2022) in which they outline ten recommendations that emerged from their collaborative project to develop an Indigenous WIL Resource Hub:

> *Be Continuously Guided by, and Accountable to, Indigenous Participants, Collaborators, and Advisors…*
>
> *Invest in Indigenous Community-Building on Campuses and Within Work-Integrated Learning Networks…*
>
> *Collaborate with Indigenous Communities and Students to Develop New Work-Integrated Learning Placements…*
>
> *Build Flexibility Into Work-Integrated Learning Programs and Placements…*
>
> *Increase Financial Support for Indigenous Work-Integrated Learning Students…*
>
> *Create Awareness of Work-Integrated Learning Programs and Opportunities…*
>
> *Expand Indigenous Counseling and Advising Services…*
>
> *Work With Hiring Partners in Decolonizing and Indigenizing Practices…*
>
> *Respond to the Needs and Concerns of Indigenous Students Navigating Work-Integrated Learning Hiring Processes…*
>
> *Provide Specialized Training for Work-Integrated Learning Staff and Human Resources Professionals.* (pp. 147-150)

As I proceed into my second year working as a co-op educator in Stó:lō Téméxw, I plan to take these recommendations to my co-op colleagues to incorporate change that supports the type of "sustainable, long-term timelines, commitments, and partnerships" needed in work-integrated learning (Nielsen et al., 2022, p. 150).

5.4 Conclusion

I conclude this chapter by returning to this important Stó:lō phrase on connection to the land: "This is our land. We have to look after everything that belongs to us" (Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, 2016a). This chapter and the previous one have surveyed the fundamental frameworks for Stó:lō and settler connection to the land through snapshots into both Stó:lō and settler history. Where Stó:lō teaching of sxwōxwiyám invite relationality in connection to the land, settler history reveals how despite good intentions, Doctrine of Discovery concepts like first discovery, occupation, possession, and terra nullius informed an ethos of possessiveness in connection to the land. As I continue this survey of Stó:lō and settler history and connection to the land, I turn my attention to the second half of the Stó:lō statement. Taking care of the land speaks to a responsibility that is also vital in Stó:lō teaching, a recognition that connection to the land is also responsibility to the land. The following chapters, then, will explore how responsibility to the land is understood and practiced, first by looking at examples in Stó:lō wisdom and history, followed by discussion of examples in settler history. As I have done in the chapters on foundations for connection to the land, I continue to examine how discussion of these historical examples inform my areas of curriculum and pedagogy in this place.

III. Responsibility: How Does an Ethos of Connection to the Land Inform Practices of Responsibility?

In November 2021, extraordinary rain fell in Stó:lō Téméxw and surrounding region, a weather event coined an "atmospheric river" (Fraser Valley Current, 2021b) for its vast amounts of rainfall within a short period of time. Flood waters flowed into the Sumas Prairie from several directions, displacing people and farm animals, shutting down highways, and bringing the surrounding community to a halt. Headlines captured the gravity of the situation: "Dikes overtopping, highway may be closed for days" (Olsen, 2021b), "BREAKING: Catastrophic damage predicted in Abbotsford" (Fraser Valley Current, 2021a), and "Sumas Prairie evacuation order issued" (Kennedy, 2021). Local journalists with the Fraser Valley Current (2022) summarized the event as follows:

> On Sunday, Nov. 14, 2021, rain was falling in the Fraser Valley. By Monday, the Fraser Valley had been all but cut off from the rest of the province, and rising waters in the American Nooksack River threatened local farmland. By December, floodwaters inundated all of Sumas Prairie, homes were lost to raging rivers, and millions of dollars in damage had affected the entire valley. (para. 1)

What was initially treated as a natural disaster that required immediate response from government, residents, and surrounding communities, also became a real-time scenario in which differences in Stó:lō and settler ideas about land were evident in responses to this disaster, informing how responsibility to the land and its residents was carried out, both during and following this disaster. I say this because the disaster was not simply the result of heavy rain. The impacts of the flood were actually 100-years in the making, set in motion when what was

once known as Sumas Lake or “Semá:th Xo:tsa” in Halq'eméylem – a vital source of food and transportation for Stó:lō communities – was transformed into Sumas Prairie, now one of the wealthiest agricultural regions in the country.

In the days following the initial flooding in 2021, the region’s history of the draining of Sumas Lake in the 1920’s became more widely known as journalists and community members investigated how this disaster came about. Fraser Valley Current (2021b) published the award-winning story, “Sumas Lake, the Nooksack River, and the historic roots of a 21st Century disaster.” The story carried this subtitle: “Sumas Lake once covered much of the Fraser Valley's fertile farmland. This is the story of how it disappeared, how it could re-appear, and some of the challenges ahead” (Fraser Valley Current, 2021b). Published during the first week of flooding, the article concisely captures the historical, social, and geographical significance of the Sumas region in Stó:lō and settler history by describing the process of transitioning the land from a lake into a prairie. When the flood waters came in 2021, the realities of 100 years of agricultural economic establishment were seen alongside Stó:lō presence and understanding of connection to the land that has been here since time immemorial. The return of Sumas Lake, albeit briefly during a flooding disaster, became a visible reminder that whether people knew it or it, everyone – Stó:lō and settler individuals, communities, and society – lived interdependently with the land. Awareness of connection to the land became a shared experience.

In an interview with reporters, historian Chad Reimer, author of the book *Before We Lost the Lake: A Natural and Human History of Sumas Valley* (Reimer, 2018) made this important observation for residents and communities on Sumas Prairie: “We have to be conscious that we’re not just on a flood plain, we’re on the bottom of a lake” (McSheffery, 2021). In the same report, Stó:lō leader and Sumas First Nation Chief Dalton Silver remarked on the historical

relationship his people have with the lake: “Our people at the time couldn’t comprehend why someone would want to drain a lake and change or alter Mother Nature is such a way…That would be a disaster” (McSheffery, 2021). Considering these observations on the historical significance of the region for both Stó:lō and settler communities, the flood highlighted how differing and complex ideologies and traditions, including those discussed in the previous two chapters, inform the immediate and subsequent responsibility when faced with a natural disaster such as this. And now, a few years later at the time of this writing, conversations for how to navigate an environmentally and socio-economically sustainable way forward in Sumas Prairie are ongoing amongst Stó:lō communities, politicians, researchers, farmers, and community members (see Olsen, 2024). What is clear, however, is that both Stó:lō and settler communities practice responsibility to the land, at times in drastically different ways, and at times in partnership and collaboration. Paying attention to these differences and similarities, as I try to do in this study, is a fundamental practice of reflexive curriculum research. Developing such critical consciousness (Freire, 2005) requires interrogating the complex intersections of ideology, history, and curriculum and thereby fostering practices of unlearning and relationality in connection to the land within education (Donald, 2022).

I share this example of the 2021 Sumas flood as a backdrop as I shift this survey from Stó:lō and settler foundations of connection to the land to the topic of responsibility to the land. How do the Stó:lō and settler foundations of connection to the land inform practices of responsibility? Here is why the second part of the Halq'eméylem phrase shared above is so critical: “We have to look after everything that belongs to us” (Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, 2016a). In Stó:lō teaching, connection to the land and responsibility to the land go together. In my conversations with Si:yémiya, he emphasized this point clearly: the

experience of connection is not passive, but invites practices of responsibility. This responsibility can be understood as both a way of life and a political assertion that emerges in Stó:lō ways of being and knowing on the land. As a way of life, responsibility with the land is expressed in things like Stó:lō history (sqwélqwel), language (Halq'eméylem), ceremony, and everyday experiences on the land. As a political assertion, responsibility to the land involves Stó:lō practices of self determination, such as establishing Stó:lō rights and title (e.g. negotiating treaties) and land-use agreements. But as noted in the previous section, Stó:lō commitments to responsibility to the land are an invitation for all residents of Stó:lō Téméxw. And foundational perspectives of connection to the land – both Stó:lō and settler as the previous two chapters surveyed – inform how such responsibility to the land is practiced.

Chapters 6 and 7, then, continue discussion of both Stó:lō and settler connection to the land, shifting the focus to reflection on historical examples of responsibility to the land to better understand how curriculum research is not just informed by foundational beliefs and history, but also practices of responsibility. Chapter 6 examines Stó:lō examples, inquiring into how relational connection to the land (see Chapter 4) informs Stó:lō practices of responsibility. Chapter 7 considers settler examples, asking how an ethos of possessiveness (Chapter 5) informs settler practices of responsibility, often characterized by a posture of superiority as expressed in historical examples of Christianity. In surveying these examples of Stó:lō and settler responsibility to the land as a form of curriculum research, each of these chapters continues to develop directions for curriculum and pedagogy in response to the historical analysis. Learning from examples of Stó:lō responsibility to the land, Chapter 6 experiments with curriculum connections in several areas: exploring narrative research as a way to foster holistic curriculum and pedagogy, engaging Halq'eméylem as a way to teach students about responsibility in work-

integrated learning, and supporting Indigenous self-determination through work-integrated learning partnerships. In Chapter 7, curriculum considerations include stories of Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw as examples of settler responsibility to the land. I discuss areas for unlearning how patterns of conformity remain in education (e.g. defining success in co-op) and include further discussion of Stó:lō self-determination in curriculum by discussing the intersection of Christianity and Stó:lō spirituality.

By discussing these historical examples, I continue to engage with what Sandra Styres (2019) describes as the "Literacies of Land," a practice of incorporating "decolonizing frameworks and praxis that critically trouble and disrupt colonial myths and stereotypical representations embedded in normalizing, hegemonic discourses and relations of power and privilege" (pp. 24-25). For Styres (2019), such decolonial inquiry requires "culturally aligned and place-conscious texts, stories, oral traditions, and symbolically rich themes that support literacies of land as living and emergent" (p. 25). With this direction in mind, then, I begin the discussion of responsibility to the land with reflection on Stó:lō stories and examples of teaching and practice.

Chapter 6: Engaging Stó:lō Responsibility to the Land: Stories, Language, and Self-determination

As I have journeyed with Stó:lō knowledge, culture, and community in my research and work in higher education in Stó:lō Téméxw, I have come to understand ways that Stó:lō responsibility to the land extends from the fundamental belief and practice of connection to the land as expressed in the teachings of sxwoxwiyám discussed in Chapter 4. As my research led me to witness Stó:lō teachings of connection to the land within these important origin stories, I have also observed embodied ways in which Stó:lō people live out their connection to the land in their practices of responsibility. Drawing from my research of Stó:lō history and teaching, conversations with Stó:lō individuals, and engagement with Stó:lō community in public ceremonies and events, this chapter will discuss how everyday stories (sqwélqwel), language (Halq'eméylem), ceremony, and land practices all represent ways that Stó:lō practice responsibility to the land. In discussing these examples, I suggest ways that Stó:lō responsibility can inform curriculum that supports responsibility to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw.

6.1 Stories of Responsibility: Sqwélqwel

If sxwoxwiyám teach about Stó:lō origins in connection to the land, I have come to understand that it is their stories of lived experience in more recent history, known as sqwélqwel, that guide Stó:lō responsibility to the land. Sxwōxwiyám are stories that inform the foundations for Stó:lō wisdom about connection to the land, a foundation that is then visible in the stories of responsibility to the land in history, what are sqwélqwel. The following overview of Stó:lō understanding of sqwélqwel discusses how these stories illustrate and guide Stó:lō responsibility

to the land and provide an example for how educators can include narrative in curriculum and pedagogy.

Focused on past and present Stó:lō experience, Stó:lō educator Shirley (Swelchalot Shxwha:yathel) Hardman (2024) refers to the Elders' teaching about sqwélqwel as "contemporary stories," Stó:lō stories that "teach us to understand everyday life and the things that happened to us or around us from a perception within our own worldview (epistemology)" (p. 70). This formative role of sqwélqwel illustrates Sandra Styres' (2019) discussion of "Storied Landscapes," in which "land is at once storied and relational informing the social, spiritual, and systemic norms and practices of a particular culture-sharing group in relationship to their places" (p. 28). With this emphasis on story as a way to understand and inform how life experience relates to Stó:lō foundational teaching, Stó:lō wisdom teaches that sqwélqwel are a fundamental way of informing responsibility to the land.

The Sq'éwlets First Nation (2016), a Stó:lō community located at the intersection of the Harrison and Fraser rivers, has an online storytelling resource that describes this formative role of sqwélqwel to inform responsibility to the land:

> Sqwélqwel means "true news". It refers to the oral history of our ancestors and the places they fished, hunted, harvested, and spent time in our world. Every Stó:lō person has their own sqwélqwel. Just as sxwōxwiyám links us to things and places of long ago, sqwélqwel links us to the more recent past. Once we know our sqwélqwel, we have a responsibility to use the places our ancestors used. Once we use these places, it becomes our responsibility to take care of them. Taking care of the places in our sqwélqwel means protecting them so they can provide for our future generations. (para. 1)

Stó:lō communities and individuals connect to the land in everyday life through the guidance of their sqwélqwel. These stories, often in the form of oral history, are part of Stó:lō family histories that get passed down from generation to generation, as well as part of larger community histories that Elders recall and remind so that Stó:lō communities can remain connected to their place and land. There is a certain everyday aspect to sqwélqwel, with a focus on "experiences in peoples' lives" (Carlson, 1997, p. 182) as a place of meaning making, what Stó:lō educator Q'um Q'um Xiiem (Archibald, 2008) describes as "the power of stories" (p. 133). In this sense, sqwélqwel speak the formative role of experience in Stó:lō teaching. Stó:lō educate by learning through the experiences of the community as recounted in these stories. In hearing sqwélqwel, the listener is invited to respond to the account of Stó:lō experience in their own practices of responsibility to the land. Other sources of knowledge, such as science, are understood in relation to the teaching of Stó:lō community experiences that sqwélqwel relate. Within contemporary educational contexts there can be competing ideas around valid sources of knowledge, often excluding or diminishing the role of Indigenous experience as fundamental to knowledge (L. T. Smith, 2012). The experiential element to sqwélqwel relates to what Indigenous researcher and educator Four Arrows discusses in relation to holistic education as "mind/body/spirit learning...embodied in practice" (Miller & Four Arrows, 2019, p. 22). It is the embodied practice of knowledge, such as sqwélqwel accounts of Stó:lō experience, that challenge dichotomies between various types of knowledge.

While sqwélqwel relate to personal experiences in the history of Stó:lō people, this does not mean they are less important than the foundational teachings of sxwoxwiyám within Stó:lō culture and history. Both sxwōxwiyám and sqwélqwel formative in sustaining Stó:lō ways of being and knowing. It makes sense, then, that the Stó:lō Heritage Policy Manuel (Stó:lō Nation

Lalems ye Stó:lō Si:ya:m, 2003) classifies sqwélqwel as part of Stó:lō heritage, defining them as "oral narratives relating to personal history" (p. 8). As part of Stó:lō heritage, like sxwōxwiyám, sqwélqwel contribute to Stó:lō culture and history in Stó:lō Téméxw as they are told in a variety of informal and formal ways, such as conversation with Elders or family, shared at events or ceremonies, and in writing (Carlson, 1997). These histories, then, guide Stó:lō responsibility to the land as they point to wisdom required to exercise responsibility in the lived experience of history.

A recent example of how sqwélqwel inform Stó:lō responsibility to the land came following the catastrophic flood on the Sumas Prairie in 2021 that I discussed above. In particular, the way Stó:lō foundational teachings in sxwōxwiyám (origins) inform practices of responsibility relayed in sqwélqwel (history) is example of how Stó:lō knowledge of origins and history interrelate to guide responsibility. The foundational Stó:lō teaching is that "great floods have happened in the Lower Fraser historically as shown in the sxwōxwiyám/sx̌ ʷəx̌ ʷəyém, the way in which the floods were overcome were through hard lessons and collaboratively working together" (Finn et al., 2024). These foundational teachings in the great floods in sxwōxwiyám is then reflected in ways that Stó:lō communities learn from more recent history through sqwélqwel, interacting with the stories passed down from previous generations that guide how they relate to the land and water in Stó:lō Téméxw today. The way Sumas First Nation responded to the 2021 flood is an example of how sqwélqwel are formative stories for Stó:lō communities.

Sumas First Nation is located at the base of Sumas Mountain, on the foothills at the edge of Sumas Prairie. The high ground of the foothills provides their community with access to both the mountain territory and flatlands, which historically included connection to the waters of

Sumas Lake (Reimer, 2018). When the floodwaters rose in November 2021, the Sumas community was mostly untouched as their location on the foothills of the prairie protected them from the rising waters. In various interviews during and after the crisis, Sumas First Nation Chief Dalton Silver told various stories of the importance of Sumas Lake for his community, often referring to stories of the lake as their primary source of food and transportation – the lake provided for them. Dalton also referenced teaching from Elders about where to locate their residences: "We had Elders that told us before that should this lake ... come back our homes would be OK. We knew the levels of the lake before (Gomez, 2021). In one interview, Chief Silver illustrated the responsibility inherent to Stó:lō views of the land: "Our perspective is that we should be looking after everything around us that looks after us, which means the salmon, the animals, everything else," he said. "We are the land and the land is us" (McSheffery, 2021). Connection to the land is part of Sumas identity; it is who they are.

Chief Silver's words highlight how sqwélqwel are Stó:lō literacy of land (Styres, 2019), knowledge and experience born out of the intimate connection to the land that is Stó:lō identity, and representing Stó:lō teaching amidst the complex realities of colonial history. These stories of connection to Sumas Lake that Chielf Silver repeatedly referenced in media appearances in 2021, illustrate the ways that sqwélqwel teaching inform Stó:lō responsibility to the land. In the case of Sumas First Nation, the wisdom from stories of Sumas Lake passed on by Elders and community members informed their location (i.e. in the foothills) and priorities such as exploring sustainable solutions to the environmental challenges facing all residents in Sumas Prairie (Olsen, 2022). There is wisdom in the example of sqwélqwel that is relevant for educators in Stó:lō Téméxw seeking to practice responsibility to the land as part of curriculum and pedagogy.

6.1.1 Curriculum Considerations: Narrative Research

Educators in Stó:lō Téméxw seeking to develop curriculum and pedagogy that attends to the literacies of land (Styres, 2019) requires the recognition of Stó:lō historical knowledge, represented by sqwélqwel, within the broader narratives of Stó:lō Téméxw history and culture. By recognition, however, I do not just mean additional historical accounts of Stó:lō Téméxw history that includes Stó:lō sqwélqwel. While certainly the appropriate inclusion of sqwélqwel is part of what is necessary, such consideration can go beyond the knowledge transmitted by sqwélqwel and engage the role of narrative and experiential knowledge in curriculum more broadly, a practice that offers important lessons for educators seeking to respect Stó:lō responsibility to the land within curriculum.

The formative role of sqwélqwel has similarities with narrative approaches to curriculum research. Attentiveness to the stories of place is a form of narrative research in curriculum development that relates to what curriculum theorist Leah Fowler (2006) describes as "a critical philosophical and analytical process of interpretation and thought at the tensioned site of self in the reflexive praxis of teaching and curriculum studies" (p. 148). This approach to narrative research, Fowler (2020) elaborates elsewhere, "helps us sequence and make sense of what we learn. It connects character, setting, plot, point of view, symbolism, and theme; it cultivates contextual knowledge and wisdom within the larger project of education" (p. 135). Specific questions emerge that guide how narrative can inform pedagogy: "Who is in your classroom? What are their stories? What would 'light up' their curiosity and care? What is on their minds, hearts, texts, media? These questions invite narrative study as a mode of effective pedagogy" (Fowler, 2020, p. 136).

As narratives of history and experience that inform life in the present, sqwélqwel have parallels to these directions in narrative research by inviting educators and students to situate themselves within the stories they are engaging and reflect on how this experience is a way of recognizing that these stories are "an authentic mode of meaning-making, a way to know and participate in the world more fully" (Fowler, 2020, p. 137). For educators in Stó:lō Téméxw, then, sqwélqwel can contribute to practices of narrative inquiry in which the narrative history intersects with the narratives of experience. Generative questions educators can ask are: What are the stories of past and present history and experience that get told in a place that inform practices of responsibility in that place? And, how are these stories explored within curriculum?

I will share an example from my own teaching in Stó:lō Téméxw. In teaching an interdisciplinary course on Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw, I experimented with storytelling that introduced the juxtapositions between different historical accounts (Pinar, 2006b), a way to respond to the invitation to tell new stories for better understanding and responding to the legacy of settler colonialism (Donald, 2021). The process began with my own reflexive curriculum development in which I recognized that, to return to Fowler's (2006) description of narrative research, "I am both participant and observer and must consider in what ways I am complicit with all that emerges from the narratives" (pp. 148-149). Sitting within the complexities of both my social location and various perspectives and experiences of history in Stó:lō Téméxw, I developed two stories about an historical event that I shared with students.

The historical event I focused on was the draining of Sumas Lake I introduced earlier, a procees in which I engaged Stó:lō accounts of this history (i.e. sqwélqwel) to inform my curriculum research and subsequent pedagogy. My research process is its own narrative of discovery and self-reflection that began when I heard the late Stó:lō Elder, Ray Silver, share

stories of his life experience in Stó:lō Téméxw at a conference titled “Journey of Reconciliation: Listening to Indigenous Elders.”

Having grown up in the area, I was intrigued by Silver’s accounts of Stó:lō perspectives on what was familiar history to me. Or so I thought. I was jolted out of the comfort of my familiarity with Stó:lō Téméxw history when Silver mentioned the devastating impact on his community when Sumas Lake was drained to make way for agricultural development in what would become known as Sumas Prairie. “The lake was our farm,” Silver (2016) recalled, discussing the importance of the lake to sustain Stó:lō ways of life fishing and hunting. Silver continued his introduction to the event, offering a gracious welcome to participants, inviting us the see our gathering as one in which awareness of being on Stó:lō Téméxw was itself a practice of reconciliation. But these larger themes of reconciliation were not what stuck with me that day. It was Silver’s story of the draining of Sumas Lake.

“What did I just hear?” I thought to myself, realizing that Silver’s story was not the one I was familiar with. I grew up with the story that it was engineering genius that turned a boggy section of land into Sumas Prairie. I thought this land was the region’s pride for being some of the best farmland in the entire country and a significant source of socio-economic benefit. Looking back at the experience, I realize that in hearing Silver’s alternative account of history, I encountered what Fowler (2006) describes as “a tensioned site of self” (p. 148) as the familiarity of my understanding was confronted by the limits of my knowledge about Stó:lō history and experience. Hearing Silver’s sqwélqwel about Sumas Lake, then, was as much about the historical knowledge as it was about my unsettling experience of encountering that knowledge (Regan, 2010).

Reflecting on the experience of hearing Silver's stories, part of my discomfort was that I was embarrassed to admit that it was the first time I had heard about the fuller history of origins of Sumas Prairie, where settler socio-economic priorities were confronted by the devasting loss to Stó:lō connection to the land. I felt that I should have known better. I also lamented the fact that my own education had been so clearly tilted towards emphasizing the benefits of that historical event within settler society, which in my case included my own Mennonite heritage accounts of the event in which the rich agriculture land was viewed as part of God's blessing. I realize, however, how this experience was part of a necessary unsettling in myself and how I understood my work as an educator in this place. I was only just beginning to understand the "colonial ignorance" (Schaefli & Godlewska, 2019, p. 223) of my prior education and experience. The encounter with history was itself a moment of personal disruption and realization, something Paulette Regan (2010) emphasizes as important in decolonial education: "I emphasize the centrality of history and myth to settler truth telling about the past. Within this context, reconnecting reason and emotion – head and heart – is integral to an unsettling pedagogy" (p. 12). Regan's description resonates with how I remember hearing Silver's stories and being moved to view myself and connection to Stó:lō Téméxw in new ways. I was attending the event out of a desire to grow in my understanding of Stó:lō history and experience and participate in important practices of reconciliation. The historical knowledge of the sqwélqwel occurred within a posture of openness to learning and relationship with Stó:lō people and land. While I did not have the language to express myself in such ways at the time, I left the event with new realization of my experience as an educator in Stó:lō Téméxw to include "storied and journeyed connections of self-in-relationship—to each other, to our places, and to all of creation—as a central model for interpretation and meaning-making" (Styres, 2018, p. 28). I had

a new sense of responsibility for my work as an educator attentive to which stories I was telling and being told (Donald, 2021).

Following the event, then, I spent time learning more about the history of Sumas Lake through a combination of additional Stó:lō oral history (e.g. Point Bolton & Daly, 2013) and settler accounts (e.g. Cameron, 1997; Reimer, 2018). This learning provided a more comprehensive retelling of that period of time and its subsequent implications for Stó:lō Téméxw as a community. I wish had encountered Dwayne Donald's work at that time, but in hindsight I can understand why his emphases on unlearning and relationality in curriculum and pedagogy research has resonated so strongly with me. Addressing the importance of getting beyond only teaching *about* Indigenous peoples within curriculum, Donald (2021) notes, "To make progress on these divisive issues, educators must be willing to experiment with curricular and pedagogical approaches that provoke their students to engage in such topics in qualitatively different ways" (p. 61). This was my desire for including the history of Sumas Lake within curriculum, to facilitate an experience for students in which encountering the contrasting accounts in history would provide space for "complicated conversations…conversation with oneself (as a 'private' person) and with others threaded through academic knowledge, an ongoing project of self-understanding in which one becomes mobilized for engagement in the world" (Pinar, 2012, p. 47).

The next step in my journey involved developing this curriculum in ways that would provoke students to examine the fuller history of Sumas Prairie and to consider implications of this complicated history within the context of the course and their own lives. The following, then, are the two stories that I shared with students as part of a lecture on the complexity of

history in Stó:lō Téméxw and which I later included in a chapter titled “The practice of storytelling: Indigenous-settler relationships in Cascadia” (Warkentin, 2021):

Story #1: The Creation of Sumas Prairie

A growing population of Europeans were settling in British Columbia’s Fraser Valley in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. With population growth came the need for land and agriculture to house and support the growth. The ingenuity of engineers and farmers, along with the political will of national and provincial leaders, led to the decision to drain and dike what was then known as Sumas Lake, a boggy stretch of water stretching up to 25 kilometers in length in the space between Sumas Mountain and Vedder Mountain. The place was seen as unusable land, a waste of space really.

The hard-working Settlers, many of whom were Dutch-Reformed and Mennonite Christians, applied their skills with diligence and experience in developing what is now known as the Sumas Prairie, a place of enormous economic wealth. Many people have benefited from the creation of Sumas Prairie in developing and sustaining a way of life for nearly one hundred years. For my own ancestors who were Mennonite Christians fleeing war-torn Europe, the opportunity to apply their agricultural prowess and exercise their values of financial stewardship was seen as nothing short of a blessing from God in this new land, a blessing of riches that continues to this day.

This first account makes a lot of sense from a Settler-Christian worldview, often influenced by a blending of economic pragmatism and theological justification. The land is for people to use for their benefit. And as some Bible translations describe the creation mandate in Genesis 1:28 (NIV), humans are to “rule” over the earth and “subdue” it. In

draining Sumas Lake, a wild wetland was subdued. The land has served people and society for decades now. Any resulting hardship was the cost of socio-economic progress.

Story #2: The Loss of Sumas Lake

The Stó:lō people – "People of the River" – have always lived in relationship with the Fraser River and the surrounding wet lands. Salmon have been a source of sustenance for the Stó:lō people for thousands of years. Prior to population increase, Sumas Lake was a central hub for sustaining their way of life both in salmon production and for transportation. As the late Stó:lō Elder, Ray Silver, recounted, "The lake was our farm." When the Stó:lō people were not fishing, the lake was used for transport in hunting deer and water fowl. This lake was part of the blessing from Creator in sustaining life in the world. Several generations ago, however, Sumas Lake was taken away by the settler newcomers and the Stó:lō people were forced into small isolated areas, several of which no longer have access to the precious water source so essential to their way of life. For example, the Sumas Band reservation located in Kilgard at the base of Sumas Mountain once sat as lakefront property. With the loss of Sumas Lake, however, what was once a blessing became the curse of a loss of a way life. The Stó:lō people are still dealing with the negative consequences of this reality to this day.

This second story makes sense from an Indigenous perspective. For Indigenous people, social or economic progress is not linear but relational; more farmland and more money are not the goal. Draining Sumas Lake, therefore, does not equal harmony with the land and one another. In fact, it is quite the opposite. The lost connection to the river was not just the loss of a food source but a disconnection from a fundamental part of their identity. The "People of the River" lost their river. (pp. 16-17)

I would read these stories to the class, including images of Sumas Lake and Sumas Prairie to illustrate the contrasting experiences of the geographical realities of the historical event. As a form of what Rice et al. (2020) propose as "settler self-interrogation," I told these two short stories to introduce students to the historical complexity within a place, and to challenge the mostly settler students to "reckon with their relationships with Indigenous peoples and their accountabilities as beneficiaries of settler colonization" (p. 10). Class discussion involved initial reactions, questions, and reflection on ways that learning this fuller history of Stó:lō Téméxw could inform how each of us understood our own role in this place. Like my own encounter with Ray Silver's sqwélqwel, this exercise was unsettling for some students, particularly those who lived and worked on farms in the Sumas Prairie, many having grown up in the area or having ongoing familial connections to the agricultural presence there. But in the discomfort, critical reflection also led to conversations about settler responsibility and local connection to Stó:lō people and land.

In cases where educators are including specific sqwélqwel they have heard or read, it is important to follow proper protocol. Because they are contextual to the person or community relating the stories, and part of Stó:lō oral tradition, educators need to consider their relationships with Stó:lō community when referring to specific sqwélqwel. Educators drawing from sqwélqwel do so in the protocols of relationship with Stó:lō Elders and communities who are the keepers of those histories. In academic research, such as I am doing here, this can involve oral footnoting as introduced to me in my conversation with Si:yémiya. Oral footnoting, he described, is a method of giving the correct source of reference to oral tradition within Stó:lō community, such as my reference to the late Ray Silver in the example above. In pedagogical practice, protocols of relationship can involve relationships with Stó:lō community members to provide

insight and accountability into how Stó:lō sqwélqwel are referenced. These practices of ethical relationality (Donald, 2009) invite a collaborative approach to curriculum that reflects the commitments of relationality within a Stó:lō paradigm for knowledge and history.

This example of hearing sqwélqwel that informed my own subsequent curriculum and pedagogy highlights the way narrative combines knowledge and experience in ways that can foster the type of responsibility that sqwélqwel are intended to inspire. Sqwélqwel themselves, however, are also connected to the important role of Stó:lō language in representing and experience Stó:lō culture and history. The next section, then, outlines how Halq'eméylem is another way that Stó:lō practice responsibility to the land.

6.2 The Importance of Language: Halq'eméylem

Another way of life that fosters Stó:lō responsibility to the land is language. Halq'eméylem, the upper river dialect of Halkomelom of the Coast Salish peoples, reflects the unique characteristics of Stó:lō Téméxw, connecting language and land in direct ways. Engaging the importance of Halq'eméylem for Stó:lō communities is a way for educators to better understand how practices of responsibility to the land are integrated into everyday experiences, such as language.

I like how one of my colleagues, Stó:lō educator and curriculum developer Senóqw'iye Leanne Joe (2024) described the importance of Halq'eméylem for Stó:lō during a language workshop: "You can't understand land apart from language." Referencing the wisdom of Halq'eméylem speaking Elders, Senóqw'iye teaches about how words and phrases have geographical significance and describe the nuances of Stó:lō relational connection to the land. By better knowing this connection, Senóqw'iye teaches that all residents of Stó:lō Téméxw, including settlers, can practice responsibility in relational ways. Senóqw'iye's approach reflects

a view of language as unique and important source of knowledge (Battiste & Henderson, 2009). The two stories above about Sumas Lake reflect ways that language inform differences between Stó:lō and settler experience of that history. Settler religious language describing relation to the land as a "blessing from God" on which they could "rule" over the earth contrasts with a Stó:lō description in Halq'eméylem: *S'ólh Téméxw te íkw'élò. Xólhmet te mekw' stám ít kwelát* ("This is our land. We have to look after everything that belongs to us"). The nuances of language bring insights into how people interpret and respond to experience, illustrated by the drastically different experiences of the draining of Sumas Lake for settler and Stó:lō communities. The loss of language due to settler policies and programs, such as the assimilation practices of residential schools, is a significant reason why the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) concluded that the devastation experienced by Indigenous children, including the loss of language, was cultural genocide. The loss of language was the loss of cultural identity. An important step towards ethical relationality in curriculum development, then, is to consider ways to respectfully include Indigenous languages. Learning about the importance of Halq'eméylem within Stó:lō knowledge and practice and beginning to learn Halq'eméylem words and phrases has been part of my own journey of connection with Stó:lō people and land. The following discussion of Halq'eméylem in curriculum reflects some of this journey.

Here I reflect on the way Halq'eméylem informs a Stó:lō worldview of connection to the land, which in turn, guides practices of responsibility to the land. Experience with the formative nature of Halq'eméylem within curriculum, I suggest, can be a way to learn from how Stó:lō communities practice responsibility to the land through language.

6.2.1 Halq'eméylem and Stó:lō Worldview

Stó:lō educator and expert in language revitalization Ethel Stelómethet Gardner (2004) explains the Stó:lō connection between land and language in the context of her research:

> I began to develop an understanding of a Stó:lo world view, or Riverworld view, by examining how Halq'eméylem expresses best the Stó:lo's relationship to the land, to S'ólh Téméxw, discovering how we, our word, and our world blend intimately and spiritually. (p. 135)

By expressing Stó:lō identity in relationship to the land in ways that English or other languages cannot do, Halq'eméylem teaches about Stó:lō worldview. Yet a significant part of the ongoing legacy of colonialism in Stó:lō Téméxw is the endangered status of Halq'eméylem amongst Stó:lō people (Fraser Valley Current, 2022b). Currently, there is only one fluent Halq'eméylem speaker, Elizabeth Siyamiyateliyot Phillips (Hardman, 2024; Kennedy, 2022). Within a Canadian context, the near-extinction of Halq'eméylem is not uncommon for Indigenous languages within the dominant settler cultural landscape of Canada (Alfred, 2009). In the account of the history of residential schools, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) provided extensive records of the ways that Canada’s residential school system was designed to eliminate Indigenous identity and culture, with the removal of Indigenous languages as a primary tool for that elimination. Recognizing the importance of Halq'eméylem for sustaining Stó:lō knowledge and culture has inspired Stó:lō communities to focus on Halq'eméylem revitalization amidst the challenges of language loss due to colonization.

Stó:lō communities have established various language revitalization programs for the purpose of sustaining the vital link between language and land, a recognition that restoring language can be a way of restoring Stó:lō knowledge and culture in connection to the land. These

programs have been centered within Stó:lō communities, such as the Stó:lō Shxwelí Halq'eméylem Language Program (2024), in which the focus is on “securing the use of the Halq'eméylem language for our future generations.” Digital resources have also been developed to help preserve and educate in Halq'eméylem (e.g. Digital Sq’éwlets and FirstVoices). Extending beyond Stó:lō community programs, Halq'eméylem revitalization has become part of the public K-12 programs in school districts in Stó:lō Téméxw (Abbotsford, Mission, and Chilliwack) as well as through Halq'eméylem university courses at the University of the Fraser Valley and Simon Fraser University.

For educators in Stó:lō Téméxw, understanding and engaging the important role of Halq'eméylem for Stó:lō knowledge and culture is a way to support Stó:lō communities, while also fostering relationship to the land in all residents. Including respectful use of Indigenous languages within the places of education is a repeated emphasis in decolonial and Indigenizing approaches to education and curriculum. As the influential Indigenous educator Gregory Cajete (1994) was already noting decades ago, language is foundational within for Indigenous education to reflect and embody Indigenous wisdom and experience. The late Michael Marker (2011) emphasized Indigenous language revitalization in his research on Indigenous knowledge and experience within education:

> As Indigenous communities begin to reclaim lost cultural space, there is an advancing focus on the revival of Indigenous languages as a centerpiece for curriculum development. Stories that feature the pre-contact worldview and the places within the Coast Salish territory are being used with language education that emphasizes traditional ecological knowledge. (p. 204)

These observations invite educators to support Halq'eméylem revitalization in Stó:lō Téméxw both in the language programs and in engaging Halq'eméylem within curriculum itself. As Stó:lō educator Dr. Lolehawk Laura Buker (2012) asserts,

> The Stó:lo language has always been in constant motion and is still evolving even through these years of decline of use and formality. How much richer would education curriculum be in content and pedagogy if Halq'eméylem would be included in place-based learning? The study of history, biology, botany, forestry, geography, geology, literature, mathematics and the arts hold unexplored interdisciplinary approaches to knowledge building and reflection when the Indigenous diversity of land, environment, language and oral histories are in the framework of the curriculum. (pp. 58-59)

In my experience, Halq'eméylem is becoming more and more common in curriculum in Stó:lō Téméxw, particularly with land acknowledgements in courses and lectures, along with Stó:lō community members and Elders contributing to course activities, often including Halq'eméylem in their teaching. I know at the University of the Fraser Valley, there have also been steps to include Halq'eméylem words and phrases in the university's official documents, such as the most recent strategic plan, called "Íyáqáwtxw" in Halq'eméylem, which translates to "House of Transformation" (University of the Fraser Valley, 2021). But where these examples have become quite common, Buker's (2012) suggestion in the quote above points to additional ways that Halq'eméylem can be included in curriculum. Where is there opportunity to include Halq'eméylem in curriculum beyond the common examples of land acknowledgements, Stó:lō visitors, and official institutional documents?

In many ways, this question can only be answered within the particular contexts of curriculum and experience, particularly when it comes from educators' practices of local

connection to Stó:lō people and land as part of a commitment to ethical relationality (Donald, 2009). Including Halq'eméylem in my own curriculum research has been an important part of my process of relational connection with Stó:lō Téméxw, helping inform creative ways to foster responsibility to the land in my work. Planning for work-integrated learning training curriculum has been one area where Halq'eméylem has brought wise insights into how it can be a context for practicing responsibility within Stó:lō Téméxw. Here I share briefly about my experience of how Halq'eméylem has informed my curriculum development in generative and relational ways.

6.2.2 Curriculum Considerations: Teaching Responsibility in Work-integrated Learning

Part of my responsibility as a co-op education (co-op) coordinator is to help plan and teach the work placement preparation course, a series of modules and workshops designed to equip students for a full-time semester of work-integrated learning. In these preparatory workshops, co-op programs commonly focus on individual career skill development, preparing application documents (e.g. resume and cover letter), job search strategies, and lessons in professional practice. There is typically a separate orientation for co-op employers on the expectations for supervision focused on supporting individual students' career development. Missing in this typical co-op orientation, however, is critical reflection on the purpose of work itself. I return to Grand Chief Clarence Pennier's observations about education and work that should give back to the community and the land; education that fosters a sense of social responsibility that is part of personal career development. This Stó:lō teaching challenges the neoliberal assumption that the main purpose of education is to create workers that can contribute to capitalist economies (J. Johnston, 2011). Imagining an alternative approach to co-op that fosters social responsibility relates to movements in professional education that focus on educating for the public good, what educational researcher Alison Taylor (2022) summarizes as

the formation of “socially conscious professionals…committed and morally involved in their work” (p. 423). Raising the topic of social responsibility in co-op, I hope, will invite students to grapple with the tensions that inevitably arise at the intersection of career development and social responsibility in society. To implement these directions as part of the co-op orientation training, I am working with colleagues to explore ways for students to address and respond to these tensions in co-op, such as additional reflection assignments, conversation with other co-op students, and events with employers who have wrestled with these topics in their own professional experiences. I am also drawn to the formative role of Halq'eméylem in Stó:lō teaching, which has led to an idea for the co-op orientation activities.

Within the co-op preparation course, I am considering the addition of an interactive presentation on the Halq'eméylem word xwelítem, which as I explained in Chapter 5, translates into English as “hungry one” (Hardman, 2024, p. xx). This activity would be oriented around the understanding that language is a form of contextual knowledge in which the learning about a particular topic or place can be deepened and in which ethical relationality can be practiced when local Indigenous language is experienced within curriculum.

The purpose of this presentation would be to teach students how Stó:lō communities have perceived settlers and settler society in history, and then invite them to practice reflexive engagement in making connections with these perceptions of xwelítem as part of developing responsible workplace practices during a co-op work term. To prepare this activity I would draw on my own learning in reading about the history of the term, such as settler research Robyn Heaslip’s (2017) work suggesting that the concept of xwelítem can be an important concept to inform practices of reflexivity with Stó:lō people and land. I would also include my learning about the concept from the research conversations I have had with Stó:lō individuals.

Learning the history of xwelítem has highlighted ways that settlers hungered for land and resources in Stó:lō Téméxw, repeatedly taking advantage of Stó:lō hospitality (Carlson, 1997). Stó:lō gifts and trade, such as fish and fur, nourished settlers during the period of initial contact, which then extended to land as settlers began to establish a more permanent presence through land allotments and the growth of an agricultural economy. In my conversation with Si:yémiya I asked him how xwelítem, a term that originated in the period of initial contact between Stó:lō communities and settlers, has been understood up until the present day. He noted that it has always represented how Stó:lō have viewed settlers and their relationship to the land. Settlers have repeatedly shown up to take from Stó:lō people and land for themselves, first with food, but continuing into the present time with resources and land itself. Xwelítem, Si:yémiya concluded, still fits to describe settlers.

The question I was left with from our conversation was whether settlers are aware of these tendencies to show up in a place and consume land and resources for themselves. In line with the decolonial directions that Natalie Avalos (2023) describes as part of "unsettling settler ecologies" (p. 1), I see a need to incorporate interrogation of colonial patterns within work-integrated learning such as co-op. To that end, I envision a conversation with co-op students on the characteristics of xwelítem as a way to practice such interrogation. Against the historical backdrop of xwelítem describing Stó:lō views of settler exploitative consumption, there are a few questions I would invite students to consider: How do you think the concepts of xwelítem impact society and your own life? How does this awareness inform how you will approach your job and career? And for upper-level students who have already reflected on these initial questions, a few more questions could deepen engagement: Where do xwelítem tendencies show up in your

industry? Where do they show up in requirements of your job? And lastly, what are some possible ways you could approach your work in different ways?

As part of incorporating unlearning into curriculum (Donald, 2022) these questions would provide no shortage of discussion on how interrogating settler assumptions complicates and disrupts common approaches to work-integrated learning (J. Johnston, 2011; Taylor, 2022). Yet because employers are also educators in co-op, their involvement needs to be considered. What role and responsibility do employers have to teach in these directions, especially if they did not receive the same education themselves? Likewise, how do students raise these questions in contexts where most employers are operating their businesses within the very capitalist economy that this xwelítem activity is interrogating? What are the implications for students' relationship to their employers? These questions highlight a gap I have noticed in decolonization and Indigenization in higher education more broadly. These unsettling directions within the university are often not paralleled by unsettling in community partners outside of the university, particularly in industry and professional partnerships. In co-op, I wonder what a parallel education on the concept of xwelítem could look like to equip employers to support students? While I have not yet answered this question, a first step could involve the co-op program consulting with Xwexwílmexwawt, the university's office for Indigenization, and the office for community engagement that oversees the university's external partnerships. Getting their insights into how these tensions are understood and experienced in the broader context of the university and its community partnerships could provide important direction for how co-op programming could begin engaging employers in ways that support the student experiences of decolonial directions in the curriculum. No doubt, this idea is a daunting one in practice as it names complexities of decolonization and higher education in a Canadian context that while

beyond the scope of this study, are certainly relevant to the possible directions this curriculum example could go.

Beyond the critical reflections of learning from the concept of xwelítem, I also see opportunity to reflect on how the concept can foster practices of relationality in work-integrated learning. Here my conversation with Q'um Q'um Xiiem about the term xwelítem has been thought-provoking. Q'um Q'um Xiiem asked me if the notion of hunger in xwelítem can be viewed positively within the context of education. Is there a positive perspective on settler hunger? I have been ruminating on that idea ever since our conversation. I wonder, what if the hunger of xwelítem can be an image for the pursuit of knowledge and experience within education, a journey of personal discovery and relational connection that can include receiving the gifts of Stó:lō wisdom in Stó:lō Téméxw, but doing so in way that honours Stó:lō people and land? This direction reflects Kuokkanen's (2007) description of the "logic of the gift" (p. 2), an approach to education rooted in Indigenous conceptions of "reciprocity, a sense of collective responsibility, and reverence toward the gifts of the land" (p. 23). I wonder, can work-integrated learning, such as co-op, guide students to view their work in relational ways to practice respect and reciprocity with the people and land they are interacting with? It is common for co-op students to focus on gaining relevant work experience in their field of study. It is a process of self-discovery, networking, and skill development through the hands-on work experience. The best type of placements are ones in which students have a supportive supervisor and work environment in which they are open to receive the wisdom of their supervisors and discover how the gift of their knowledge and skills can contribute to responsible engagement in their work. In these circumstances, there is a reliance on others that work-integrated learning placement requires for success, not unlike the settler reliance on Stó:lō knowledge and hospitality in the

historical context of xwelítem. In my learning about Stó:lō approaches to education at the University of the Fraser Valley (Andrews & Joe, 2024), the journey of learning is relational and experiential, where a posture of respect to Elders and community members fosters an openness to receive the gift of their wisdom as fundamental to developing one's own gifts. Through my research conversations with Si:yémiya and Q'um Q'um Xiiem, my understanding is that before Stó:lō communities knew about the possessive impulse of the initial European settlers, this was the assumption that Stó:lō communities were operating from when they extended hospitality and support to the newcomers. This picture of relational learning as an encounter of hospitality offers an alternative approach to xwelítem relationships, an approach where hunger can be satisfied in respectful ways that align with Stó:lō responsibility and connection to the land. Returning to my idea for reflexive discussion, this second part would include the following questions: How does the image of hunger describe your expectations for learning during your work term? What knowledge and skills do you hope to develop in your learning from others and the land? What practices of respect can you include with others and the land during your work term? How does this positive image of hunger inform how you approach your job and career?

This is one idea to include Halq'eméylem within one area of my own curriculum responsibilities. It is an example, however, that I hope can spark creative ways of engaging Halq'eméylem appropriately in any discipline. Reflection on an important Halq'eméylem term in the context of Stó:lō relationship and wisdom can lead to imagining alternative ways of relating that address the complexity of Indigenous-settler relationships today, and can do so in a way that honours Stó:lō language as a fundamental way of fostering responsibility in Stó:lō Téméxw.

The conversation so far on sqwélqwel and Halq'eméylem points to community experiences of Stó:lō ways of being and knowing informing responsibility to the land. A

common practice of community experience in which both sqwélqwel and Halq'eméylem is shared is in Stó:lō ceremony, the topic I turn to now.

6.3 Responsible Together: Stó:lō Ceremony

The importance of sqwélqwel and Halq'eméylem in fostering Stó:lō identity and responsibility to the land are also part of the practices of Stó:lō ceremony, another way Stó:lō communities and families sustain relation to one another and to the land. As important gatherings that honour Stó:lō teaching and culture and facilitate connection and responsibility to the land, understanding the role of Stó:lō ceremony for fostering relationships provides insight into the dynamics of Stó:lō community while also giving important guidance for educators in Stó:lō Téméxw seeking to follow the protocols of ethical relationship (Donald, 2009).

Stó:lō ceremonies are varied, both in type and location. Potlatches, naming ceremonies, winter dances, and First Salmon ceremonies are just a few of the examples of Stó:lō people gathering to honour their connection to the land and their ancestors. Because ceremony is a community practice for Stó:lō people in which no recording of any kind is allowed (Carlson, 1997), I will not describe the details of Stó:lō ceremonies that I have experienced. Non-Stó:lō people are permitted to participate if invited or the event is public, but they are expected to follow the same protocols so that each ceremony can retain its unique context and practice that reflects the people and land. Here, then, I focus on a brief description of the general characteristics of Stó:lō ceremony that apply to various kinds of Stó:lō ceremony. I then consider how Stó:lō ceremony protocol has implications for curriculum research in Stó:lō Téméxw.

My understanding through reading Stó:lō accounts and discussing with my research participants is that Stó:lō ceremony is a gathering that reflects Stó:lō values of relationship and generosity with one another and the land. In her dissertation on Indigenization within higher

education, Stó:lō educator Shirley (Swelchalot Shxwha:yathel) Hardman (2024) describes the rhythms of ceremony:

> Ceremony is an important aspect of Stó:lō life. I feel like the early government people knew this and it is why there was a Potlatch ban. We gather all winter as community and multiple communities...when we are all in one place and gathering at the longhouse. We have ceremony to mark important events in our lives: naming, marriage, honouring and death. (p. 189)

In gathering to commemorate these significant seasons in Stó:lō life and community, certain protocols guide the focus of each gathering. These protocols inform the location (e.g. longhouse), the role of hosts in providing hospitality to participants, and the honour and responsibility of speakers and witnesses in representing Stó:lō teaching during the specific "work" (Carlson, 1997, p. 184) of a specific ceremony. And like sqwélqwel and Halq'eméylem, these gatherings orient Stó:lō people around practices of connection and responsibility to land. Discussing the First Salmon ceremony, Buker (2012) notes this formative aspect of Stó:lō ceremony: "The First Salmon ceremony reflects an indigenous epistemology towards a basic truth: sharing is a value, a personal commitment to sustaining a community and a cultural resilience" (p. 83).

It is important to pay attention to proper protocols for Stó:lō ceremony. For non-Stó:lō and settler educators in particular, it is important to participate in Stó:lō ceremony respectfully and ethically. Here educators looking to connect with Stó:lō communities need to resist the ways in which curriculum research can become a form of settler consumption of Stó:lō traditional practices (L. T. Smith, 2012). Stó:lō ceremony is not simply knowledge or experience, though it includes that. Rather, Stó:lō ceremonies, as the quotes from Hardman (2024) and Buker (2012)

note above, are about relationship and responsibility. For educators seeking to engage Stó:lō ceremony in curriculum, then, attending a ceremony has to be more than a learning objective, accumulation of knowledge, or place-based pedagogical strategy. Instead, what I learned in my research conversations with Si:yémiya and Grand Chief Clarence Pennier, Stó:lō protocol invites relational connection to Stó:lō communities that can still involve participation, but participation that emerges in the context of relationship (e.g. personal invitation; open to the public). Settler researcher Robyn Heaslip (2017), in describing her own experience of being invited to participate in a Stó:lō First Salmon ceremony, emphasizes the importance of relationship with Stó:lō communities in the process:

> Many have come to walk towards a spiritual reconnection with the land and an understanding of ourselves, through relationships with Stó:lō and other Indigenous people. In our collective experiences, Stó:lō people have been deeply generous and open to including us in ceremony, in land-based practices, and in growing everyday relationships in which we are offered a context in which to learn from within a Stó:lō-centred perspective. These relationships have shaped us in subtle and significant ways, sharing love, friendship and mutual support. There is no one moment, teaching or experience; rather, through relationships, we come to participate in the sacredness of life, in actions of respect, reciprocity and reverence with the land and with each other." (p. 228)

Heaslip's description of relationships that emerge over time illustrates how educators can approach connection to the land with Stó:lō communities in ways that practice ethical relationality (Donald, 2009).

6.3.1 Curriculum Considerations: Showing Up

In my work with co-operative education (co-op) at the University of the Fraser Valley, while still in the early stages, I have begun the process of relational connection by responding to invitations to spend time getting to know the university's Stó:lō Elders as well as participating in various Stó:lō ceremonies and events hosted in partnership with the university. The encouragement I got from Grand Chief Clarence Pennier in our conversation during my research has stuck with me: if it is a public event or you have been invited, show up. Go to Stó:lō public gatherings and community events. Respond to invitations to attend ceremonies. Participate without an agenda and prioritize relationship. In her research on non-Indigenous educators who are actively participating in Indigenization, Hardman (2024) notes that it is the repeated presence of people at Indigenous events and other learning opportunities that stands out, a presence marked by "respect and reverence" (p. 82) in how they relate to Indigenous communities. In the context of co-op, then, I am in the stage of showing up and building relationships that has included meetings with Stó:lō Elders and Indigenous Student Centre staff. Conversation has included ways work-integrated learning relates to Indigenous student experiences at the university, which has included discussion about the many barriers that Indigenous students face when considering co-op and other forms of work-integrated learning. The conversation also noted some of the limits for students in co-op curriculum itself when it does not reflect the type of relational and socially-conscious experience that aligns with Indigenous students' culture and values. As I continue on this path of relational engagement with Stó:lō gatherings in my work at the university, I look forward to ways my relational connection with Stó:lō community members can inform my ongoing work in curriculum development.

In addition to how sqwélqwel, Halq'eméylem, and ceremony, there are also ways that Stó:lō people exercise connection and responisiblity to the land in their everyday lives, often through subsistence practices. While there are many such practices, such as hunting, gathering berries, and cedar weaving, one practice that I understand to be especially important for Stó:lō responsibility to the land is fishing.

6.4 The Responsibility of Fishing

In Halq'eméylem, Stó:lō means "river," and as such, Stó:lō are known as the "People of the River" (Sq'éwlets First Nation, 2016c). A significant part of this identity in relation to water is how Stó:lō have practiced responsibility to the land through fishing, a practice that has been fundamental to Stó:lō culture since time immemorial. As the following discusses, understanding the role of fishing for Stó:lō responsibility to the land can be an example of integrative practice that educators in Stó:lō Téméxw can learn from.

Stó:lō Elder and fisherman, Ernie Crey, describes the significant role of salmon and fishing as follows:

> As a member of the Cheam Band, which is one of more than 20 Indian band communities that make up the nation of the Stó:lō people, my history tells me that salmon is the reason I am here. We are salmon people. The history of the salmon in this part of the world is my own people's history. The salmon, and the Fraser River, define who we are. We take our name from the word that we give the river: Stó:lō. Our history tells us that at the beginning of the world, salmon was given to the Stó:lō by Xa:ls, the creator and great Transformer. He taught us how to survive by maintaining a good relationship with salmon. He taught us how to fish for salmon, how to cook it, and how to look after it. (cited in Cameron, 1997, p. 140)

Fishing, as Crey describes, is a way for Stó:lō people to live responsibly in connection to the land. Throughout Stó:lō Téméxw, Stó:lō communities have fished using a variety of methods, such as nets, harpoons, and traps (Cameron, 1997b), with some estimates suggesting that pre-European contact, "fish and other marine proteins made up about 90 percent of the Stó:lō diet" (Smith, 2001, p. 120). Stó:lō have also adapted their fishing practices to adapt to the ebbs and flows of seasonal fish populations in order to sustain the various needs that fish provided for (e.g. ceremonial, trade, and food). Again, Ernie Crey captures the significance of Stó:lō fishing as a responsible practice: "For the First Nations, the right to harvest salmon has always carried with it moral and spiritual imperatives of stewardship and conservation, whether the salmon was harvested for social, ceremonial, or economic reasons" (cited in Cameron, 1997, p. 142).

With colonial settlement, however, came a decreasing freedom for Stó:lō to fish in their traditional ways. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Stó:lō fishing was viewed as a competitor to the commercial fisheries as the evolving colonial government of British Columbia and Canada sought to exercise control of industries in the emerging socio-economic context of Stó:lō Téméxw (Cameron, 1997b). For the past 100+ years, then, modern developments have impacted fish populations and thus Stó:lō responsibility to the land through fishing. Railway construction, dam development in various Fraser River tributaries, poor forestry practices, use of chemicals in agriculture, and urban land developments and land-use changes have all impacted the fish and Stó:lō access to them.

Stó:lō communities, therefore, have been calling for more contextual approaches to Fraser River fisheries that draw on local Indigenous knowledge, such as an in-river based fishery based on traditional Stó:lō and others methods. Fisheries biologist Vince Harper (1997) summarizes the situation as follows: "It seems ridiculous to invest millions of dollars in boats,

gear, and manpower to chase around fish that are going to return to the rivers anyway. The in-river supporters including the Stó:lō argue 'why not wait until the fish return and then harvest them?'" (p. 159).

Efforts have been made towards establishing Stó:lō fishing practices more prominently. For example, the Lower Fraser Fisheries Alliance (LFFA) is a multi-agency funded organization that exists to advocate for First Nations fishing rights in the Stó:lō Téméxw. The vision of the LFFA (2024) states, "The LFFA is a voice for the first Nations of the Lower Fraser River. We work collaboratively and holistically to manage our fishery and to support our cultural and spiritual traditions for future generations." The sense of Stó:lō responsibility to the land is evident in the LFFA (2024) Shared Values:

> Respect for the opinions, voices, experiences and culture of others.
>
> Our inherent rights to fish and manage the fishery.
>
> Trust, Honesty, Openness, and Reciprocity.
>
> Commitment to the sustainability of our fishery for 7 generations.
>
> Recognition of the connectivity of the ecosystem.
>
> Collaboration: "Fishers working together" - Sq'eptset Syoyes Sth'o'th'eqwi. (under "Shared Values")

This Stó:lō approach to the practice of fishing combines strategic direction with Stó:lō wisdom and cultural values. Fishing is a practice of responsibility to the land, an extension of what it means to be Stó:lō and to live in connection to the land. In terms of implications for my curriculum research, how does fishing as a Stó:lō practice of livelihood and responsibility to the land inform curriculum seeking practices of unlearning and relationality?

6.4.1 Curriculum Considerations: Holistic Education

The integrative way that Stó:lō envision responsibility to the land in practices such as fishing challenges the common dualism in contemporary education. Fishing, for example, is such an integral part of Stó:lō identity that the practice itself is a way of expressing values and beliefs in tangible ways. In higher education curriculum or in local institutional contexts is there a way that theoretical knowledge, beliefs, and values can be experienced in a similar holistic way? Do academic disciplines have an equivalent to the Stó:lō practice of fishing that offers hands-on experience of the fundamentals in that field of study in a similar way to how fishing expresses the fundamental values of Stó:lō identity? How can definitions of work and career development be redefined in more holistic directions?

Similar to my curriculum reflections above, these are questions that each educator has to ask themselves for their own context. During a curriculum development workshop I participated in at UFV in my role with co-op curriculum (Andrews & Joe, 2024), Stó:lō educator and curriculum developer Senóqw'iye Leanne Joe noted to me the congruence between the experiences of work-integrated learning and Stó:lō ways of being and knowing. Stó:lō people learn practices of responsibility to the land, such as fishing, through mentoring and hands-on learning, which are also common aspects in work-integrated learning. The integrative of experience of mentoring and practice, then, is not just a means to end (i.e. career development) but an experience of relational connection within work that is an end in itself. A definition of work emerges that is fundamentally relational, inviting student practice and professional development to occur within the relationality of the work experience. Such a view challenges the common conceptions of work-integrated learning focused primarily on individualistic career development within contemporary society (J. Johnston, 2011).

In seeking to support connections between Stó:lō responsibility and areas of curriculum work I am part of, I realize that the value of relational experiential learning requires the ability to facilitate that experience in the first place. This observation raises another important question: just as Stó:lō communities have had to fight for their right to fish, what needs to be fought for in education to sustain the conditions for this type of learning?

I begin to answer this question recognizing that while Stó:lō responsibility to the land is evident in practices such as fishing, these practices are only possible if Stó:lō people are actually able to access the land of Stó:lō Téméxw. Practices of responsibility, then, need to be approached within the larger movements of Indigenous resurgence and self-determination. Stó:lō political efforts of self-determination in Stó:lō Téméxw, such as the LFFA mentioned above, highlight the connection between practices of responsibility and the politics of self-determination as I discuss now.

6.5 The Responsibility of Self-Determination

Indigenous self-determination refers to the ways that Indigenous people exercise their rights to the land and freedom to practice responsibility to the land in their own ways (Victor, 2012). This final section on Stó:lō responsibility to the land surveys Stó:lō self-determination as a political practice of responsibility to the land, including discussion on how Stó:lō approaches to self-determination challenge assumptions in the politics of recognition common within education. I begin by defining Indigenous self-determination generally, with a focus on how I understand Stó:lō self-determination.

Article 3 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) defines self-determination as follows: “Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue

their economic, social and cultural development" (United Nations, 2007, p. 4). While the ratification of UNDRIP in 2007 was a significant marker of support for Indigenous self-determination, Indigenous researcher and political scientist Jeff Corntassel (2008) echoes Glen Coulthard's (2007) critique of the politics of recognition. Within state political structures recognition of Indigenous identity is fraught with debate as their rights to self-determination are confined to political categories, such as definitions of nation states. As a result, self-determination is not able to achieve the type of independence for Indigenous people as it is intended; their freedom is still requires assimilation to colonial political structures. Instead, Corntassel (2008) proposes that

> in order to overcome the limitations of the rights discourse, new strategies are needed to shift Indigenous political mobilization efforts from rights to responsibilities. Additionally, Indigenous self-determination needs to be rearticulated on Indigenous terms as part of a sustainable, community-based process rather than as narrowly constructed political/legal entitlements. (p. 116)

Because of these limits of self-determination within the rights discourse of a politics of recognition, Corntassel (2008) suggests a "sustainability of self-determination in praxis," noting that "a process of Indigenous self-determination is more than a political/legal struggle – at its core are spiritual and relational responsibilities that are continuously renewed" (p. 117). This approach to self-determination aligns with how Stó:lō teaching and practice emphasize the interconnectedness of knowledge and practice, connection and responsibility to the land.

In her research on Stó:lō governance and self-determination, Stó:lō scholar Winona Victor reflects on Corntassel's proposal to inform her research on governance and self-

determination in Stó:lō Téméxw. Commenting on the implications of sustainable self-determination, Victor (2012) suggests,

> If Indigenous natural laws are used to guide the ways in which we relate to each other, our environment, and our natural resources then territory and our relationship to it is mainstream, not an afterthought or disconnection. Embedded within Indigenous laws are values of respect, moderation, inter-dependency, and individual autonomy that strengthen the wellbeing of the collective, preserve ancestral teachings and protect future generations. (p. 47)

Drawing on these directions in sustainable self-determination, Victor's research outlines the multifaceted nature of self-determination in Stó:lō Téméxw, involving personal engagement and resurgent politics. Speaking to the personal aspect of self-determination as an Indigenous person, Victor describes how,

> self-determination is in our individual ability to reject the colonists' power and control over us and to reject the colonialists' definition of who we are as Indigenous people, and encourages us to remember our ancestry, our cultural teachings and our sacred relationship to our Indigenous territories. In so doing we will find the strength to reject the colonists' attempts at assimilation and become a part of the spiritual revolution that is required to free our minds, hearts, and spirits of colonial indoctrination. (p. 47)

In Victor's (2012) research, then, she weaves stories and examples from her personal experience as Stó:lō. In addition to her personal engagement, Victor's research also points out how Stó:lō self-determination also involves resurgence, the return to traditional Indigenous governance as a way to counter the legacy of colonial governance structures. Victor (2012) summarizes this movement towards the resurgence of Indigenous governance: "Indigenous governance is

inextricably linked to Indigenous philosophies and values. Indigenous governance therefore is about respect, diversity, autonomy, balance and ultimately peaceful relationships that promote sustainability and movement of life" (p. 49). For Stó:lō communities, this type of resurgence rooted in Stó:lō Téméxw and Stó:lō ways of being and knowing has involved ongoing effort in self-determination in activities such as political activism and organization. In what follows, I consider two examples of Stó:lō self-determination that I think align with Victor's suggestion for resurgence rooted in Stó:lō ways of being and knowing.

6.5.1 Examples of Stó:lō Self-Determination

The first example is the Stó:lō Declaration, a political statement now nearly 50 years old that remains influential for Stó:lō expression of self-determination Stó:lō Téméxw (Schaepe, 2007). Prior to its development, Stó:lō communities spent decades fighting colonial land use all over the territory, but often in independent ways depending on the area and which Stó:lō community was impacted most. While the independence of Stó:lō communities remains a strong value, Stó:lō leaders and activists in the 1960's and 1970's realized that collective action could alleviate some of the burdens these communities were facing (Casey, 2019). The result was the creation of the Stó:lō Declaration, a statement of rights and title that captures Stó:lō connection and responsibility to the land in holistic and direct ways and which serves the purpose of directing how to approach land-use disputes with colonial governments. Combining Stó:lō worldview and political assertions, the declaration presents a clear statement for why and how Stó:lō view their responsibility to the land in the practices of governance in Stó:lō Téméxw. I provide the full text here to show how Stó:lō connection to land informs their responsibility to the land in political engagement:

STÓ:LŌ DECLARATION

We, the people of the Stó:lō Tribes know the Creator put us here.

The Creator gave us laws that govern all our relationships to live in harmony with nature and mankind.

The laws of the Creator defined our rights and responsibilities.

The Creator gave us our spiritual beliefs, our languages, our culture and a place on Mother Earth which provided us with all our needs.

We have maintained our freedom, our languages and our traditions from time immemorial.

We continue to exercise the rights and fulfill the responsibilities and obligations given to us by the Creator for the land upon which we were placed.

The Creator had given us the right to govern ourselves and the right to self-determination.

The rights and responsibilities given to us by the Creator cannot be altered or taken away by any other nation.

We, the people of the Stó:lō Tribes, openly and publicly declare and affirm to the people and government of Canada and British Columbia:

That the people of the Stó:lō Tribes have held and still hold aboriginal title, and aboriginal rights to all land and resources within our Tribal territory.

That the people of the Stó:lō Tribes have never reached any agreement or treaty with the governments of Canada and British Columbia concerning the occupation, settlement, sovereignty or jurisdiction over our land.

We, the people of the Stó:lō Tribes declare and affirm our inalienable right of aboriginal title and aboriginal rights to the land, the mountains, the minerals, the trees, the lakes, the

> rivers, the streams, the sea, the air and other resources of our land. We declare that our aboriginal title and aboriginal rights have existed from time immemorial, exists at the present time and shall exist for all future time.
>
> We, the people of the Stó:lō Tribes, declare that we shall do all in our power to see that the governments of Canada and British Columbia recognize in law and in practice, our aboriginal title and aboriginal rights. (Pennier, 1994)

This statement has informed subsequent Stó:lō self-determination by providing a foundation for Stó:lō teaching that can then be used as the basis for ongoing efforts of political engagement with responsibility to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw. The second example of self-determination, the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre (SRRMC), highlights how the legacy of the Stó:lō Declaration has informed self-determination as a practice of responsibility to the land.

The SRRMC is a multi-service agency that serves the primary purpose of stewarding Stó:lō heritage and environment in Stó:lō Téméxw. The first section of the Stó:lō Declaration that affirms Stó:lō connection to the land through presence and tradition bestowed on them since time immemorial, represents the work of SRRMC to protect Stó:lō heritage. This work is carried out through the caretaking of Stó:lō resources (e.g. archives, Material Culture Repository, publications), authoritative oversight of research and resource management, and participation in events and projects that support Stó:lō research and resource management throughout the territory. The work of SRRMC is then used to support efforts to uphold Stó:lō rights and title as expressed in the second half of the Stó:lō Declaration. Through archaeological and Geographical Information System (GIS) research, such as investigating unmarked graves at former residential school sites (CBC News, 2023), SRRMC provides important continuity between Stó:lō heritage

and present-day land-use claims. Where questions arise as to how particular issues reflect Stó:lō traditions, SRRMC provides answers to help guide Stó:lō claims to be made in ways that reflect their historical commitments. In summary, SRRMCS exists “to take care of and provide resources for the Stó:lō community that assist them in practicing values embodied in the saying ‘S'ólh Téméxw te íkw'élò. Xólhmet te mekw' stám ít kwelát’” (Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, 2016a).

The Stó:lō Declaration and the SRRMC are just two examples of how Stó:lō self-determination is understood and practiced in Stó:lō Téméxw. There are also other examples of political engagement, such as the S'ólh Téméxw Stewardship Alliance (STSA). The STSA (2024) is “a political body that guides engagement and consultation processes within S’ólh Téméxw” (para. 2). There are Stó:lō land claim negotiations with the Canadian government, such as the recently resolved claim by Matsqui First Nation over lost reserve land (Larsen, 2024). There are also socio-economic projects, such as the Cascade Skyline Gondola Project (2024) initiated by Cheam First Nation which highlights creative ways Stó:lō communities are involved in sustainable economic development. Considering these various examples, the question of how curriculum can support and engage Stó:lō self-determination is a challenging one, particularly in contexts where settler frameworks for knowledge have a legacy of ignoring, appropriating, rejecting, and/or displacing Indigenous communities and knowledge in education (Donald, 2012a). Returning to my discussion of different perspectives on the history of Sumas Lake, telling those competing stories was also a way to consider the complexities of Indigenous self-determination in curriculum as it required understanding diverse and at times competing perspectives on contentious topics within politics and economics in Stó:lō Téméxw. Ongoing

debates about the future of Sumas Prairie only highlight the ongoing complexity of Stó:lō-settler relations in this region (see Currie, 2024; Finn et al., 2024; Olsen, 2024).

When these types of complicated and contextual approaches to diverse knowledge and experiences are represented within curriculum, however, there is no guarantee that the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives will lead to changes in the systems of society and education. Considering Stó:lō self-determination, then, I turn now to consider how curriculum research requires understanding the limits within the common framework of a politics of recognition. I then reflect on two guiding questions I use in my own context to engage Stó:lō self-determination in ways that foster relationship and question settler assumptions.

6.5.2 Curriculum Considerations: Supporting Self-determination Beyond Recognition

How does Stó:lō self-determination inform curriculum seeking practices of unlearning and relationality in Stó:lō Téméxw? Here I suggest that the Stó:lō examples of self-determination invites educators to unlearn the limiting effects of a politics of recognition and the assumptions therein (Coulthard, 2007) by interrogating the oversimplified ways Stó:lō-settler history and relationships have been understood, including my different stories of Sumas Lake above. Alongside this critical engagement I also consider practices of relationality as a way to support Stó:lō self-determination within education.

6.5.2.1 The Limits of a Politics of Recognition in Education

Discussing how a politics of recognition limits Indigenous self-determination, Coulthard (2007) notes that “colonial powers will only recognize the collective rights and identities of Indigenous peoples insofar as this recognition does not throw into question the background legal, political, and economic framework of the colonial relationship itself” (p. 41). A challenge for educators engaging Indigenous self-determination within curriculum, then, are the assumptions

within the context of coloniality that often go unaddressed (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). Conceptions of the purpose of government, political structure, and land ownership often frame how people respond the land disputes between Indigenous communities and colonial governments. For example, when the Sumas First Nation outlined their territorial claim publicly in 2017 (Gawley, 2017), I can remember hearing comments from settler community leaders that went something like this: "Well, we're not going to return the land. We can't go back to what it was like before Europeans arrived, so what should we do with statements like this?" It is important to note how these assumptions impact Stó:lō efforts at self-determination because of the misconceptions embedded in them. The assumption that individual land ownership supersedes historical or social responsibility for colonial violence – i.e. "It's not my fault. I wasn't there!" – shuts down consideration for what responsibility can look like here in the present day. Additionally, responses like these also caricature Indigenous people and culture in vague, pre-contact imaginaries that assume calls for self-determination reject industry and innovation altogether. Missing in these responses is the acknowledgement that self-determination is calling for respect, reciprocity, and justice in the present reality (Corntassel, 2008). This means that while the past informs self-determination – especially important knowing Stó:lō values of interconnectedness with the past, present, and future – emphasis is on allowing the past to the inform responsibility in the present, not return to some idyllic vision of the past. For educators, then, a practice of unlearning invites examination on where these types of colonial assumptions are embedded in curriculum, and then understanding what Stó:lō communities mean by self-determination as a practice of responsibility to the land (Victor, 2012). This emphasis aligns with calls within land education research to address settler assumptions and support Indigenous self-

determination in ways that “explicitly address settler colonialism in relation to futurities of Indigenous land and life” (Tuck et al., 2014, p. 11).

6.5.2.2 Supporting Stó:lō Self-Determination in Curriculum

In my own curriculum development projects in Stó:lō Téméxw, specifically within co-operative education (co-op) I am part of at the time of this writing, I have begun the practice of asking myself two questions within the process of my work. First, how does this curriculum relate to current examples of Stó:lō self-determination? Second, what are the colonial assumptions embedded in this curriculum that are important to address in order to support the responsibility of self-determination beyond just the recognition of Stó:lō presence in Stó:lō Téméxw? These questions have invited me to connect with local Stó:lō communities, getting to know how they are practicing responsibility to the land through self-determination. Examples in my local community was the opening of the Sumas First Nation Kilgard Business Park (Abbotsford News, 2023) and the recent land claim settlement between the Matsqui First Nation and the Canadian government (Larsen, 2024). In the context of co-op curriculum, there is opportunity to develop partnership with these local First Nations to explore ways that student career development could support these areas of self-determination through community-based student employment opportunities. Engaging these Stó:lō expressions of self-determination is a way to support the move “towards local, Indigenous centered, responsibility-based movements” that Indigenous scholars are calling for (Corntassel, 2008, p. 122). A next step in my work will be to support Stó:lō self-determination by asking how Stó:lō communities envision work education and finding ways to support these directions in co-op curriculum.

This type of support for Stó:lō self-determination in curriculum can include practices of relationality. In her dissertation, Robyn Heaslip (2017) researches the topic of settler

responsibility in Stó:lō Téméxw by reflecting on the term xwelítem. Heaslip interviewed Stó:lō people to learn about their perspectives on expectations for positive relationships with settler people in Stó:lō Téméxw. Heaslip's findings highlight settler individuals and communities who have engaged openly and ethically in relationship with Stó:lō community, people who displayed a willingness to unsettle personally, communally, and institutionally. And then it was from this place of relational connection with Stó:lō people and land that Heaslip's research indicated how Stó:lō communities experienced the support and partnership with settler people in specific issues of self-determination such as land claims. A lesson for educators, then, is to not approach Stó:lō self-determination simply as an illustration within curriculum, but rather see it was a place of relational connection and ethical responsibility (Donald, 2009).

Alongside discerning potential partnerships and relational engagement, assessing colonial assumptions within curriculum has been an important part of curriculum research that includes Stó:lō self-determination and build relationships with Stó:lō community. In the case of co-op curriculum, here I have seen how the limits in a politics of recognition inform academic programming in my context. For example, there is a strong emphasis on supporting Indigenous student participation at the University of the Fraser Valley, yet Indigenous students are underrepresented in co-op. Guidance I have received from Stó:lō educators has involved assessing the structures of the program as a likely barrier to participation (e.g. funding, timing, types of available jobs, location). Focusing on Indigenous representation by itself risks accepting the framework of a politics of recognition, a framework that identifies Indigenous participation within the current structures of society, in this case co-op. Learning from my research about sustainable self-determination that centers Indigenous community, knowledge, and traditions (Corntassel, 2008) led to conversations with colleagues and Stó:lō educators on examining where

the structure of co-op itself may need reconsidering in everything from funding, to timing requirements, to the types of jobs available to students. These directions in co-op track with other recent research on needs-based approaches to work-integrated learning with Indigenous students (Nielsen et al., 2022). Where the current curriculum often emphasizes students' individual responsibility to navigate career development and increase employability, I am learning that Stó:lō emphases on community responsibility and relational education and career development are not always evident in the traditional curriculum structures of co-op education. While my learning is still early, the process of identifying these assumptions has been a rewarding experience of creative and relational curriculum development.

6.6 Conclusion

In shifting the focus to responsibility to the land for this section, this chapter reflected on ways Stó:lō responsibility to the land is understood and practiced. This involved consideration of sqwélqwel, Stó:lō stories of responsibility that are personal and historical accounts of Stó:lō experience that inform Stó:lō ways of being and knowing in everyday life. The formative role of story in sqwélqwel can provide a way for educators to include narrative research as part of curriculum development in Stó:lō Téméxw. The formative nature of story is sustained by Stó:lō language, Halq'eméylem, which reflects the interconnection within a Stó:lō worldview. Discussion included ways that Halq'eméylem can be included in curriculum, with the example of responsible approaches to work-integrated learning. Stó:lō ceremony was discussed with an emphasis on understanding the protocols of ceremony so that educators can relate ethically to Stó:lō community. Conversation about fishing as a fundamental practice of Stó:lō responsibility to the land highlighted the importance of integrative practice and relationality as an idea for educators that challenges common conceptions about work. The chapter concluded with

discussion of Stó:lō self-determination as the personal and political process of Stó:lō resurgence, a way to centre their traditional ways of being and knowing in the present. Examples of political engagement for responsibility include the Stó:lō Declaration and the work of the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre. The implications of Stó:lō self-determination for educators was to assess the assumptions within curriculum that are prone to perpetuate the limits of a politics of recognition, seeking instead to consider areas for change born out of relational connection. Examples from my ongoing work developing co-op education highlight possibilities for supporting Stó:lō self-determination that incorporate flexible structures and relational career education frameworks.

As I mentioned in the beginning of this section, responsibility to the land is not just a Stó:lō priority, but one in which all residents of Stó:lō Téméxw are invited to participate. Just as I discussed in the previous chapter, however, settler priorities have frequently been out of alignment with Stó:lō ways of being and knowing. The following chapter, then, shifts from Stó:lō responsibility to the land to exploring aspects of settler responsibility to the land, looking specifically at the influential role of Christianity as a relevant part of settler history in Stó:lō Téméxw.

Chapter 7: Settler Responsibility – Christianity and Impulse to Civilize

Growing up as a Christian in Stó:lō Téméxw, I can remember hearing at various points of my childhood a few different versions of the following: "God blessed us with this land." The sentiment was often expressed in the context of reflecting on the hardship my Mennonite ancestors experienced fleeing war-torn Russia in the early 1900's and finding safe haven first in the Canadian prairies before finding their way to Stó:lō Téméxw. The safety of this new land, and the opportunities it provided to sustain the Mennonite convictions for strict Christian devotion and religious community separated from mainstream society, was a viewed as a gift from God.

Over the decades of settlement in Stó:lō Téméxw many Mennonites acclimatized to modern socio-economic life, no longer practicing the type of separateness that had characterized the movement historically. Integration into business and politics went from being a principled hesitance and at times refusal in Europe, to a not-so hesitant embrace as wealth and influence increased for Mennonites in Stó:lō Téméxw. The impulse to remain separate remained to some degree, but for many, became ordered in ways similar to and influenced by American conservative evangelicalism (Kyle, 2017), a movement in the mid-20th century characterized by a rigid view of individual faith and morality that arose alongside larger cultural trends of North American individualism (Rojas, 2023). I researched this topic of individualism and Mennonites in my MA thesis (Warkentin, 2009). Many Christians in Stó:lō Téméxw, including my Mennonite community, were influenced by these trends to the point where values of North American suburbia (e.g. traditional family roles, home ownership, and financial independence) became intertwined with conceptions of religious devotion. In hindsight, then, I see how my

memories of hearing family and community members reflect on the land as God's blessing was a formative story of my Christian community, part of the settler literacy of the land on which I grew up (Styres, 2019).

The integration of religion and society, characteristic in the story of my own Mennonite Christian tradition, was formative in how Christianity was part of settlers' interaction with Stó:lō people and land. Where Stó:lō responsibility to the land is expressed in practices of relational connection within the locales of Stó:lō Téméxw, Christianity has exercised responsibility to the land as a pathway of religious devotion essential for establishing settler society in this place. From the earliest missionaries evangelizing Stó:lō communities, to the construction of Catholic and Protestant churches and residential schools as a physical presence of European religion, the settler foundations for possessiveness (Chapter 5) provided a context (i.e. land) to practice responsibility that combined the religious devotion of Christianity with the process of civilization that came with a growing settler society. In this chapter, I continue my experiment in investigating areas of relevant knowledge for higher education curriculum research in Stó:lō Téméxw by focusing my inquiry on the legacy of Christianity.

To interrogate the legacy of Christianity as part of settler civilization in Stó:lō Téméxw, I return to the categories in *Discovering Indigenous Lands: The Doctrine of Discovery in the English Colonies* (R. J. Miller et al., 2010):

> Religion was a significant aspect in the development and application of the Doctrine [of Discovery]. Under Discovery, non-Christian peoples did not possess the same human and natural law rights to land, sovereignty, and self-determination as Christian peoples. Indigenous peoples were assumed to have lost many rights upon their discovery by Christians…

> The European definition of civilization was an important part of Discovery and the idea of European superiority. Europeans thought that God had directed them to bring civilization, education, and religion to Indigenous peoples and to exercise paternalism and guardianship powers over them. (p. 8)

Looking specifically at early examples of missionaries and churches, I reflect on historical snapshots that represent this intersection of Christianity and civilization. In examining these aspects of the formative role of Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw, this chapter continues discussion on how the formative stories of land can support ways for educators to connect their curriculum and pedagogy to the particularities of place (Donald, 2020).

I begin with a brief discussion of how the foundational views of settler possessiveness discussed earlier have corresponding assumptions of settler superiority. I consider how an ethos of superiority, framed by a prioritizing of Western knowledge in settler society (L. T. Smith, 2012), was a central part of Christian missionaries, churches, and residential schools in Stó:lō Téméxw, highlighting a way of showing up on the land oriented around the integration of religion and civilization. Settler responsibility to the land, I am suggesting, prioritized conformity to Christianity and settler civilization that has resulted in a complex legacy in Stó:lō Téméxw that educators would do well to pay attention to. In discussing relevant history of these areas of Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw, I include reflection on examples for educators to connect this knowledge to curriculum and pedagogy as a way to experiment with the implications of this research for educational practice.

7.1 An Ethos of Superiority

> The nexus between cultural ways of knowing, scientific discoveries, economic impulses and imperial power enabled the West to make ideological claims to having a superior civilization. (Smith, 2012, p. 126)

Indigenous educational researcher Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) offers this observation in her influential book, *Decolonizing Methodology: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, a book that interrogates the colonial project in relation to research and education. Smith highlights ways colonialism asserts superiority by imposing a worldview on society that prioritizes Western knowledge and culture. For settler colonialism, possessing the land is not the end of the story. Once the land is owned, to use an agricultural analogy, it gets tilled and sowed (i.e. establishing settler social structures), and then harvested (i.e. implementing settler social structures), forming a rhythm of responsibility to the land oriented around the values and practices that assume settler superiority. In the case of my examination of settler colonialism in Stó:lō Téméxw, Christianity played a role in the early decades of land possession with corresponding practices of superiority through the presence of missionaries, churches, and residential schools.

What characterizes this settler superiority? Where assumptions about the land, such as first discovery, rights to occupancy and possession, and terra nullius helped establish settler possessiveness, assumptions about the priority of Western understandings of knowledge established an ethos of settler superiority. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) explains,

> The globalization of knowledge and Western culture constantly reaffirms the West's view of itself as the centre of legitimate knowledge, the arbiter of what counts as knowledge and the source of 'civilized' knowledge. This form of global knowledge is generally referred to as 'universal' knowledge, available to all and not really 'owned' by

> anyone, that is, until non-Western scholars make claims to it. When claims like that are made history is revised (again) so that the story of civilization remains the story of the West. (p. 125)

Extending the legacy of the industrial and scientific revolutions, European knowledge is viewed as the most reliable form of knowledge, which is then used to exert power in developing structures for society that solidify these perspectives, such as education. This superiority of Western knowledge assumed a universality, an ability to address any issue in any place. And while this view had many benefits for society, the assumptions in this understanding became a form of violence when imposed as the only epistemic option (Donald, 2022).

In the history of settler societies, including specific locales such as Stó:lō Téméxw, this universalizing of Western knowledge provided a framework for settlers to exercise superiority in relation to the Indigenous people and land they encountered. The practices of settler society, then, reflect the assumed superiority of Western knowledge in the day-to-day lives of particular people in particular places. Part of my task in seeking to relate the theoretical directions of unsettling and decolonial research to education in Stó:lō Téméxw has been to consider what relevant aspects of history and culture are worth paying attention to as part of the settler legacy of this place. Where has superiority shown up in Stó:lō Téméxw? What relevance does this history have for education in this place? There are many directions these questions could take inquiry on Stó:lō Téméxw. As I have noted above, Christianity is one area that has significance in my personal connection to this land, while also having significance in the history of settler colonialism broadly and Stó:lō Téméxw specifically. So, while I note other areas of relevant knowledge in discussing additional directions for this project as a whole, I have decided to focus specifically on the role of Christianity to illustrate settler superiority in Stó:lō Téméxw. To focus

the conversation, I first look at how missionaries exhibited settler superiority in their initial encounters with Stó:lō people and land, followed by discussion of how churches and residential schools further established this settler superiority. For each topic, I provide a historical example with brief discussion of its relevance, and then I highlight areas of consideration for educators seeking to engage this history well.

7.2 Demanding Conformity: Examining the Assumptions of Missionaries in Stó:lō Téméxw

This first example of settler superiority focuses on missionaries who came to Stó:lō Téméxw in the latter decades of the 1800's. I choose this example because accounts of both Catholic and Protestant missionaries reflect assumptions of settler superiority that influenced how Christianity and settler society were established in the region. I show that Catholic missionaries strategically targeted Stó:lō leaders in order to establish separate Christian Stó:lō communities and Protestant missionaries emphasized a call to conversion that required Stó:lō people to reject their cultural traditions and spirituality. Through historical examples, including commentary from specific missionaries, I highlight one way an ethos of settler superiority showed up in Stó:lō Téméxw. Following the brief summary of these examples, I turn to curriculum theorist Dwayne Donald's (2012) reflections on unlearning colonial frontier logics as a guide for connecting these historical examples of Christianity to my own curriculum and pedagogy work in co-operative education (co-op). I discuss lessons I am learning in co-op and how settler and neoliberal visions for workplace success often require a conformity in students. In recognizing how this structure demands conformity, I discuss how identifying and learning from complexity provides direction for engaging the nuances of curriculum and beginning to

develop contextual alternatives, which in my case involve learning from Stó:lō teaching as a way to generate new directions in co-op curriculum.

7.2.1 Missionaries in Stó:lō Téméxw: The 'Good News' of Conformity

As the history of Christianity reflects in regions around the world, missionaries have often been part of establishing European presence as part of settler expansion (Scott & Griffiths, 2005), including in Canada (Craig, 2016; Scott & Austin, 2005). In the process of bringing their Christian beliefs with Indigenous people in these places – sharing what they believed was the good news of Christianity – missionaries also brought the 'good news' of European society, including in British Columbia (Fisher, 1992; Hare & Barman, 2006) and Stó:lō Téméxw (Carlson, 1997). Commenting on the role of missionaries in British Columbia settlement, historian Robin Fisher (1992) describes the entanglement of Christianity and settler society:

> The aims of the missionaries were at one with the general impact of the settlement frontier in the sense that the missionaries demanded total cultural capitulation from the Indians. No matter how much missionary societies might debate the question of whether civilization should precede or follow evangelization, in effect the two were inextricably intertwined. The missionaries brought a new set of religious beliefs to the Indians, beliefs which were to cleanse them "from the awful superstitions in which they were now sunk." But they also assumed that the "improvement" of the heathen was an essential part of their becoming Christian, and for the European of the nineteenth century "improvement" meant westernization. The missionaries were aggressively confident about the superiority of their own culture and therefore had no qualms about interfering with the customs of the Indians. (pp. 124-125)

In his work on the history of settler-Indigenous relationships in Stó:lō Téméxw, historian Keith Carlson (1997) makes a similar observation for Christian missionaries who arrived in Stó:lō Téméxw: “Some of the initial foot soldiers in the government’s assimilation policy were Christian missionaries” (p. 95). A combination of evangelical fervor and motivation to support the establishment of settler society characterized how both Catholic and Protestant missionaries interacted with Stó:lō communities in Stó:lō Téméxw.

Catholic missionaries were the earliest Christian presence in Stó:lō Téméxw, establishing a Catholic presence that resulted in a significant number of Stó:lō conversions to Catholicism in the latter decades of the 1800’s. Missionaries where initially invited to Stó:lō Téméxw by the government to help reverse the negative impacts of whiskey distribution within Stó:lō communities during the gold rush of the 1860’s. Catholic missionaries focused their efforts on converting Stó:lō leaders as a strategy for conversion and assimilation. Writing about the role of missionaries with Stó:lō leaders within the process of government assimilation – Stó:lō leaders are referred to as “sí:yá:m” in Halq'eméylem (Galloway, 2009, p. 88) – Carlson (1997) notes how the first permanent Catholic Oblate priest, Father Leon Fouquet, studied Halq'eméylem and Stó:lō culture to

> learn the best way to gain their acceptance and win them over to his cause. Once he understood aspects of Stó:lō society he designed his missionary activities to take advantage of Stó:lō concepts of sí:yá:m. To accomplish this the Oblate priest identified sympathetic traditional Stó:lō sí:yá:m, and with their assistance established “Temperance” or “Sobriety” Societies. To assist the sí:yá:m, Fouquet and the other Oblates identified Stó:lō community members who were supportive of the missionaries’ work and appointed them “captains” or “watchman.” (p. 96)

Developing these Catholic communities, as Carlson (2003) describes elsewhere, served the purpose of both social and religious instruction in a world that was viewed to have evils lurking in all sorts of forms:

> If the devil was at work among the Stó:lō his influence was perceived as emanating at least in equal parts from the non-Native whiskey peddler and his alcohol, as from the Stó:lō shaman and his magic. Indeed, for the Oblate observes, evil emanated from multiple sources. Boundaries were therefore needed internally as well as externally. Internally, the watchmen and other Indigenous Church-appointed and sanctioned officials were assigned the duty of directing local religious instruction, monitoring community activities and reporting moral violations to the priest—a responsibility many fulfilled with vigour. (p. 233)

This incorporation of Stó:lō sí:yá:m was used to help convince Stó:lō converts to reject their traditional spirituality and cultural practices, part of what became known as the Durieu system, named after the influential Catholic Bishop Paul Durieu. The Durieu system created separate Christian communities for Stó:lō converts in order to remove them from the "debauched elements of European settler society while simultaneously remaining isolated from the reactionary and corrosive influences of their traditional Indigenous culture" (Carlson, 2003, p. 229). Carlson (2003) describes how these communities were social laboratories in which the Stó:lō Christians could establish their own successful communities centered on Catholic religion and agricultural development. The vision of Catholic leaders was to partner with Stó:lō converts to develop "a model town surrounded by thousands and thousands of acres of cultivated fields…separated and isolated from the uncivilized elements of Indigenous and Western society" (Carlson, 2003, p. 237). While shrinking reserves prevented the vision from long-term success,

such as with Matsqui in the 1860's, the vision for Stó:lō converts to assimilate to Catholicism and settler society was clear. The construction and operation of St. Mary's residential school is a case in point.

Extending from Durieu's vision to separate Stó:lō communities from their culture and land, St. Mary's incorporated intergenerational separation as another tactic for imposing conformity to Catholicism and settler society (Carlson, 2003). Taking children from their families and land was a way to indoctrinate them away from their Stó:lō beliefs and practices. As I discuss further below, the construction of St. Mary's reflects the broader establishment of the Catholic church in Stó:lō Téméxw beyond the initial missionary efforts. But whether it was building communities of Stó:lō Catholics or running St. Mary's, an ethos of superiority was embedded within Catholic missionary aims for Stó:lō conversion in requiring the rejection of Stó:lō spirituality and the assimilation to settler religion and society.

Protestant missionaries exhibited similar views of superiority as the Catholics. For example, Methodist missionary Thomas Crosby was an influential missionary during early settlement of British Columbia (Bolt, 1992; Hare & Barman, 2006) and he spent considerable time in Stó:lō Téméxw during the 1860's as part of his efforts to bring Christianity to Indigenous people. Writing in his published journal of reflections on his missionary efforts to reach Indigenous people on Vancouver Island a few years prior to his work in Stó:lō Téméxw, Crosby (1907) made this observation that characterized his vision as a missionary:

> Numbers of the poor heathen were little by little led to give heed to the message of truth and abandon their old ways of superstition and sin. Still we felt that the education of these people would not be complete unless they were taught habits of order and industry. (pp. 48-49)

Crosby's intentions were clear: the message of Christianity and ways of life imported from European society were meant to go together. From traveling lectures at various settler communities, to starting churches throughout the region, to later helping organize the creation of residential schools in Stó:lō Téméxw and other parts of the province (Carleton, 2017), Crosby contributed to establishing Protestant Christianity in the region with a call for Indigenous people to conform to Christian belief and spirituality, including the incorporation of settler ways of life on the land. In the introduction to Crosby's published journal, his Methodist colleague Alexander Sutherland wrote these comments regarding Crosby's legacy:

> It is seldom that men who lay the foundations of empire get credit for the achievement. Their work, for the most part, is done underground and out of sight. They are content to take up the work that lies nearest, leaving results with God, and are more concerned about doing their work faithfully than claiming credit for themselves. And yet all the while they are laying the only foundations on which an enduring civilization can rest, and are better entitled to the name and fame of empire-builders than some who have claimed the credit without doing the work. If it be true that he is a benefactor of his race who makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before, much more is he a benefactor whose spiritual husbandry transforms a savage into a citizen—a pagan into a saint. (Sutherland in Crosby, 1907, pp. iii-iv)

Assuming a blend of citizenship and sainthood, nationalism and spirituality, Sutherland's words reflect the union of settler society and Christianity, a combination of religion and citizenship that characterized the ethos of superiority for how Protestant missionaries showed up on the land in Stó:lō Téméxw. And similar to the Catholic missionaries, Protestants embedded their views about the superiority of Christianity in the construction of a residential school to convert children

to Protestant beliefs and settler ways of life. Crosby's successor in Stó:lō Téméxw, Charles Tate and his wife Caroline, initially started a day school in their home that would later become the initial operation of Coqualeetza residential school. As "The Children Remembered" (2024) website, a historical resource from the United Church of Canada, summarizes, "like other missionaries, they believed that removal of children from the influence of their homes and families was the best way to achieve cultural change."

Reflecting on the legacy of Thomas Crosby's wife, Emma, educational researchers Jan Hare and Jean Barman (2006) summarize the assumptions of superiority in the Christian missionary efforts in British Columbia:

> Virtually everyone accepted as a given the superiority of their religion and the superiority of their skin colour. This potent combination was at the heart of the missionary phenomenon. The notion of hierarchy of skin colour, drawn from the ideas of Charles Darwin and others, reflected biblical images of light and dark, which added to the seeming potency of Christianity. The colonization of Indigenous peoples around the world only seemed to confirm the superiority that persons of the dominant societies already took for granted. (pp. 257-258)

In citing these examples of both Catholic and Protestant missionary perspectives and practices in Stó:lō Téméxw I am drawing attention to ways that settler superiority showed up. These assumptions of superiority, rooted in notions of religious truth and colonial progress, informed how missionaries demanded conformity from Stó:lō individuals and communities in their interactions with them. While the growth of churches in Stó:lō Téméxw extended the missionary vision for Stó:lō conformity, before discussing those examples I want to reflect on

ways that engaging these missionary examples can foster important practices of unlearning for educators today.

7.2.2 Curriculum Considerations: Unlearning the Push for Conformity in Education

The last few decades have seen a growing awareness of how contemporary education demands conformity to a western Euro-centric worldview based on assumptions about its truth. When education prescribes such knowledge as "the only way to be a successful human being," Donald (2022) notes how "belief in the veracity of those understandings becomes a form of violence" (para. 6). In their efforts to convert Stó:lō people, missionaries were practicing this type of prescription of a narrow view of humanity and knowledge, presented in the package of Christianity and European settler society, and which was then imposed on Stó:lō people. Writing about the intersection of religion, settlers, and Indigeneity, Indigenous religious studies scholar Natalie Avalos (2023) reflects on the legacy of Christianity as a narrow and prescriptive movement that "sought to consolidate power through exercising control over people's souls…spreading Christendom for the common 'good' of humanity" (p. 5). If people did not accept and align with European versions of Christianity, as was the case for Indigenous peoples, Avalos (2023) notes they became "targets of violence, coerced conversion, and political domination" (p. 5).

Assumptions of superiority led to both Catholic and Protestant missionaries demanding the rejection of Stó:lō spirituality and conforming to Christian and European ways of life. Superiority was part of the settler ethos, a way of seeing the world that motivated the push for conformity (Donald, 2012). As an educator in Stó:lō Téméxw interested in learning from these stories of settler presence, I have found value in learning from these past examples as a way to avoid perpetuating similar patterns of settler superiority today. For education in Stó:lō Téméxw,

then, how does a legacy of settler superiority need to be identified and wrestled with? I discuss two possible responses to this question by continuing my engagement with curriculum theorist Dwayne Donald. First, I look at the practice of identifying assumptions as a way of "unlearning colonial logics" (Donald, 2022, para. 7). Second, I consider how navigating the tensions at the intersection of "lived experience and historical consciousness" (Donald, 2012, p. 545) can provide a way of identifying and learning from the complexities of this historical context for education today.

7.2.2.1 Identifying Assumptions

As I am examining in the various directions of this project, curriculum research that is attentive to place requires examination of the foundations of the curriculum an educator is working on. Examining the foundations includes the context of curriculum. Continuing in these directions, then, here I experiment with how my engagement with the assumptions of missionaries in Stó:lō Téméxw has helped develop an attentiveness to ways superiority can show up in education. Now, I am not suggesting that because missionaries exhibited superiority there is some sort of straight line to superiority showing up in education today. Rather, as synoptic text inquiry is intended to provoke, reflection on the relevant knowledge of history and culture – in this case, assumptions held by early missionaries in Stó:lō Téméxw – can provide insight into the ways the ethos of a place relates to education. So, recognizing how missionaries demanded conformity to settler Christianity and European social values based on assumptions of superiority can help identify where assumptions of superiority may continue to perpetuate harm in education today.

To explore these connections between missionary assumptions and education today, I return to Donald's (2022) emphasis on the practice of unlearning colonialism and the various

ways it divides the world according to colonial assumptions – what he refers to as "relationship denial" (para. 7). In surveying missionary assumptions, I am investigating how these types of assumptions continue to be part of the structures of education that I am engaged with, specifically co-operative education (co-op).

7.2.2.1.1 Assumptions of Co-operative Education

As I have discussed in previous chapters, co-op is a work-integrated learning program "which alternates periods of academic study with periods of paid work experience in appropriate fields of business, industry, government, social services and the professions" (Anderson et al., 2012, p. 59). Co-op requires students to navigate the demands of searching and applying for jobs, and if successful, working for periods of full-time employment was part of their educational journey. As a result, students who wish to succeed in both their academic program and the additional work experience of co-op are required to expend additional time and energy to be successful in the program, as academic credit is typically additive (i.e. not part of their academic program credit load), and jobs are secured competitively (CEWIL Canada, 2018). In my observation of successful co-op students, it is the students who can best conform to these demands that are successful, and the system rewards their individual hard work with a valuable career development experience.

The approach to success in co-op reflects common assumptions in contemporary workplaces, in which "the focus on the individual employee indicates the implicit assumption that the individual is primarily responsible and accountable for ensuring employability, high quality jobs and engagement at work" (Bal & Dóci, 2018, p. 542). I should clarify that I am not suggesting the demands of time and energy that are themselves problematic. Rather, I am concerned with interrogating the assumptions that get perpetuated when a curriculum, co-op in

this case, is structured around specific assumptions for human experience determined by economic priorities for success (Donald, 2019). Organizational psychologists Matthijs Bal and Edina Dóci (2018) note that the influence of neoliberalism is significant in definitions of success in the workplace: "The core principle of neoliberalism is that human welfare will be maximized when individuals have ultimate economic freedom to act" (p. 538). Neoliberal ideology, they continue, has a specific idea for what individual workplace success involves:

> Each individual is expected to be self-interested, and to pursue maximization of one's own outcomes. Individualism refers not only to the opportunity for individuals to pursue their individual goals and desires, but also to the individual responsibility and accountability for one's actions and well-being…people are expected to be self-reliant, and to ensure their own well-being, education, employability, wealth, societal success and so on." (Bal & Dóci, 2018, p. 539)

I see similarities with these neoliberal assumptions for workplace success and the demands co-op places on students to succeed in these ways. The result is an implicit demand for conformity to this vision for workplace success often informed by the expectations of employers who influence the direction of the student experience. If students want to succeed in co-op they have to conform to these expectations. My question is where does this approach to co-op risk perpetuating assumptions of settler superiority?

In my own work as a co-op coordinator interacting with and supporting co-op students, I have seen how neoliberal ideology shows up as a form of settler superiority in co-op. As the example of missionaries highlights, settler superiority has historically been expressed by an unquestioning pressure on others to embrace European values and culture. I see a similar unquestioning in how the structures of co-op compel students to accept a pathway for personal

career development rooted in neoliberal values of capitalist society. The better individual students can conform to the expectations of career success, the more successful they will be in the program. Focused on individual career development within the competitive job market of Canada, co-op is structured to reflect the neoliberal principles of individual hard work as the pathway for economic success. Co-op student success is dependent on a student's ability to fit the mould of neoliberal employability. And not unlike early missionaries imposing assumptions on Stó:lō people, there are times when co-op educators – myself included – risk calling students to conform to these expectations of success through our words, actions, attitudes, and overall administration of the co-op courses. Working as a co-op educator in Stó:lō Téméxw, what do I do when I am faced with the complexity of this observation? How do I make sense of ways I come to see the colonial logic of the past get repeated in the present? These types of questions represent the type of unlearning this project is intended to provoke, and here I reflect on them further in my work with co-op.

When I began my work as a co-op educator, I had already begun conducting my research on settler assumptions in Stó:lō Téméxw. Seeing the acceptance of settler assumptions within co-op in my own setting, while also observing these trends to define success in neoliberal terms in other co-op programs and the work-integrated learning field more broadly (J. Johnston, 2011; N. Johnston, 2007; G. A. Lloyd et al., 2022), has been an important part of my own practice to better understand assumptions of settler superiority within my context. I started asking, where are these assumptions for success present? Is it possible for other forms of success in co-op? What would that look like?

In asking these questions I am seeking to address the ongoing legacy of colonialism in which the settler superiority seen in the early missionaries is continued in the embrace of

neoliberal education today, including co-op. I have begun to respond to Donald's (2022) invitation for educators to interrogate the assumptions of education today: "An urgent educational challenge facing educators today involves: first decentring, denaturalizing, and unlearning colonial logics of relationship denial as curricular and pedagogical common sense, and second, honouring other ways to know and be" (para. 8). And while interrogating the settler assumptions within co-op has been an important practice in my own journey of unlearning, it is this second part of Donald's proposal to honour other ways knowing and being that has led to new understanding and practice within my approach to co-op.

7.2.2.2 Identifying and Learning from Complexity

In considering alternative ways of understanding co-op within my context of Stó:lō Téméxw, I have found Donald's (2012b) suggestion to identify and learn from the complexity of conflicting ideas and perspectives in curriculum to be a helpful guide for developing alternative approaches to curriculum. Donald (2012b) proposes this approach as part of his development of Indigenous Métissage, decolonial research that navigates the intersection of Indigenous and colonial knowledge and experience, discussed in Chapter 4. Drawing on hermeneutics, Donald (2012b) suggests that engaging complexity occurs by "remaining right in the midst of tensionalities rather than searching to rise above or move beyond them" (p. 545). Instead of resolving tensions, this approach identifies and articulates the complexity inherent in knowledge and experience, what Joe Kincheloe (1999) notes as "the context-specific, ambiguous nature of knowledge about human beings" (p. 213). This approach to research, explains Donald (2012b), "requires deep attentiveness to the centrality of history, culture, tradition, and philosophy in producing standpoints of interpretation. It is a provocative call to come to better understand the 'fix we are in' that eschews foreclosure and conclusion" (p. 546). Relating this approach to my

own context, where I am tempted to simply dismiss aspects of co-op that reflect settler assumptions of superiority, the idea of identifying and learning from complexities invites me to wrestle with the tensions of different perspectives and experiences within the context of my work. It is an approach that avoids oversimplification of the journey of unlearning.

So, taking this approach to analyzing the complexities in the legacy of settler superiority, how do I respond to the 'fix we are in' when it comes to co-op education in my work in Stó:lō Téméxw? Reflecting on this question in the midst of the complexity of the structure of co-op and the dynamics of Stó:lō Téméxw as a place has resulted in a few new directions for co-op curriculum in my work.

One area of response to the complexity of co-op has been to include new opportunities for transformative student experience within the tensions of co-op in Stó:lō Téméxw. This has involved recognizing that while co-op can perpetuate neoliberal values of individualism that require conformity to these standards, this is not only way to frame student success in co-op. While I have noticed that students in co-op often accept the neoliberal assumptions of the program, students are also quite receptive to alternative approaches when they encounter them. An appropriate way to incorporate a different approach to co-op, then, has been to introduce students to different perspectives on the purpose of co-op as a way to complicate the common definitions of success.

This different perspective for co-op has been informed by my learning from Stó:lō people and knowledge during this project, and in my interactions with Stó:lō colleagues of the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV). I have learned about movements among Stó:lō communities that emphasize teaching for individuals to take responsibility for their own gifts of knowledge and skill, an approach to education that has parallels to the requirements for

individual success in co-op. It may be oversimplified, but in the context of co-op's neoliberal work ethic, consideration of Stó:lō teaching of gifts and responsibility leads to a picture of student success that while different, still fits within the journey of career development that co-op fosters. The "hustle" of co-op education is not necessarily all bad when framed within assumptions of success that connect individual work ethic to responsible community connection. In my conversation with Grand Chief Clarence Pennier, for example, in discussing how education prepares students for their careers, he said,

> Part of learning should be how do you give back once you receive an education. What can you do to give back to our future generations? Cause that's where we have to go, right, we have to look towards, rather than just 'okay, now I can go out, I get a job.' (personal conversation, May 30, 2024)

Grand Chief Pennier's comment illustrates the complexity of Stó:lō responsibility within the pressures of career development, an observation that I can relate to the tensions of co-op curriculum that has required an attentiveness to navigate the context in which I am working. Stepping into the complexity of incorporating holistic approaches to learning (Andrews, 2023) within the common structures of co-op curriculum has been formative in developing updated learning outcomes for UFV's co-op curriculum in which definitions of success that include both individual work ethic and the discovery of strengths and abilities as gifts to share in connection with the land and community. For example, a learning outcome for a student's first work term describes the experience of self awareness and personal development in the following way upon the completion of the course: "Discover personal gifts and areas for learning related to career readiness" (University of the Fraser Valley, 2024a). Students are then led to connect this experience of personal career development to social responsibility in a later term as their work

experience is framed as an opportunity to “contribute to responsible, inclusive, and responsive workplaces” (University of the Fraser Valley, 2024c). The previous co-op learning outcomes were focused solely on how co-op provided opportunity for “students to transfer academic skills and knowledge to an employment setting” (University of the Fraser Valley, 2004), missing any explicit connection of work-integrated learning experience with personal transformation and social responsibility. Through my learning of Stó:lō teaching on responsibility to the land, along with consultations with UFV’s Indigenous curriculum staff, the additional emphases on student gifts of knowledge and ability along with social responsibility moves co-op curriculum in directions that invite students to connect personal career development in more holistic directions. My discussion with Stó:lō educator Dr. Lolehawk Laura Buker affirmed these directions as she stressed the importance of creating space for students to discover their role in the story and place of education in Stó:lō Téméxw, what she referred to as everyone’s “storytelling voice” (personal conversation, May 21, 2024). I hope that the added emphasis in co-op curriculum on discovering one’s strengths and abilities as gifts to share for fostering social responsibility can be a way to capture this aspect of Stó:lō teaching within the curriculum.

Engaging both the emphases of co-op and the Stó:lō teachings of responsibility has also influenced adjustments to UFV’s co-op assignments that I was part of revising. Returning to my learning with Grand Chief Pennier, his words about how education can help students realize their connection to the land stuck with me as I considered ways to connect co-op to the land: “You’re part of this area, part of this territory” (personal conversation, May 30, 2024). Incorporating holistic teaching and learning (Andrews, 2023) along with Stó:lō teaching to take responsibility for the land in Stó:lō Téméxw (Andrews & Joe, 2024) informed the development of a land-based learning outcome and land acknowledgement exercise at the beginning of every co-op work term

(see Appendix C). While the reception of this activity could be viewed as tokenistic (Ahenakew, 2017) if it is simply added onto the typical co-op experience, this risk is reduced when viewed alongside movements for Indigenization in UFV curriculum more broadly. Students entering co-op, typically in their 3rd or 4th year of undergraduate study, will have some familiarity with navigating the tensions of Indigenous and settler perspectives that are introduced in core areas of UFV's curriculum. By inviting students to view their work in relationship with the land, we hope it will challenge them to consider how their work can also give back to the land, a way of imagining co-op as part of what Robin Kimmerer (2024) describes as the reciprocity inherent within the "gift economy" (p. 25) of humanity's relationship to the land.

Inviting co-op students to connect their co-op experience to the local Indigenous people and land on which the work is occurring reflects the invitation that Si:yémiya emphasized in my conversation with him. He was adamant that the Stó:lō teaching to take care of the land and everything in it applies to all residents of Stó:lō Téméxw, not just Stó:lō individuals and communities. An important point that Si:yémiya stressed to me, however, is that such responsibility needs to be done respectfully in relationship to Stó:lō communities and land. A key part of our development of co-op curriculum has been to frame the invitation of student's personal development and social responsibility within the local context of the land on which the co-op work will take place. As a co-op team, our own consultation with UFV's Stó:lō Indigenous Teaching and Learning staff has been an important source of guidance and support in developing this curriculum. And for co-op students, UFV's Stó:lō Elders are available for conversation and support with students as they wrestle with how to learn from these land-based activities in co-op. Launched in September 2024, my co-op colleagues and myself are excited to see how the implementation of these changes goes. While we have yet to get in-depth assessment of the

impact of these directions, initial observations of student engagement show mostly positive response. For example, in completing the land acknowledgement exercise, students have noted it was a new way of learning about the local history and experience of Indigenous communities that went beyond a typical classroom setting. Some students noted how the local focus of this activity was not something they had considered before, especially in relation to a work experience. Some students did acknowledge a struggle to make connections between their area of work and Indigenous communities and land, highlighting a possible need for additional student preparation prior to the work term experience. Beyond the scope of this project, I envision a follow-up review of the impact of these directions for students, but also for employers and the local community.

This section has discussed ways the assumptions of superiority exhibited by missionaries in Stó:lō Téméxw resulted in demands on Stó:lō people to conform to Christianity and settler society. The reflection so far, however, has been limited to responding to the legacy of missionaries. But alongside the initial push for conformity by missionaries in Stó:lō Téméxw came the establishment of churches throughout the region, including the construction and operation of residential schools. The next section of this chapter articulates how the ethos of settler superiority continued in these developments of Christianity, and because the presence of Christianity remains significant in Stó:lō Téméxw, its role is an important part of the region's history and culture for educators to understand and learn from.

7.3 Building Conformity: Establishing Churches and Residential Schools in Stó:lō Téméxw

Churches were established in Stó:lō Téméxw following the significant influence of missionaries within Stó:lō communities in the early decades of settler contact. Along with

churches, the construction and operation of residential schools in Stó:lō Téméxw extended the work of both Catholic and Protestant missionaries to educate Stó:lō children in the late 1800's. By the early 20th century, the influence was considerable. In 1903, Canada's Indian affairs reported statistics about Stó:lō affiliation with Christianity as follows: "out of 2728 Aboriginals in Fraser River Agency; 2481 were Catholic, 153 were Methodist, 52 were Anglican and 52 were 'pagan'" (Shaw, 1998, p. 3). These numbers suggest the initial missionary efforts to convert Stó:lō people to Christianity were largely successful, at least numerically. Alongside the numerical growth of Catholicism and Protestantism that was part of the broader growth of settler society in Stó:lō Téméxw, there was a growing number of churches within Stó:lō communities. Just as the impetus for conformity characterized the assumptions of missionaries, Christians continued to represent settler superiority in both their physical presence on the land via church buildings and residential schools, and in the demand for a way of life that required adherence to a combination of Christian spirituality and settler social norms that continued the project of Stó:lō assimilation. If missionaries brought the message of conformity in their encounters with Stó:lō people, establishing churches and residential schools was a practice of building conformity in the midst of Stó:lō communities.

In this section, then, similar to my discussion of missionaries, I survey how settler churches and residential schools represented ongoing expectations for Stó:lō conformity. I begin by looking at how church buildings themselves became a visible presence from which the demand to conform to settler Christian norms and values continued within Stó:lō communities. I then reflect on how residential schools supported the establishment of Christianity through education based on settler religion and culture. Continuing to wrestle with the complexity of the legacy of this ethos of superiority, however, I then outline ways the intentions of both Catholics

and Protestants were received and interpreted by Stó:lō people, highlighting the importance of Stó:lō self-determination in deciding how to address the legacy of Christianity. The story of Christianity's legacy in Stó:lō Téméxw goes beyond conversion numbers and here I reflect on how Stó:lō people perceive the influence and legacy of Christianity, including comments from some of the individuals I interviewed during my research. Reflecting on the tensions between settler religion and Stó:lō experience, I show how varied Stó:lō response to Christianity displays a resilience and self-determination that complicates the legacy of settler Christianity, highlighting a need for Stó:lō people to choose for themselves how to navigate this legacy. I conclude this section with my own reflections on areas of learning and some initial ideas for a curriculum project exploring the topic of Christianity and land in Stó:lō Téméxw.

7.3.1 Churches in Stó:lō Téméxw: Building Presence

As missionaries sparked Stó:lō conversion to Catholic and Protestant Christianity, constructing church buildings within Stó:lō communities established a physical presence for Christianity. Church buildings were a visible sign of Christianity's presence throughout Stó:lō Téméxw, including in Stó:lō communities. If early missionaries counted on the conversion of Stó:lō sí:yá:m's as a strategic way to spread Christianity within Stó:lō communities (Carlson, 1997), it was the construction of church buildings that provided a permanent structure for Christian religious practice, a physical symbol of settler Christian values that could be seen on the land. A settler ethos of superiority was embedded in the prominent role of church buildings within Stó:lō communities, a reality that is evident in how the history of these buildings has been recorded. As stated on the back cover of a book of reflections on church buildings in British Columbia Indigenous communities in the late 1800's, the authors note how "rough, hewn-log churches marked the first firm footholds in the missionaries' Indian crusade of the 1860s"

(Veillette & White, 1977). The physical presence of churches, both Catholic and Protestant, were viewed as 'footholds,' a physical sign of settler success. The growth of churches in Stó:lō communities, then, was a logical next step for establishing settler superiority. And this was the case for both Catholic and Protestant churches in Stó:lō Téméxw.

7.3.1.1 Catholic Churches

For Catholics, corresponding with their successful missionary efforts of the late 1800's, constructing church buildings was a natural next step in Catholic success, whose "presence in Stó:lō Téméxw and among the Stó:lō people was overwhelming" (Moore, 2009, p. 12). Initially built in partnership with the Stó:lō leaders and people, and later funded by the Canadian government as part of their strategies to connect Indigenous education with the presence of Christianity (Moore, 2009), the presence of Catholic churches represented the growing presence of settler Christianity amongst Stó:lō people. This growth, as Keith Carlson (2003) observes in his analysis of Catholic records from the late 1800's, was designed to avoid the ills of both settler and Stó:lō society (e.g. whiskey and Indigenous spirituality), instead supporting Stó:lō assimilation to Catholicism and settler society with the creation of "Church-centered villages" (p. 229), part of what became known as the Durieu System initially employed by Catholic missionaries and then extended into the construction of churches. Named after influential Catholic priest Paul Durieu, the Durieu System drew from Jesuit strategies in other parts of North America to create church-run governments within Indigenous communities as a way to "separate Indigenous people from their traditional ways of life and from settlers, who were viewed as sources of corruption" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015a). Stó:lō Indigenous educator Winona Victor (2012) notes how Catholic churches and communities were meant to prevent contact with "the 'bad Indian' (i.e. pagan)…the one who still abided by

his/her Stó:lō beliefs and teachings" (p. 156). The goal, Carlson (2003) notes, was for Catholicism to "establish entirely new Indian communities on fertile agricultural lands away from the sites of older Native settlements" (p. 230). In this sense, building Catholic churches served to construct conformity to the values and practices of settler society within Stó:lō communities, a process in which the structures of Christianity aligned with government directions resulting in new structures of Stó:lō community:

> As the era of colonial settlement progressed, one thing was becoming clear: State and Church authorities were collaborating to undermine the social and familial linkages between communities upon which supra-tribal identity was based…settlements were intended to be autonomous of one another. Leadership was to be expressed through western-style institutions and conducted under the supervision of non-Native individuals rather than through the extended family connections that bound people of different settlements together under variously ranked family and tribal leadership. (Carlson, 2003, p. 237)

At the same time, however, where the imposition of Catholic spirituality aligned with government policies for assimilation, there was less alignment with government policies of dispossession. In her article on Catholic missionaries and Indigenous lands in British Columbia, geographer Lynn Blake (1998) notes that the spiritual life of Stó:lō churches was disrupted by the loss of Stó:lō land due to shrinking reserves amidst growing settler population and revised land allotment policies. Beyond religious priorities, however, Blake (1998) argues that Catholics supported Stó:lō rights to land out of a belief in natural law for the structures of society not the instrumental utility of settler law and policies:

> The position of the provincial government regarding Native rights to land was a legal position that embodied a set of inherently British cultural assumptions about possession taking and the link between "reasoned" economic activity, individual rights to property, and the social order. The Oblates' rejection of that legal position was rooted in a set of moral precepts that supposed a fundamentally different view of economy, property, and social order. (p. 40).

The Catholic belief was in a social order that would keep Stó:lō Christians, Blake (1998) suggests, oriented around a "divinely ordained" (p. 42) vision for the values of social and family life that contradicted the government's priorities of individual property ownership. This position is worth mentioning as one way to complicate the settler narrative of superiority in Christianity. While the superiority of Christian spirituality was certainly used as a tool for conformity to settler society, other aspects of the Christian tradition, such as Catholic teaching on natural law in relation to property ownership, were not completely opposed to aspects of Stó:lō rights to the land.

7.3.1.2 Protestant Churches

For Protestants, Methodist and Anglican churches were also an early physical presence in Stó:lō communities, though to a lesser extent than their Catholic counterparts. The missionary energy of people like Thomas Crosby and Charles Tate translated into various churches constructed on Stó:lō reserves as a way to encourage establishing Protestant Christianity alongside settler social norms. As Charles Tate (1997) recounted in an 1875 diary entry referencing Stó:lō acclimation to Christianity and agriculture, "It is encouraging to see them adopting European principles in this way" (Sep. 21, 1875).

As churches were built and congregations established, there was a progression from the invitation to Christianity with the initial missionary contact to the demand for conformity to settler Christianity post-conversion. The expectation to leave behind Stó:lō spiritual practices was a significant part of the demand for conformity. As Christian congregations developed along with the construction of church buildings, rejection of non-Christian spirituality was expected (Carlson, 2003; Fisher, 1992). For example, as many Stó:lō communities had extensive conversion to Christianity in the late 19th century and early 20th century, the newly formed Stó:lō congregations stopped practicing traditional Stó:lō spirituality, such as the winter dances, potlatch, and longhouse gatherings (Carlson, 2003). Christian leaders were influential in the Canadian government's potlatch ban in the 1880's, a law designed to eliminate Indigenous spirituality and culture:

> The main objective of this new law was to promote the assimilation of Aboriginal people by subverting one of their main economic and social institutions. Many missionaries and Indian agents who had observed these gatherings viewed them as "heathen," "immoral," and "communisitic," because they allegedly appeared un-Christian and discouraged saving thereby making paupers out of rich people. (Carlson, 1997, p. 99)

By rejecting Stó:lō spirituality and culture, participation in these churches required submission to European Christian beliefs and practices such as church attendance, prayer, baptism and other sacraments and rites of passage (Carlson, 2003). In many ways, as Stó:lō individuals and communities were forced to leave their traditional ways in favor of Christian spirituality, the adoption of Christian liturgical life became a liturgy for settler society as well. Practicing Christianity was a practice of settler assimilation. Exacerbating the pressure to conform was the role of Catholic and Protestant residential schools in Stó:lō Téméxw in which Stó:lō children

were removed from their community, land, and culture and indoctrinated in settler religious and cultural beliefs and practices. Continuing the discussion of how Christianity established conformity in Stó:lō, the following section surveys some of this legacy of residential schools.

7.3.2 Residential Schools: Educating for Conformity

> I was 6-years old when I was first brought to residential school. And then I stayed in residential school for 11-years and through those 11-years we never really learned about our culture and our traditions and about ceremonies. I never learned about who we are as a people… The purpose of the residential schools is to make sure we aren't who we are as a people. (Indian Horse #Next150, 2024)

This quote, from Stó:lō Grand Chief Clarence Pennier who attended residential school in Stó:lō Téméxw, captures both the impact and intent of Canada's residential schools. As British Columbia joined Canada's confederation in 1871, it became subject to policies and laws that were developed Canada-wide regarding the treatment of Indigenous people and land. In addition to the ways Christianity and European social norms were imposed by churches within Indigenous communities, residential schools were a way settler superiority was expressed through education. With the express purpose to civilize Indigenous communities, government and churches across the country partnered to develop schools designed educate and civilize Indigenous children. Stó:lō Téméxw was no exception. In the following discussion I briefly summarize the history and role of two residential schools in Stó:lō Téméxw as examples of settler superiority alongside missionaries and churches. In doing so, I recognize this summary is limited to how residential schools were illustrative of settler superiority; a more in-depth and comprehensive overview was beyond the scope of this project.

The formation of residential schools in Stó:lō Téméxw began with Catholic and Protestant missionaries incorporating education into their efforts to evangelize in Stó:lō communities. As I noted above, missionaries realized the important role intergenerational relationships had in Stó:lō community and culture. To remove children from their families, communities, and land was a strategic way to indoctrinate children away from the influence of these formative relationships. Initially in the form of missionary-run day schools and boarding schools, the creation of the Indian Act in 1876 and the government's decision to fund the schools resulted in the establishment of residential schools across the country. The sense of settler superiority in these developments was clear from the beginning. For example, in arguing for government support for the creation of residential schools, the Public Works Minister presented the budget with this appeal to his fellow politicians:

> If you wish to educate these children you must separate them from their parents during the time that they are being educated. If you leave them in the family they may know how to read and write, but they still remain savages, whereas by separating them in the way proposed, they acquire the habits and tastes—it is to be hoped only the good tastes—of civilized people. (Langevin, H, as cited in Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. 161)

There were two main residential schools started in Stó:lō Téméxw as part of this operation to use education as a tool for assimilation. The first residential school to operate in Stó:lō Téméxw was St. Mary's which was started by Catholic Oblate missionaries in 1863 along the shores of the Fraser River in what would eventually become the community of Mission. The vision for St. Mary's extended the reach of the Durieu System, discussed above, to the operation

of residential schools. As the historical account of St. Mary's from the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) describes,

> The principles of the Durieu System structured the students' daily life. Although the forty-two boys the school initially recruited were given an introduction to reading, writing, and arithmetic, they spent much of their time in the fields, gardening and farming. The punishments employed included additional school work, being required to kneel for a period of time, confinement, isolation, humiliation, and corporal punishment. (p. 100)

Over the course of over a century, St. Mary's carried out this vision by operating in three different locations in the community of Mission. St. Mary's closed as a school in 1969 but continued to house Indigenous students attending school in Mission until 1984.

The other main residential school in Stó:lō Téméxw was operated by Protestants, the Methodist-run Coqualeetza residential school in Chilliwack. Begun in 1886 as missionary day school Coqualeetza established itself as the largest residential school in the province, eventually constructed to house up to 200 students and which focused on a curriculum that included a combination of spiritual, educational, and trades/labour instruction (Carlson & Lutz, 1997; The Children Remembered, 2024). Coqualeetza was known particularly for its industrial training of both boys and girls, which included a 70-acre farm and involved domestic and vocational training in homemaking, blacksmithing, and mechanics. Reflecting on these range of activities, George Raley, Coqualeetza's principal in the 1920's, was quoted as saying the purpose of the school was to "make Christian citizens of the pupils" (The Children Remembered, 2024). Coqualeetza was closed in 1940, the property and buildings bought by the government to be converted into a hospital.

As documented by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) reports, the oppressive education and religious indoctrination in residential schools was accompanied by sexual, physical, and spiritual abuse. The result is a devastating legacy of intergenerational trauma and loss of connection of community, culture, and land that is felt to this day. As a reminder of this legacy, Stó:lō communities have installed memorial house posts at the sites of both St. Mary's and Coqualeetza to honour the memory of residential school children. A recent report noting that 158 children died at residential schools sites in Stó:lō Téméxw (CBC News, 2023), however, highlights how the journey of healing and reconciliation is far from over. With these two residential schools in Stó:lō Téméxw, dislocation from family and land, along with the rejection of language and culture combined to foster an additional presence of settler superiority alongside churches.

In tracing these examples of churches and residential schools, I wonder how extensive the influence of Christianity was and continues to be amongst Stó:lō people and communities. What is the legacy of the settler superiority of Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw? As I discuss now, Stó:lō resilience and self-determination reveals a complicated history of Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw, where impact of settler superiority has been tempered by the persistence of Stó:lō spirituality and traditions.

7.3.3 Stó:lō Self-determination: The Tensions of Christianity within Stó:lō Community

These accounts so far risk painting a picture of one-sided settler domination through the influence of Christianity among Stó:lō communities. The reality, however, was that while the patterns of superiority were clear, the lasting impact on Stó:lō people and communities is less clear. Drawing from written examples of Stó:lō reflections on Christianity, along with my conversations with Stó:lō individuals, I note the importance of honouring Stó:lō resilience and

self-determination when it comes to discussing the legacy of Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw. I do this by discussing the varied experiences of Stó:lō people and Christianity and comment on the emphasis on self-determination that arose in my research conversations.

In my commitment to approach my research as a witness to Stó:lō people, experience, and land, I recognize the limits of my analysis of Christianity so far. Information about the growth of churches, and government statistics of Stó:lō participation in Christianity, cited above, is from the perspective of settler historical accounts. Writing about the importance of Indigenous voice speaking truth to power, PhD students in Sociology and Equity Studies, Aman Sium and Eric Ritskes (2013) note in the journal *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, "Stories in Indigenous epistemologies are disruptive, sustaining, knowledge producing, and theory-in-action. Stories are decolonization theory in its most natural form" (p. II). In particular, the authors note, "Indigenous stories affirm that the subjectivity of Indigenous peoples is both politically and intellectually valid. Indigenous stories also proclaim that Indigenous peoples still exist, that the colonial project has been ultimately unsuccessful in erasing Indigenous existence" (p. IV). With this in mind, I turn to a Stó:lō story of Christianity in which the ethos of settler superiority meets the resilience of Stó:lō self-determination.

7.3.3.1 Dr. Gwendolyn Point's Reflections on Christianity as a Stó:lō Woman

This story of Stó:lō experience of Christianity is the testimony of Dr. Gwendolyn Point, Stó:lō knowledge keeper, leader, and educator, who recounts some of her experiences wresting with Stó:lō identity and practice alongside Catholic spirituality and traditions. Below are a selection of quotes from Dr. Point included in an interview with graduate student Christie Shaw (Shaw, 1998) who studied the legacy of Christianity for Stó:lō women. As Shaw (1998) notes in her description of Dr. Point's narrative,

> The narrative that follows is the story of how she came to embrace both Catholicism and the Stó:lō spirituality practiced by her great, great grandmother...her personal history reflects many of the themes of the nineteenth-century period of missionization including the tensions between Catholicism and Stó:lō spirituality...Above all, her narrative reveals the physical, the emotional and the spiritual strength of five generations of women. (pp. 24-25)

I present Dr. Point's story of Christianity and Stó:lō spirituality chronologically, as she shared in the initial interview, providing brief subject lines but otherwise focusing on Dr. Point's own words to represent the complexity of the topic. The Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre staff helped me confirm with Dr. Point that these reflections still represent her views today. I turn, then, to Dr. Point's story, as recounted in her conversation with Christie Shaw (1998).

This first quote highlights Dr. Point's childhood experience of church as a normal part of her upbringing:

> [Church], to me, when I was a little girl, was a good experience. Certainly, when you are a young child you do what you are told. Every Sunday our parents woke us up, you know "go to church" and we'd get up and we'd all run to church and I said Mass in Latin. I could speak the whole Mass in Latin, in high Latin. And I really enjoyed it, it was just something you did. (p. 26)

Here Dr. Point discusses her mother's ongoing relationship to Christianity despite suffering punishment in residential school for speaking her language and then later being excommunicated due to a prohibited medical procedure:

> So, it is not a very good history, it is not a pleasant one. It certainly wasn't for my mom, it certainly wasn't for her brothers and sisters. For my Mom to continue with that belief, with their religion, something must have inspired her to believe in God and to be able to separate the people that physically, sexually and mentally abused them. Right? (p. 27)

This quote presents the tensions and conflict that Dr. Point endured when she began to experience Stó:lō traditions and spirituality as a teenager:

> I became involved in our own spiritual ways when I was fifteen/sixteen and I didn't understand because not too many people know what to do with anybody in our traditional ways because it was gone for so many years because it was outlawed. My mom kind of helped me understand because when I went home when I was fifteen/sixteen – I was isolated for a new month – the first thing – I was really happy to be able to go home an feel normal because for years I wasn't and I didn't know what was wrong with me, but for the first time in my young life I felt normal, like a person would feel normal and understood what I needed to do to take care of myself a little bit so that I could…my normalcy, I guess. But the first thing she said to me when I got home, "you're the devil." And I left and I didn't go back for years. So, in that year she told me, "I always regretted saying that to you. (p. 29)

Dr. Point's great grandmother was beaten for practicing Stó:lō spirituality and here Dr. Point shares how her mother related that history and the negative impact it had on her as she continued to experience her own Stó:lō spirituality:

> She said that it was a hard life, a hard thing that they went through, that when they were in residential – they were all shipped off to residential school – and the abuse and every she endured there. It was beaten into them that our ways were bad and she witnessed her

> grandmother getting beaten because she was a spiritual person… So, that's what my mother grew up with, but she never told me that, you know. And I know I suffered for years because everybody was scared because of the way I was and nobody wanted to acknowledge it and everybody hoped it would go away. And as a result, I suffered, personally because nobody knew how to take care of me, you know. But the only thing that I have to hang on to is my mom did try to explain that to me and I could better understand. So, I was really angry as a young person, angry, I was mad at the church. Like, "who has the right to do that, who in their right mind, who if they believe in God would do that, how can God do that?" And I was mad. (pp. 29-30)

This section highlights the tensions in navigating her anger at Catholic prohibitions of Stó:lō spirituality alongside her positive experiences of Christian spirituality:

> I was always kind of like angry and I wouldn't practice because I thought, "this is wrong." But at the same time, I believed in God, I knew that feeling you get when you pray that no human being can give you. I knew the feeling when we all prayed, whether was for the meal or whether it was at night, but I was really confused. All I knew was that I wanted to pray but I didn't want to pray with them…what's wrong with this picture? And at that time, my husband and I were young, if you said anything about the church or anyone who practised the church other people would say, "oh, yeah you're a hypocrite…because you practise your ways *and* you want to go to church." (pp. 30-31)

This quote relates the experience of returning to the Catholic church for confession and Mass:

> I remember going to my little church, Mass was at ten or eleven, well you go to Mass here in Chilliwack, they have a Mass at eight, a Mass at nine, a Mass at ten and eleven-

> thirty or something. Well, when we got to church everybody was filing out and here you have these two Indian people rushing up and the priest is standing there shaking hands with people and he looked at us and we looked at him and…Steven said, “we want to say confession Father.” We didn't know that Mass (was starting] five minutes later, right. And you don’t say confessions before Mass like how we grew up. You go on the night before, or whatever. But Father looked at us and goes, “come with me.” And he takes us into the back and here's this big alter and here's these pews and he takes us into this back room, his room and Steven said confession and then I said confession and then we went out and we held up Mass. All the congregation was waiting the Father goes out there and he says, “thank-you for waiting.” And then everybody is looking at us and we walked in front of all these people to sit down and you could tell people were wondering, “what's going on here?” And it was kind of neat but… that's when we went back to church, the Catholic church. (pp. 32-33)

Community resistance was a result of Dr. Point’s participation in Catholicism, and here she discusses the decision to return to church for the sake of her kids:

> We weren’t treated very well by some of our own people, even some of [our] own family because we were church-going Indians, yet we practise our spiritual ways, our own ways. And I think the best thing that ever happened is ... but at the same time, I thought, “It’s not for you, I'm doing this.” And I realized, how are my children going to know what the church is if I don't show them. So as a parent, I wanted my children to be able to have that too. But, how are they ever going to know if they have never been to church, right? (p. 33)

Not everyone, however, was judgemental of Dr. Point's practice of both Stó:lō spirituality and Catholicism, as illustrated by this story about interacting with a Catholic priest:

> So, we started going to church and took flak from our people, like I said. But, I was working in Chehalis at the time and Father Gary was in Mission. I was getting to a point where I was comfortable with my own spirituality and that and I remember – I don't know why – I was comfortable with Father Gary. And I don't know why. He's not much older than me, if anything he might be younger. He was sitting beside me in the longhouse and we just finished having this great big Chehalis day celebration. And for whatever reason I turned to Father Gary and I said, "Father…I'm going to leave now because I'm going on a four day fast." And he turned to me and said, "oh, pray for me," and he holds my hand, he said, "pray for me because you cannot get any closer to God than that." And I said, "I will Father." Then I felt so good. And I think, at that time, my husband and I began to realize that it really doesn't matter who you pray to or how you pray because your prayers all go to the same place. But we still weren't popular in the eyes of some people because we believed that. But, it didn't matter. So, we fasted and I would go in the lodge and fast for four days and pray and then I would go to church on Sundays and then I practiced our own spiritual way. And it was a real wonderful experience.

Facing criticism about her Stó:lō and Catholic practices, this quote reflects how Dr. Point reconciles her approach to practicing both Stó:lō and Catholic traditions:

> I've had people ask me, "you know, l see you go to church and I see you take communion at funeral and I see you praying and yet you go to the longhouse and you do these other things…" And so I'll tell them, you know, I said, "I must be really bad because I need all

> sorts of help." (laughter) And really, that's all it is, I really don't believe that God imposes rules – and to me when I look at all the religions and all the spiritualities, they have the same underlying values and principles and beliefs that ultimately it's all the same thing when you look at it. It's kindness, respect, and that belief in the higher power. And I believe that all people are supposed to be spiritual people, that we are spiritual people here having a human experience. But, we're so removed from spirituality that people have been taught to be afraid of it and to me that's not right. I do know that, I do know that the spirit knows too and that God knows and I believe that God understands and gives us every day and every minute and every hour gives us opportunities for belief. And I'm always grateful for all that I have and I give thanks all the time.
>
> And yes, I still go to church and yes I still practise my own spirituality and I give thanks for that all the time…and for that understanding. And I only pray that other people will obtain this form of spirituality and I believe all people need it. And that, to me, is what's been lacking in our communities because our spirituality was taken away, forcibly taken away. (p. 34)

Following her conversations with Dr. Point, where these quotes come from, interviewer Christie Shaw (1998) offered this conclusion on the complexities of Dr. Point's story:

> This personal narrative reveals the way in which one Native woman came to understand relationship to Christianity. However, it also serves as testimony to the lasting effects of missionization and government assimilation policies. Her experiences of tension in the community are not centred in the nineteenth-century xwelítem conflicts between Catholics and Protestants. Rather they focus on the split in her community between those

who embrace Christianity and those who value traditional spirituality and practices. (p. 35)

As I read Dr. Point's story, I was reminded again of Dwayne Donald's (2021) emphasis on the need to tell new stories as an important practice for navigating the intersection between settler and Indigenous beliefs and practice. Within the complexity of Stó:lō responses to Christianity, then, I return to the task of this project, which is to connect the relevant knowledge of this place to areas of education in my own work. How do examples of Stó:lō self-determination, such as Dr. Point's story of wrestling with Stó:lō spirituality and Catholicism, inform my practice of unlearning and relationality as an educator in Stó:lō Téméxw?

7.3.4 Curriculum Considerations: Learning from Stó:lō Self-determination and Christianity

When I first read Dr. Gwendolyn Point's story, I was immediately drawn to the honesty and messiness in which she shares about her experiences with Christianity as a Stó:lō woman. Her reflections of wrestling with Stó:lō and Christian identity, spirituality, and religion highlight the complexity at the intersection of Indigenous experience and settler religion that defies easy categorization. Returning to the analysis of British Columbia missionaries from Jan Hare and Jean Barman (2006) in their book *Good Intentions Gone Awry*, their reflections on the legacy of Christian superiority are relevant here: "We have been careful to think of Aboriginal people who engaged in Christianity as something other than converts. Despite the term's historical currency in writing on missionary work in Canada, we believe it overstates the case" (p. 258). As Dr. Point's story illustrates, she did not lose her Stó:lō identity and community in identifying with Christianity. The assumptions that conversion to Christianity involves the complete renunciation of all other commitments, traditions, and experiences, then, in line with Hare and Barman's

observations, certainly is an overstatement. The case of Dr. Point's own journey of navigating both Stó:lō spirituality and Catholic religion, then, serves as one example that offers important lessons for educators seeking to engage the complexity of settler Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw. Here I share a few lessons I am learning.

7.3.4.1 Avoid Oversimplification

One lesson for any approach to studying Stó:lō spirituality and Christianity is to resist the urge to accept binary depictions of Stó:lō experience that impose colonial logics onto Indigenous experience. For settler researchers and educators seeking to better understand the dynamics of Stó:lō Téméxw, such as the presence of Christianity as I am doing here, a challenge is to avoid overgeneralizations so common in attempts to categorize research. For example, in considering the complexity of Stó:lō experiences of Christianity, such as Dr. Point's story, questions emerge that beg for categorization and clarity. Who is Christian? What makes a person or community Christian? Can a person be Stó:lō and Christian? Who determines the answers to these questions? These types of questions reveal an implicit quest for certainty, that as Dr. Point's story illustrates, is not possible in the subjectivity of her experience as both Stó:lō *and* Christian.

A few years ago I had the chance to interview Switametelót, Patricia Victor, Stó:lō Elder, educator, and Pentecostal pastor for a writing project on Christianity and reconciliation, and she cautioned against the common settler need to categorize Indigenous experiences at the intersection of Indigenous ways of being and knowing and Christianity (Warkentin, 2016). First, she noted the importance of recognizing the problem of conformity:

> We need to get rid of the attitude that everyone needs to fit into mainstream society in the same way. Here, tolerance alone won't lead to reconciliation. Rather, we need all people to be walking together in a good way. This means reconciliation is by nature relational

> and ongoing. This Indigenous perspective of reconciliation allows all of us to be free in who we are as individuals, but also committed to journey together. (Warkentin, 2016, para. 7)

Second, Switametelót stressed the importance of Indigenous communities working out for themselves what the integration of Indigenous spirituality and Christianity involves:

> There is no one generic Indigenous spirituality to integrate, therefore each Indigenous community must do this hard work—working alongside Indigenous traditional leaders so that we can clearly understand the intent, the meaning and the value placed upon these traditions. (Warkentin, 2016, para. 11)

7.3.4.2 Supporting Stó:lō Self-Determination in Religious Identity and Practice

Both Dr. Gwendolyn Point's story and Switametelót's insights highlight the importance of Stó:lō self-determination when it comes to the legacy of Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw, an emphasis that also showed up in my conversations with Stó:lō research participants. Si:yémiya explained how the government bans on Stó:lō traditions and spirituality (e.g. potlatch ban) were influenced by the role of Christianity as the settler presence grew in the Frase Valley in the 20th Century. As bans were lifted and Stó:lō communities began to return to traditional practices, Si:yémiya described how conflicts emerged amongst Stó:lō communities, including some that still will not return to Stó:lō spiritual practices out of their commitment to Christianity. While he lamented the ongoing conflict from this legacy of settler Christianity, Si:yémiya also emphasized the importance of giving individuals and communities the respect to navigate these tensions for themselves.

In my conversation about Christianity with Stó:lō Grand Chief Clarence Pennier, he focused on the importance of relationship amongst the various religious groups in Stó:lō

Téméxw. We need to “get to know each other,” Grand Chief Pennier stated, and instead of the perspective of “my god is better than yours” ask the question, “How can we work together?” In the “different ways of looking at life and development in this territory, how can we change it to make it better?” (personal conversation, May 30, 2024).

In discussing the legacy of Christianity with Q’um Q’um Xiiem, she observed how there are examples in Stó:lō communities in which people have faced the tensions between Stó:lō Spirituality and Christianity and found ways to accommodate both worlds. Looking to the wisdom found in Stó:lō experience, Q’um Q’um Xiiem noted, “Somehow the Elders were able to figure it out and live these two worldviews.” And one reason this was possible was examples of Christian leadership that displayed a different posture from the superiority that was so common in the Christian contexts. As she described, there were “priests who actually…made space for Stó:lō spirituality when there was a death, a funeral, you know there was a combination of both Stó:lō and Roman Catholic protocols, practices” (personal communication, June 5, 2024). Q’um Q’um Xiiem’s examples highlight the need for openness and respect, an important posture in engaging religion and spirituality, but also in how we consider the influence of religion and spirituality in education.

Learning from these examples of Stó:lō experience with and reflection on Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw has highlighted the importance of self-determination for Stó:lō people and communities to navigate their relationship with Christianity, particularly in discerning what role Christianity has in Stó:lō Téméxw today. Yes, some of the patterns of settler superiority established by missionaries and early churches persists in Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw yet today – I see an opportunity for religious studies scholarship to take up historical and sociological analysis in several important areas that go beyond the scope of this study. For

example, the repeated use of the term “Bible Belt” to describe parts of Stó:lō Téméxw (Dart, 2012; Olsen, 2019) highlights a need to understand the influential role of American-style evangelicalism in the region’s politics and culture. There is also a need to build on the insights on Christianity within areas of Stó:lō Téméxw history and culture provided in the collection of essays, *Being the Church in Abbotsford* (Dart et al., 2013). Such research could investigate how these insights are informing present and future areas of Christian representation in business, politics, and education, bringing further understanding to the ongoing role Christianity in this place. There are examples of Christian communities who are currently interrogating the history of settler superiority by acknowledging and apologizing for past wrongs, such as Mennonites apologizing to Sumas First Nation in Abbotsford (Sumas First Nation, 2023). Highlighting ways that Christianity and Stó:lō communities are connecting aligns with Dwayne Donald’s (2021) challenge to educators to contribute new stories that seek to restore broken relationship and find new ways of relating to one another and the land.

With my own background in community-based experiential education, this research journey has led me to ask, what is my part in telling this new story? What is my role as educator in Stó:lō Téméxw developing experiential curriculum in this place? Considering these observations and the aims of this project to allow the relevant knowledge of synoptic inquiry inform curriculum development, an idea has emerged for a university course or community-based workshop that explores the themes of Christianity and land in Stó:lō Téméxw. As a way to experiment with how synoptic text research informs curriculum development, in the next section I briefly sketch initial ideas for a curriculum project that combines interrogating settler religion with the land-based experiential learning.

7.3.4.3 The Place of Christianity: An Experiential Education Curriculum Idea

Background: As I have just outlined in the examples of Christianity's early growth in Stó:lō Téméxw, church buildings became a visible physical presence of Christianity and settler society throughout Stó:lō Téméxw, a presence that remains to this day. A drive down Clearbrook Road in Abbotsford, for example, reveals church buildings on nearly every block. Despite increasing multi-religious and secular expressions throughout Stó:lō Téméxw, the physical presence of Christianity remains significant, a prominent reminder of how the ethos of superiority exhibited by early Christianity lingers on today. The prominence of church buildings within the cultural landscape of Stó:lō Téméxw was recently captured by photographer Landen Sperling (2022) in this published Instagram project "Bible Belt." Over the course of one year, Sperling photographed every church in Abbotsford, but does so mostly from indirect angles as if the photo was taken walking or driving by. There is an ordinariness to ways these church buildings are present in place that illustrates my observation that the ethos of Christianity has been built into the landscape.

In this sense, church buildings operate in the similar way Dwayne Donald (2009, 2012a) suggests Canadian forts are a physical reminder of the settler-Indigenous boundaries established by the structures of Canadian society. Church buildings are the physical presence of the superiority imposed by Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw. With the presence of so many church buildings, then, the asserted superiority of Christianity is visible everywhere. The idea for a course or workshop on Christianity and land in Stó:lō Téméxw emerges from this context. By engaging the wisdom of land-based teaching of Stó:lō cultural tours (Stó:lō Tourism, 2024), for example, alongside critical reflection on settler Christian history and culture, this curriculum idea

intends to introduce participants to the lesser known, uncomfortable, and complex stories of encounters with Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw.

Course Description: This interdisciplinary course introduces students to the study and experience of religion and place, with a specific focus on Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw. Exploring the connections between how religious belief and practice are enacted in place through missionaries, churches, and residential schools, students will come to understand how the contextual expressions of religion and spirituality are interconnected with the land. To engage these topics, the course will combine lectures, guest speakers, and place-based experiential learning in Stó:lō Téméxw in partnership with local religious leaders, practitioners, and communities. An orienting focus in the course will involve learning from the wisdom and traditions of enduring Stó:lō connection to the land amidst settler religion and spirituality.

Course Outline:

1. Introduction to the study of religion and place, with a specific focus on Christianity
    a. Reference the settler colonial roots of Christianity that found expression in missionaries, churches, and residential schools.
    b. Introduce settler responsibility to acknowledge the truths of this history and contribute to the necessary changes needed to support Indigenous survivors and communities impacted by settler Christianity.
2. Overview of theoretical directions for the course/workshop
    a. Critical place-based education: introducing the importance of addressing the problem of placelessness in education, including religious studies.

b. Indigenous land-based education: highlighting how practices of unlearning and relationality in connection to the land can inform ways of engaging religion and land, including Stó:lō spiritual beliefs and practices.

3. Survey of the history and culture of Christianity in Stó:lō Téméxw and where that fits into the religious landscape of the region.
4. Introduction to Stó:lō connection to the land, with an overview of the impact of Christianity on historical and present Stó:lō tradition and spirituality.
5. Visits to religious places with a lens for decolonial interrogation and conversation (e.g. church, synagogue, temple, gurdwara).
6. Next steps: Exploring decolonial directions in religion and education in Stó:lō Téméxw through stories of past and present practice in religion/spirituality.

Pedagogy: I envision this course team taught by a combination of educators and community members to best represent the variety of perspectives that interdisciplinary inquiry into religion and place requires. Pedagogical practice would include lectures and discussion on critical and decolonial inquiry in religion (e.g. Avalos, 2023; Henry, 2016; Sandhra, 2024), land-based activities in partnership with Stó:lō Tourism to teach on place and land in Stó:lō Téméxw, and individual experiences that combine reflection and walking on the land (Donald, 2021). Additionally, any texts used to supplement the content and experiential activities would prioritize Indigenous authors reflecting on the legacy of Christianity. This choice follows the example of curriculum researchers Balzer et al. (2023) who propose texts that address the tensions of power in the legacy of colonialism, including accounts of Indigenous experiences to counter "familiarity, safety, and complacency" and introduce participants to "unfamiliar, vulnerable, and discomforting stories" (p. 30).

Next steps: This is an initial idea that I would want to develop further in collaboration with other educators and community members in Stó:lō Téméxw, which goes beyond the scope and time I have within this current project. Next steps, however, will include first meeting with potential collaborators, such as representatives with Stó:lō Tourism, relevant faculty at the University of the Fraser Valley (e.g. Religious Studies, History, Indigenous Studies), and other community members (e.g. church leaders, inter-faith community groups). Next, I would draft an initial plan and submit to the appropriate channels either within the University of the Fraser Valley or with a community partner organization (e.g. Mennonite Central Committee Indigenous Neighbours program). Because many variables would need to be considered in steps 1-2, I am hesitant to plan beyond this step.

7.4 Conclusion

This chapter has considered how settler superiority was represented in the ways that missionaries and churches in Stó:lō Téméxw demanded conformity and established presence on the land, particularly in relationship to Stó:lō communities. In examining these snapshots into history, I have experimented with ways that curriculum research can learn from this relevant knowledge, including the complexities they represent. These examples highlight how educational structures, such as co-op, can reflect settler assumptions within Stó:lō Téméxw, and my reflections on areas for new approaches are my initial attempts to experiment with the type of ICP research this project is experimenting with. In the final chapter, I summarize the lessons and directions in unlearning and relationality that have emerged in the course of this research on unsettling education in Stó:lō Téméxw while also discussing some additional areas of relevant inquiry that were beyond the scope of this project.

Chapter 8: Reflections on the Journey of Unsettling Education in Stó:lō Téméxw

> In the context of Canadian education, place-stories can help people reread and reframe their understandings of Canadian history as layered and relational, and thus better comprehend ongoing Indigenous presence and participation. (Donald, 2009, p. 10)

As I arrive at the conclusion of this dissertation I feel like I am only beginning to learn the place-stories of Stó:lō Téméxw and consider Stó:lō presence and participation within higher education in this place, and specifically within the areas of my own work as educator here. How does one complete research that is by design open-ended? The stories I have heard and the stories I have told speak to the ongoing nature of unlearning and relationality in addressing the continued complexity of Stó:lō and settler presence in this place. So, while I seek to conclude this dissertation, I realize a tension between completing this project and the ongoing nature of this integrative of curriculum of place (ICP) research. But instead of resolving this tension, I use this conclusion to consider how the iterative, contextual, and ongoing nature of ICP research has been and will continue to be essential to my journey of unsettling education in Stó:lō Téméxw. I share some of the principles for ICP research that have emerged from my learning along with the lingering questions I have raised throughout this project. Considering these directions, this conclusion is less of an ending to my research than it is a step in my ongoing journey.

Returning to the idea of this project as a collection of snapshots has been a helpful way to frame concluding this dissertation that also acknowledges the ongoing directions in ICP research. This project is just one snapshot in a moment of time in a particular place, each topic and story contributing to an image of unsettling education in Stó:lō Téméxw, that while

important in relating concepts, stories, and experiences of unlearning and relationality in curriculum research, is anything but complete. No doubt there are many other possible snapshots of unsettling education in this place.

8.1 A Snapshot of Stó:lō Futurity

I begin this conclusion, then, with one more snapshot of my own experience of place. It was during my final phase of writing this research that I sat in a room full of educators and community members in Stó:lō Téméxw and listened to a fascinating lecture on the history of Indigenization at the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) as historian, educational leader, and professor emeritus Eric Davis reflected on his 30-plus years as part of the institution (Davis & Hardman, 2024). The event was in commemoration of Canada's National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and there was a somber energy in the room as events like this one are intended to remember the atrocities committed against Indigenous people as part of Canada's residential school program. As I looked around the room and sensed the energy around me, I was grateful to be part of an institution and community that was opening itself up to historical introspection and consideration of learning and growth for how to engage Indigenous wisdom, people, and land in our work together.

As Davis finished his lecture, I waited for the respondent to enter the stage, as the program had indicated that the university's Associate Vice President of Xwexwílmexwawt, the Halq'eméylem name for UFV's office for Indigenization, Shirley (Swelchalot Shxwha:yathel) Hardman would be speaking as well. And then, without seeing her enter the stage, I heard her begin to speak.

Her voice echoed through the room with warmth and wonder as she began to speak from somewhere off stage. She shared a story about a journey on the land to a place by the river that

was meaningful to her. Her story related the importance of the water in nourishing her connection the land. I was struck by the tone of her voice and vividness of her words evoking the experience of connection to water and land. I thought of my learning about sqwélqwel – Stó:lō personal stories and accounts of life in this age – and how Hardman's story represented the wisdom of Stó:lō story. What a beautiful account of Stó:lō experience, I reflected as Hardman shared her gift of storytelling.

I thought the brief story was the conclusion of the event. But then the narrative continued and I observed Hardman's story of connection to the land shift from present reflection to imaginative futurity, a vision of connection to the land that spanned time and people to capture the possibility of what a shared journey of connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw could look like generations from now. Hardman shared a vision of walking on a university campus, describing a series of experiences in which people on this campus welcomed her with generosity and care, speaking Halq'eméylem words and phrases, and relating interactions with Elders and the land that were commonplace in the routines of university life. As I listened, the warmth of Hardman's voice exuded both a deep satisfaction for the experiences of this vision and a wisdom in relating this hopeful future to us as an audience. I heard in her voice someone who had received the gift of connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw and who was simultaneously sharing that gift with us in her presence and in her words. As she concluded sharing these snapshots of connection to language and land in her vision, I found myself wondering about my own journey: Where is this journey of unsettling education going for me? What does the future hold? Hardman's story did remind to me to keep learning from the past and interrogating realities in my present as this project has attempted to do. But her sharing also inspired me to listen to the imaginative possibilities that are emerging in this place.

I began this dissertation with a story of protest and resistance to change, a story that represented ways settler culture expects the privilege of status-quo to remain, including the ongoing limits that such social structures have placed on Indigenous populations. This perspective looks back with nostalgia and hope to restore some notion of the "good ole' days" by resisting change. As political scientist Ezgi Elçi (2024) notes in his study on nostalgia and populist movements, "nostalgia is a longing for a time and place that is distant and displaced from the present by providing a sense of predictability, safety, and familiarity that feels like coming home" (p. 315). The cries for freedom of those protesting government health mandates were compelled by a vision for the future based on a hope to return to the past.

This concluding story offers an alternative vision of the future. Instead of a dream to return to some sort of idyllic past, the vision I heard for education in the future of Stó:lō Téméxw was rooted in the imaginative possibilities of Indigenous resurgence. This vision dreams of a time in which land and language is not just a topic for decolonial analysis and activism, but a shared experience of life in this place, an experience that sparks connection and care to people and land within the experience and place of education. As an example of Indigenous futurity, Hardman's vision models interconnectedness across generations – the Stó:lō teaching of tómiyeqw and connection to seven generations are embedded in the story, a vision of the future rooted in connection and responsibility. The vision relates to Indigenous science fiction writer Lou Cornum's (2015) observations about the future:

> Indigenous futurism is centered on bringing traditions to distant, future locations rather than abandoning them as relics. Indigenous futurism does not care for speed so much as sustainability, not so much for progress as balance, and not power but relation. (para. 8)

It is with these reflections on the stark differences between populist nostalgia and Indigenous futurity that I consider how this project has wrestled with selected histories of the past as a way to inform analysis in the present and possible directions for the future. I offer comment on how this project of unsettling education in Stó:lō Téméxw relates to relevant areas of curriculum research informed by critical place-based and Indigenous land-based education, along with reflection on how a relational approach to synoptic text inquiry offers an example for curriculum synopsis that other unique contexts could benefit from. I also summarize ways this project has answered the research questions that I began with, including a note on some of the challenges and limitations I experienced along the way. But in this summarizing reflection, I am attentive to where this research goes from here, exploring ways to keep telling this story of unsettling education in Stó:lō Téméxw as part of the much larger story of unlearning and relationality, part of the "new story" that Dwayne Donald (2021) invites educators to share.

8.2 The Journey of Unsettling Education in Stó:lō Téméxw: Lessons in Unlearning and Relationality

In reflecting on where this project of unsettling education in Stó:lō Téméxw has come, I reflect on this summary with my original research goals in mind:

1. Engage a variety of theoretical directions to inform my curriculum research in Stó:lō Téméxw
2. Innovate a methodology for unlearning and relationality
3. Learn from and with Stó:lō teaching, people, and land
4. Interrogate settler coloniality in Stó:lō Téméxw and education
5. Experiment with decolonial curriculum praxis

In reflecting on how each of these goals were addressed in this dissertation, I first summarize what emerged as the main focus for each goal in the project. I follow this summary with discussion of key lessons and lingering questions in unlearning and relationality to trace my own journey of ICP research while also noting some of the strengths and limitations in this project. Each goal also speaks to the contribution this project makes in various fields of educational research, such as curriculum theory, educational research methodologies, settler-Indigenous relationships, decolonization in education, and curriculum praxis.

8.2.1 Navigating the Particularities of Place: Theoretical Directions for Curriculum Research in Stó:lō Téméxw

What began as an interest in place-based education to inform my work in experiential education and interdisciplinary curriculum evolved into a process of navigating the particularities of place (Donald, 2020) in Stó:lō Téméxw. Emerging in this process was a combination of theoretical approaches to curriculum and pedagogy that I would come to call an Integrative Curriculum of Place (ICP). Bringing together concepts inspired by the examples of research as métissage (Chambers et al., 2008) and braiding (Elwood et al., 2019), I drew from the fields of critical place-based and Indigenous land-based education to orient this project around the concepts and practices of unlearning and relationality (Donald, 2022). This approach has required ongoing awareness of my positionality as a settler educator in Stó:lō Téméxw through interrogating the logics of colonialism (i.e. unlearning) alongside walking in connection to Stó:lō teaching, people, and land (i.e. relationality). These theoretical directions informed curriculum research that wrestles with complex knowledge, experience, and relationships that characterize the complicated conversation that is curriculum, a lesson I have learned repeatedly from curriculum theorist William Pinar on a theme that spans his work (e.g. Pinar, 2012, 2015).

Emphases on unsettling research (Regan, 2010), critical place-consciousness (Greenwood, 2012), and ethical relationality (Donald, 2009) complemented curriculum as complicated conversation, combining to frame why unlearning and relationality were fitting directions in ICP research. The orientation towards unlearning has been a way to align this project with decolonial directions in education that are intentional about interrogating the ongoing legacy of settler colonialism. A lens for unlearning has been a way for this project to respond to the observation from the *Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures* collective on their discussion of challenges in decolonial change: "We have found that there is a significant gap between people's intellectual ability to acknowledge these patterns in the abstract and their affective and relational abilities to identify and interrupt when they or others embody these patterns in action" (Stein et al., 2021, p. 28). Defining unlearning as a practice of "decentring, denaturalizing, and unlearning colonial logics" (Donald, 2022, para. 9) within the context of curriculum research has been a way for this project to serve as a sort of case study within the larger body of Canadian decolonial curriculum research (e.g. Brunette-Debassige et al., 2022; Daley et al., 2024; Donald, 2012b, 2022; Jaber et al., 2024; Mooney, 2021; Poitras Pratt & Bodnaresko, 2023).

Likewise, with an emphasis on relationality as epistemological (i.e. engaging complex and conflicted sources of knowledge), contextual (i.e. occurring within the particularities of place in Stó:lō Téméxw), and social (i.e. emerging within relational connections), ICP draws from a variety of theoretical directions and reflects on the breadth of possibilities in contemporary curriculum research in which no one theoretical orientation is dominant (Wearing et al., 2020). Evident in his reflections on decolonization and curriculum in Canada, I return to Donald's (2022) analysis as he provides important questions and commentary that have guided my approach to relationality in this project:

> What expressions of knowledge and knowing flow from an education that emphasizes kinship connectivities and relational renewal? What kind of human being emerges from such educational experiences? These are questions without clear answers. However, they are also questions that educators must begin to carefully consider as part of the much larger struggle to unlearn colonialism. (para. 17)

Like unlearning, including a lens for relationality serves as an example of how settler educators can face the complexity of these questions that are without clear answers, yet still proceed to wrestle with possible answers in connection to their own location. I hope that these theoretical directions for unlearning and relationality can serve as my contribution to decolonial research that includes relationality and contextuality (e.g. Elwood et al., 2019).

Developing ICP as a theoretical orientation has been a complex process as I wrestled with the strengths as well as the limitations of these directions. By making the development of a theoretical lens part of my research itself, there is the risk of perpetuating ways that decolonial research on place, particularly by non-Indigenous scholars such as myself, can remain somewhat abstract and missing connections to practice. Early in my project I came across this critique from Métis educational researcher Gregory Lowan-Trudeau (2017): "While there has been much theorizing about the potential for expressing Indigenous concerns through writing in the spirit of a critical pedagogy of place, there has been very little demonstration of what this actually entails" (p. 512). For example, to avoid abstract approaches to decolonization in education, some suggest that language of land should be prioritized over language of place in theories of decolonization and place-based education. In discussing the importance of land in Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang's (2012) article "Decolonization is Not a Metaphor," critical place-based educator David Greenwood (2019) notes how the authors emphasize land to "push settler culture to

acknowledge its ongoing occupation of Indigenous land, and challenge others who use the term to examine their relationship to settler colonialism" (p. 367). The ICP emphasis on relationality in research is in part to attend to the practical realities of land in decolonial curriculum research. Shirley (Swelchalot Shxwha:yathel) Hardman (2024) challenges universities to engage the realities of the land on which they are situated:

> *Indigenization is about the university finding belonging to the place in which it is found.* Post-secondary institutes must embrace and teach a deep understanding of the First Nation people who have been a part of, held onto, and stewarded this land and territory since the beginning. Simultaneously, post-secondary institutes must acknowledge and teach about the colonization that has been endured by the First Nation people in the territory wherein the post-secondary institution sits. (p. 232, emphasis in original)

Greenwood (2019), while not conceding the value in theorizing about both place *and* land, does acknowledge the importance of practicing relationality as educators, noting how the insights in both critical place-based and Indigenous land-based education challenge educators to "develop practices that continually support our own ontological becoming—in relationship with ourselves, each other, the land, and the cosmos itself" (p. 368). So, I recognize the risk of abstraction remains, which is also reflective of the larger discourse on decolonization in education. My practice of combining theoretical inquiry into the history of Stó:lō Téméxw with relational connections and curricular praxis in my own work, however, shows that resolving tensions between theory and practice is not necessarily possible or even desired. As a settler educator committed to my own journey of unsettling research and education, my approach to theory and practice contributes to Donald's (2009) call for theorizing that can address the complexities of settler and Indigenous knowledge and experience: "What is needed is a theory of métissage

focused on colonial experience that demonstrates that Aboriginal peoples and Canadians have deeply historical relationships that continue to manifest themselves in ambiguous ways to the present day" (p. 9). Like other settler researchers joining the decolonial work within place-based education (e.g. Seawright, 2014), I hope readers have found the theoretical directions of this project suitable for engaging such complexity. I view the iterative, contextual, and relational model of ICP as a framework that could spark creative curriculum praxis from other educators in Stó:lō Téméxw and within other contexts.

8.2.2 Discerning the Stories to Tell: Innovating Methodology in a Relational Approach to Synoptic Text Inquiry and Decolonial Curriculum Praxis

It was the ICP emphases on unlearning settler colonialism and fostering relationality within contexts of education that fostered an interest to engage research that practiced these concepts within my location in Stó:lō Téméxw. Facing the complexities of settler colonialism and Stó:lō teaching, people, and land, I was inspired by the invitation for educators to tell a new story within the particularities of their own place (Donald, 2021). But what story would I tell and how would I tell it?

These questions highlight how the methodological components to this project contribute to scholarship in curriculum research methodologies. Here is where my project draws from the concept of bricolage within approaches to critical research (Kincheloe, 2011; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005), the ways various methodologies can be utilized in interrelated ways to address complex realities within education and its context. As a strong proponent of the necessity of this approach in addressing "the social, cultural, epistemological, and paradigmatic upheavals and alterations of the past few decades," educational researcher Joe Kincheloe (2011) offers this overview of bricolage, which I found particularly helpful for my own work as a doctoral student:

> In the best sense of Levi-Straus's (1966) concept, the research bricoleurs pick up the pieces of what's left and paste them together as best they can. The critics are probably correct, such a daunting task cannot be accomplished in the time span of a doctoral program; but the process can be named and the dimensions of a lifetime scholarly pursuit can be in part delineated. (p. 179)

The methodological directions that emerged in this project reflect my own process of naming the complexities of what I was embarking on, research at the intersection of settler history and culture, Stó:lō teaching, community, and land, and work as an interdisciplinary and work-integrated learning educator. Realizing that I would not find one perfect methodology to align with the theoretical directions of unlearning and relationality within an ICP framework was an important step in freeing me to select methodologies appropriate for my journey of picking up the pieces available to me as best I could. The result was a relational approach to synoptic text research with curriculum examples appropriate to this project, but also reflective of the type of iterative and contextual research I anticipate in my own lifetime scholarly pursuit. Combining research conversations with Stó:lō educators and leaders, historical and cultural analysis of synoptic text inquiry, and experiments in curriculum practice in my own work, each method has provided an angle to explore unlearning and relationality within my ICP framework. This type of flexibility to adapt to the contextual nuances of the research reflects the critical place-consciousness (Greenwood, 2012) in curriculum research that I had hoped to engage at the start of this project.

The research conversations with Stó:lō educators and leaders were a rich experience of relationality within the research, not only providing invaluable insights into Stó:lō teaching and experience, but being an experience of personal connection with Stó:lō individuals as we got to

know one another during the meetings. Learning from and with Stó:lō community also contributed to unlearning as I was introduced to ideas that challenged my assumptions about my own settler beliefs and practices as well as my understanding of Stó:lō ways of being and knowing. I recognize that there are limitations to the research conversations within this project, particularly in considering calls for collaborative research with Indigenous communities (Chambers, 2008; Gaudry, 2018; Jones & Jenkins, 2014). While my connections to Stó:lō individuals was accountable to Stó:lō research protocols in Stó:lō Téméxw as part of the Research Registry with the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, these connections were still primarily one-directional (i.e. me learning from Stó:lō teaching). I have been careful, then, not to equate my project with the type of collaboration between settler and Indigenous people and knowledge that other examples of métissage exemplify (e.g. Chambers et al., 2008; Donald, 2009), though some of my curriculum development work in co-op education involved collaboration with Stó:lō educators within my work as I share below. Additionally, while Stó:lō teaching in my reading and conversations urged research at the pace of relationship, there have been times when the process of relational connection has not aligned with the priorities of doctoral timelines. There are several Stó:lō individuals who did not have time or availability to meet with me but indicated interest in my research and openness to connect in the future. So, while my academic responsibilities pulled me forward, more time could have allowed additional conversation to occur. Recognizing this limit, however, is one reason I hesitate to call the end of this project a conclusion but more a signpost on my ongoing journey of relational research in this place.

Synoptic text research provided an approach to discern the appropriate topics within Stó:lō Téméxw history and culture. I can remember at the beginning of my project feeling an

impeding sense of being overwhelmed about the many possible directions the project could take. What parts of Stó:lō Téméxw history and culture would I focus on? How would I decide? What I thought was a problem, however, turned out to be the exact questioning that synoptic text research seeks to address by seeking what knowledge is most worth considering when the complexities of place, people, and knowledge is examined (Pinar, 2006b). Through my survey of historical and cultural knowledge, along with the research conversations with Stó:lō individuals, the theme of connection to the land emerged as a relevant area of inquiry on unlearning and relationality amidst the complex and conflicted knowledges and experiences of Stó:lō and settler histories and cultures. And while these topics provided helpful direction for this specific project, the open-endedness of synoptic text inquiry (Schubert, 2010) has left space to raise additional questions without feeling the pressure to address every aspect of connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw. Potential areas for future research could include analysis of other selected histories of Stó:lō Téméxw (e.g. Stó:lō and settler politics and land) as a way to further examine unsettling education in this place. I also recognize that Stó:lō Téméxw as a place of inquiry is limited in scope within the larger of field of curriculum inquiry, yet the project serves as an example of how the complicated conversations raised in synoptic text inquiry can be applied in generative ways within local contexts.

As an additional method of ICP research, the curriculum examples provided an opportunity to experiment with the praxis of unlearning and relationality in ways that reflected themes emerging from the research conversations and synoptic text research. Noting a need for additional examples of decolonial praxis early in my project, the curriculum areas I considered within interdisciplinary curriculum and work-integrated learning were an opportunity to move beyond the theoretical analysis of ICP and test the implications of unlearning and relationality.

Wary of the ways settler educators can exercise "settler moves to innocence" by avoiding the incommensurability of decolonization (Tuck & Yang, 2012, pp. 9-28), navigating the challenging task of implementing ICP directions within my current work has been a way to face the practical realities of the "unsettling work of decolonization" (p. 4). I anticipate the wrestling that was part of this process, such as interrogating and responding to the presence of neoliberalism within co-op curriculum and programming, will be an ongoing part of my work.

Together, research conversations with Stó:lō individuals, synoptic text research on topics of connections the land, and experiments in curriculum praxis have combined to form a collection of research perspectives into unsettling education in Stó:lō Téméxw. The reflections on Stó:lō and settler perspectives and experiences in Stó:lō Téméxw on the topics of foundations for connection to the land (Ch. 4-5) and practices of responsibility to the land (Ch. 6-7) represent my own journey alongside other Stó:lō and settler researchers and writers who modeled connection to the land in research and education (see Buker, 2012; Carlson, 1997; Hardman, 2024; Heaslip, 2017; Naxaxalhts'i, 2007; Oliver, 2022; Point, 2015; Reimer, 2018; Victor, 2012)

8.2.3 Research with Open Hands: Learning From and with Stó:lō Teaching, People, and Land

As the methodological practices were designed to consider, ICP emphases on unlearning and relationality are not just conceptual, but relational and experiential. And as a settler researcher and educator, learning from and with Stó:lō wisdom, people, and land has been an ongoing journey in this project. Reflecting on different aspects of connection to the land throughout the project has been a gift of Stó:lō wisdom and experience that I receive with appreciation and responsibility to witness to in respectful ways (Carlson, 1997). The understanding and experience of Stó:lō foundational teachings (e.g. learning from sxwōxwiyám)

and examples of responsibility (e.g. as taught in sqwélqwel) have contributed to areas of unlearning and relationality within my work in higher education in important ways, such as the importance of honouring Stó:lō paradigms of knowledge, learning from the formative role of Stó:lō stories, and centering Stó:lō self-determination.

I remain convinced that a way forward for education to address the complexities of the world amidst social challenges at local, regional, and global scales, is the experience of learning from and with Indigenous communities within the particularities of place. As I discussed in outlining theoretical directions in Chapter 2, as my interest in critical place-based education grew, repeatedly I found the trajectory of critical place-based education scholarship was moving towards knowledge and practice in education in which Indigenous teaching had always been. And I do not say this to diminish the important directions within place-based education that emphasize social and environmental responsibility in tangible ways (Greenwood, 2019). There is an opportunity for dynamic collaboration between place-based and Indigenous land-based education as I have tried to explore here in this project. I do think, however, that place-based educators would do well to pause and acknowledge that any sense of innovation emerging in critical trajectories within place-based education is in large part due to the persistent presence of Indigenous people and on the persistence of the land itself. In this project, to experience the richness of Stó:lō wisdom, community, and land in the various aspects of this research, has not been an exercise relating my ideas by themselves, but a journey of witnessing to the gift of Stó:lō teaching in ways that engage relationship and shared experiences of connection to the land in Stó:lō Téméxw.

These relational directions align with calls to support Indigenous resurgence and self-determination (Corntassel, 2012; Simpson, 2016), which for Stó:lō communities has involved

asserting rights and title to land and renewing traditional practices such as language recovery, land-use practices, and ceremonies. In learning from these expressions of Stó:lō connection and responsibility to the land, the implications for education have been oriented around how the structures of education have historically limited these expressions of Stó:lō knowledge and traditions, while also advancing ways that curriculum can foster the renewal of these ways of knowing and being for everyone to experience.

As I become more involved at the University of the Fraser Valley as this project concludes, this connection to Stó:lō knowledge, people, and land is emerging in new directions with colleagues and work in relationship with Stó:lō people and communities. Whether it is further development in co-operative education programming and curriculum or the opportunities for continued learning from and with Stó:lō community, I envision continuing the journey of unsettling education in Stó:lō Téméxw in the years ahead.

8.2.4 Examining the Politics of Place: Interrogating Settler Coloniality in Stó:lō Téméxw and Education

The role of unlearning within ICP research has been a critical component in this project as part of unsettling education in the various topics I was addressing. Within each of the topics of synoptic text inquiry and curriculum consideration, unlearning has involved critical analysis of how settler colonialism continues to inform education in Stó:lō Téméxw. I am reminded of Si:yémiya's discussion with me about the legacy of the Halq'eméylem term xwelítem. He related how the hunger in which settlers showed up on the land can still be illustrative of ways that settler society shows up with practices of unsustainable consumption on the land and in relationship to Stó:lō wisdom and community. Unlearning, in this context, is not just learning from the past but also examining the present. This approach to decolonial directions of

unlearning align with other settler educators and researchers doing similar work in place-based education (Gahman & Legault, 2019; Greenwood, 2019; Seawright, 2014) and in historical and cultural research on Stó:lō Téméxw (Carlson, 1997; Heaslip, 2017; Reimer, 2018). As I interrogated settler assumptions in areas such as placelessness in education, the politics of dispossessing the land from Stó:lō communities, and Eurocentric conceptions of knowledge that dehumanize Stó:lō people, each topic highlighted the settler "epistemic norms associated with the politics of place" (Seawright, 2014, p. 562). The result, as I wrestled with in each topic, is that developing an awareness of the settler assumptions in culture and education – fostering a critical place-consciousness (Greenwood, 2012) – is a way for settler educators like myself to begin taking steps towards alternatives approaches to curriculum that do not repeat the problematics aspects of settler education. I should note a limitation to this type of decolonial direction is for critical consciousness to remain just that: consciousness. Understanding and awareness is an important step, one which I am continually engaging. But as Tuck and Yang (2012) challenge in their commentary on the limits of decolonization,

> We are asking them/you to consider how the pursuit of critical consciousness, the pursuit of social justice through a critical enlightenment, can also be settler moves to innocence - diversions, distractions, which relieve the settler of feelings of guilt or responsibility, and conceal the need to give up land or power or privilege. (p. 21)

I take this challenge seriously, especially as someone who gravitates towards theorizing as a valuable practice in and of itself. Decolonial analysis, as this project has examined in varying ways, is an important practice. But returning to the questions from the authors of *Developing Stamina for Decolonizing Higher Education*: "How much effort are you, and others in your institution/office/department, willing to put into your own learning (and unlearning)?" (Stein et

al., 2021, p. 33). Decolonial research is not effortless; it comes with a cost in the disruptive change that inevitably ensues. I am not sure this challenge to settler researchers is ever fully resolvable considering the complexity of settler colonialism's ongoing legacy within higher education, including the areas of curriculum research I have been exploring in this project. But before I get caught in paralysis at the incommensurability of this realization, I hear Shirley (Swelchalot Shxwha:yathel) Hardman's words ringing in my ear from the event on Indigenization at UFV that I mentioned above: "The most important thing to do is to do something; the most important thing to stop doing is to stop trying" (Davis & Hardman, 2024). My hope is that this project has gone beyond trying and I am committed to continue experimenting and implementing practices of unlearning and relationality in higher education curriculum.

A unique aspect of this decolonial study, compared to the broader analysis within much of the decolonial research in higher education research, is the contextual nature in which the topics of settler interrogation were illustrated within the particularities of place (Donald, 2020) of Stó:lō Téméxw. Again, while this project is not a typical case study, its contribution to decolonial research in higher education serves as one, a journey of connecting the emphases within decolonial educational research (Battiste, 2017; Brunette-Debassige et al., 2022; Donald, 2009; Lin et al., 2021; Tuck & Yang, 2012) to my own place and praxis of higher education curriculum. The practice of unsettling settler stories, as I do here, is a contribution that settler researchers can make to Indigenous education as it brings understanding and insight into the settler experience in respectful ways, another way of practicing reciprocity as settler researchers and educators. The examples of early explorers, land-use decisions, and missionaries, churches, and residential schools are all contextual ways in which possessiveness and superiority were

instilled within the settler ethos of this place. And considering the legacy of these examples in relation to higher education curriculum can serve as an example for others who are doing similar work of situating curriculum within the particularities of place in their own contexts.

8.2.5 Experimenting with Decolonial Curriculum Praxis: Interdisciplinary Curriculum and Work-integrated Learning

Experimenting with decolonial directions within areas of curriculum itself has provided the opportunity to test the implications of the synoptic text inquiry in my journey as an educator in this place and in the current context of my work. It is this type generative and contextualized process that leads Canadian curriculum theorist Cynthia Chambers (2008) to suggest that "a curriculum of place is a wayfinding" (p. 122), a type of "knowing as you go…learning a place by dwelling and traveling in that place" (p. 123). Being able to connect the discussions of unlearning and relationality from the synoptic text research on Stó:lō Téméxw history and culture to the concrete realities of curriculum praxis has provided me with this type of dwelling in place as a researcher. While this has meant a narrow focus on the context of my own curriculum areas that is not applicable to all higher education curriculum contexts, this limit to the research is keeping with the challenge from decolonial scholarship to address the complexities of settler colonialism in contextual ways connected to the Indigenous people and land of its location (Donald, 2012a, 2020; Styres, 2019; Tuck & McKenzie, 2015; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Additionally, the curriculum examples themselves have provided opportunity to develop research that contributes to scholarship in both interdisciplinary community-based learning and work-integrated learning (WIL). For example, I have given two conferences presentations on the developments discussed in this study of UFV's co-operative education (co-op) program, including one at the conference meeting of the Association of Co-operative Education and Work-

Integrated Learning, a gathering a WIL leaders and practitioners from institutions across British Columbia. The response to these presentations was a combination of supportive interest and curiosity about implementation. Listeners exhibited a shared interest to develop decolonial directions in co-op while also noting some the challenges I have noted in this project regarding the neoliberal socio-economic context of co-op. I also have a recently published peer-reviewed article that examines ideas in decolonization and co-op, again drawing from aspects of my learning in this project (Warkentin, 2025). Sharing my research within the field of WIL scholarship adds to the growing examples of research on decolonization and Indigenization in WIL in higher education (Arney, 2021, 2022; Duder et al., 2022; Eady et al., 2022; Nielsen et al., 2022).

The curriculum examples have also been an opportunity for this research to experience glimpses of the type of collaboration that is important for practicing relationality in decolonizing curriculum development. Bringing diverse perspectives into conversation within curriculum – "a textual encounter of diverse perspectives that creates a provocative interpretive engagement" (Donald, 2009, p. 8) – has challenged common assumptions and invited conversation and connection with other people and perspectives in areas of my work. Noting the importance of collaboration in decolonial curriculum research, here is where my experience updating UFV's co-op curriculum has begun to include collaborative approaches to curriculum development in my partnership with Stó:lō colleagues, employers, and communities. For example, the process of updating the co-op assignments included contributions from UFV's Indigenization specialists in considering how the activities reflected Stó:lō teaching on experiential learning and connection to the land. While I recognize it was only one part of the co-op curriculum updating process, it was an experience of collaboration with Indigenous colleagues that I hope to continue in further

co-op program development. Opportunities for further collaboration with Stó:lō communities and co-op include facilitating ways to be more intentional in supporting Indigenous students (Arney, 2022) and expanding the focus from students and curriculum to include Stó:lō partnerships for work placements (Duder et al., 2022).

I also plan to disseminate this research in the form of a collaborative curriculum guide or workshop based on ICP research and the topics in the synoptic text inquiry in this project. I had this idea in my initial research proposal but realized that the time and resources required to develop relational connections, facilitate partnerships, generate ideas, and produce a guide or workshop is better suited to the long work of ICP research within the network of relationships of a particular place. While I decided against this direction fairly early in the project, the idea has been lingering in my mind. I realized that individual curriculum examples were only one aspect to reflecting on the implications of ICP synoptic text inquiry in Stó:lō Téméxw. In each area of curricular experimentation, I found myself noting insights and questions that could inform any educator in Stó:lō Téméxw connecting their work to the particularities of place. As my writing was concluding, I began to imagine an ICP curriculum development guide produced in collaboration with colleagues at UFV. Modelled after examples aimed at supporting decolonization within higher education (Antoine et al., 2018; Stein et al., 2021), this curriculum guide, in the form of a written document or workshop, would offer practical suggestions and reflection questions that other higher education practitioners in Stó:lō Téméxw could use to improvise the implementation of unlearning and relationality within their own curricular praxis. As of this writing, I have had preliminary conversations with a few individuals who have expressed interest. I look forward to exploring this possibility of ongoing collaborative practice of unlearning and relationality as the story of ICP will no doubt continue.

8.3 Conclusion

As I conclude the written portion of this research, I can relate to Tuck and McKenzie's (2015) description of place(s) as "sites of presence, futurity, imagination, power, and knowing" (p. xiv). In examining areas of unlearning and relationality in higher education curriculum research in Stó:lō Téméxw, this project has been a journey of experimenting how "decolonizing conceptualizations of place confront, undermine, disavow, and unsettle understandings of place" (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015, p. 49). In the process of this unsettling research, the combination of theoretical development, methodological innovation, relational synoptic text inquiry, and decolonial praxis has informed a journey of navigating the particularities of place, discerning the stories to share of Stó:lō and settler connection to the land, and experimenting with the implications of this research in the context of my work with interdisciplinary community-based and work-integrated learning curriculum. I conclude this dissertation, then, not so much as an ending but as a step on my ongoing journey of decolonization (Regan, 2010). Where do I go from here? In this final section, I consider this question by summarizing important principles I have learned in this research. I also include some of the lingering questions that I raised throughout this project that reflect the continuing journey of unsettling education. While these principles and questions emerged from my own work in Stó:lō Téméxw, I hope the insights I share can inspire others seeking to connect curriculum and educational research to the particularities of their own places.

8.3.1 The Value of Personal and Contextual Research Directions

Discerning a theoretical and methodological approach that fit my own interests, abilities, location, and work was invaluable to this project. My development of an Integrative Curriculum of Place (ICP) oriented around practices of unlearning and relationality emerged from own

research journey as an educator and researcher in Stó:lō Téméxw. While I draw from examples of other research that related to the theories and methods within this project, the combination of critical place-based and Indigenous land-based education with synoptic text inquiry, relational connection, and curriculum examples reflects the unique characteristics of this project. Having research that fit with who I am and my research location helped me maintain progress in the project as it sustained my interest and energy to engage the research fully. Because place and experience are not static, it is not surprising that the iterative process of research development has left many lingering questions for how I will continue to explore educational research in Stó:lō Téméxw: What are the next steps in each of these research directions, for myself, but also in my connection to other educators and Stó:lō communities? Committed to a posture and practice of ongoing discernment about how to best conduct educational research in Stó:lō Téméxw, what other areas of my work will be informed by this research? Where is further interrogation of settler history and education needed in Stó:lō Téméxw? What are some new directions to follow in interdisciplinary and WIL curriculum, or other areas of inquiry within the broader context of my work in higher education?

8.3.2 Relationships Take Time – Keep Showing Up

Each time I engaged with Stó:lō knowledge, people, and land was a rich encounter and reminder of my own connection to Stó:lō Téméxw as a settler resident, educator, and researcher. Whether it was a conversation, event, ceremony, or reading, if I felt isolation in my research or work, or pressure to rush through a section of the project, the notion of relational connection with people and land of Stó:lō Téméxw renewed my focus and reminded me that I was doing this work for that purpose. Engaging research at the pace of relationship taught me to hold my plans loosely and to keep showing up when invited. This lesson helped me realize this project has been

a small step in a much longer process of building relational connection into my work. Each in their own way, the research participants reiterated the Stó:lō invitation for ongoing relationship – connection is ongoing in life; connection in education and research reflects this same principle. Notable questions I have raised throughout this project illustrate this ongoing connection: How will the relational connections in this project evolve? What new relationships will emerge, including connection with people who were not able to participate at this time? What additional areas of unlearning and relationality will emerge in the future? What additional Stó:lō stories do I need to hear and learn from and witness to?

Grand Chief Clarence Pennier's question for education lingers with me as formative for the posture and practice of this ongoing research: "What can you do to give back to our future generations?" (personal communication, May 30, 2024). While intended for students, it applies to educators as well. I feel like this project has barely scratched the surface of my understanding and experience of Stó:lō wisdom, community, and land. What will be my next steps of unsettling and giving back?

8.3.3 Unsettling Research is Personal

As a settler researcher and educator, I quickly realized the personal implications of this project as interrogation inevitably included reflection on my own journey within settler history, culture, and education. The question from Nisga educational researcher Amy Parent was present throughout this research in Stó:lō Téméxw: "What can I learn about myself in relation to this land experience?" (Parent, 2021). Through personal reflection, I was able to recognize where my own complicity in settler systems of society and education needed to be addressed and alternative perspectives considered. Questions raised in this project will continue to guide my personal engagement with unsettling research: Where does abstract analysis give the illusion of

change and prevent the integration of theory and practice in the complexities of my work in Stó:lō Téméxw? Am I ready for the unknowns of this unsettling as I continually reflect on my own location as a settler working at a public university in this place? In seeking new ways to understand settler history, culture, and education, what is my part in telling these stories as a settler researcher?

8.3.4 Change is Incremental and May Not Always Be Possible

My work with co-op curriculum and programming has illustrated the incremental nature of change. I view the co-op curriculum examples in this project as first steps to challenging the narrow assumptions that exist in common co-op programs and incorporate more holistic ways of approaching this form of work-integrated learning. What are the next steps for change? In asking this question, I realize some factors related to change are much broader than the curriculum itself, such as the neoliberal context of higher education that co-op exists within. Where more formal connections and partnerships with Stó:lō communities and employers is a next step I have identified, I do not know yet if co-op will be a receptive site for change when its structures are designed to support neoliberal socio-economics often opposed to Stó:lō priorities (e.g. resource extraction). I wonder if Stó:lō partnerships may be better suited to other forms of WIL or community-engaged learning activities that can directly support the needs of the community (Taylor, 2022). This wrestling with next steps for co-op highlights how some of the questions that I have asked about co-op throughout this project remain. Considering my own work with co-op at UFV, this project has raised specific questions about co-op within the socio-economic context of Stó:lō Téméxw: What are Stó:lō priorities in socio-economic development alongside settler society and education in Stó:lō Téméxw? How do issues related to historical land dispossession (e.g. land claims and treaty negotiations) inform present day Stó:lō relationships

with settler institutions and businesses? What role does education such as co-op play in these Stó:lō priorities, both for Stó:lō communities and for public institutions such as UFV? And regarding co-op generally, I continue to ask, what are the limits to this change? Amidst the pressure students face to ascend the capitalist ladder of individual success, how is co-op left at the whims of these cultural pressures? What is the possibility of a critical pedagogy of work in co-op? Where does co-op risk perpetuating assumptions of settler superiority? What role does co-op have to play in addressing the neoliberal challenges in education more broadly?

In concluding this dissertation with these principles and lingering questions, each topic invites a posture and practice of curiosity and openness to learn, grow, and change in this journey of curriculum research in Stó:lō Téméxw. My experiences of unlearning and relationality in education and research, then, will continue in Stó:lō Téméxw as it is the location, to again return to one of my favourite quotes from William Pinar (2015), in which for me "the particularities of history, culture, and subjectivity become entwined" (p. 128).

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Appendices

Appendix A Research Introduction

RE: Potential research conversation

Hello [name],

I am a UBC doctoral student currently working on research that focuses on decolonization and education in the Fraser Valley (Research supervisor: Dr. Alison Taylor). The project explores ways that higher education curriculum can practice walking in a good way with Stó:lō people and places, developing curriculum oriented around unlearning and renewing relationship in connection to the land (i.e. Stó:lō Téméxw). The project is tentatively titled, "Unsettling Education in the Fraser Valley." The research is being conducted in relational ways by engaging local people and places in relationship, inviting input, feedback, critique, and conversation from Stó:lō community members.

In conversation with Sonny McHalsie about my research, he suggested I speak with you about your wisdom and experience of connection to the land as Stó:lō. And personally, knowing you have been involved in First Nations education in a variety of contexts, is this something you would be interested and available for?

These are some of the topics Sonny recommended we discuss:

- What does connection to the land mean for you and your community?

- How has your connection to the land been influenced by the legacy of settler colonialism?
- Where do you see opportunity for educators to practice unlearning and renewed relationships within Stó:lō Téméxw?

If you are interested in participating in a 60-120-minute conversation with me, are you okay if the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre provides me with your contact information? Or, you can contact me directly by email or by phone.

Please note, as UBC doctoral research and as a project that has been accepted into the Stó:lō Research Registry at the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, the interview recordings, notes, and any transcripts will be stored securely with UBC as well as transferred to the Stó:lō Library and Archives. Additionally, as part of my doctoral research, parts of our conversation may be used in the written dissertation with the understanding that they will only be included with your permission and the opportunity to review the material prior to completion of the project. Before our conversation, I will also provide a more detailed consent form outlining the focus of our conversation in the context of my research project.

I look forward to hearing from you! Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David Warkentin

Appendix B Interview Questions

The following interview questions were developed to reflect practices of ethical relationality (Donald, 2009) and to reflect Archibald's (2008) storywork teachings:

Respect, reverence, responsibility, and reciprocity:

- Tell me about yourself, your name, family, [nation/band if Stó:lō], land, and anything else you think is important to who you are.
- What does connection to the land and place mean to you? How do you relate to Stó:lō Téméxw? What does connection to the land mean to your community?
- Where have you and/or your community lost connection to the land due to the legacies of settler colonialism?
- How do you understand the term xwelítem to describe settlers? Is there a Stó:lō story or teaching that is important for me to know?
- What is important in these topics? What is missing? What cautions/concerns to you have?
- How can this research represent Stó:lō wisdom and knowledge in a good way in this project?

Holism, interrelatedness, and synergy:

- What does connection to the land mean for higher education in the Stó:lō Téméxw?
- When it comes to connection to the land, what do educators in Stó:lō Téméxw need to unlearn?
- Conversely, where can educators in Stó:lō Téméxw renew relationship to the land?

Appendix C Co-op Land-based Learning Outcome and Land Acknowledgement

Preamble: Using the address of your co-op employer's location (if working remotely, use the address of the company's main office), identify the local Indigenous communities/groups/tribes using the website Native-Land.ca or Whose.Land. Spend some time exploring the various links provided to learn more about the Indigenous people and land of your work term location. For further reading, see Davey (2023), "Indigenous Inclusion In Employment." (University of the Fraser Valley, 2024a, 2024b, 2024c)

Work Term #1:

Learning outcome: Recognize the Indigenous people and land of the work term location.

Activity: Based on your learning, list 2-3 topics of learning that were noteworthy to you. For example, if you are working within Stó:lō Téméxw (land/territory), is there history, characteristics, or programs that stood out to you (see https://www.stolonation.bc.ca/)? Why did you pick these? (University of the Fraser Valley, 2024a)

Work Term #2:

Learning outcome: Relate work experience to the priorities of the Indigenous people and land of the work term location.

Activity: Based on your learning, what are some potential areas of connection between your co-op job and one of the Indigenous communities you learned about? For example, if you are working within Stó:lō Téméxw (land/territory), is there a Stó:lō program or service

(https://www.stolonation.bc.ca/programs) that your job or industry is related to? (University of the Fraser Valley, 2024b)

Work term #3:

Learning outcome: Develop practices to engage the priorities of the Indigenous people and land of the work term location.

Activity: Based on your learning, reflect on the following: Does your employer have any current connection to local Indigenous communities/groups/tribes? What are some challenges that Indigenous people may have in your field of work? What are 1-2 practices you and/or your employer could engage that is connected to a program or service of one of the local Indigenous communities/groups/tribes (e.g. https://www.stolonation.bc.ca/programs)? (University of the Fraser Valley, 2024c)