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The words for what you are feeling articulating reconciliation in Canada from an Indigenous research paradigm

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The Words for What You Are Feeling: Articulating Reconciliation in Canada from an Indigenous Research Paradigm

Ian Robert Calliou

*A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the University's
requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy*

September 2019

**Coventry University and the Centre for Trust, Peace, and Social
Relations**

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Ethics Approval



Certificate of Ethical Approval

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This is to certify that the above named applicant has completed the Coventry University Ethical Approval process and their project has been confirmed and approved as Medium Risk

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This research and thesis took place in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. The work was located on the original lands of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, Anishinabewaki ᐃᓂᓂᐱᐅᐸᐅᐸ, Métis Nation, and Dene land.

It is also the land of Treaty One.

I pledge to respect the land and the Peoples. I vow to honour the practices where necessary and maintain a relationally accountable practice when on the lands and off them.

I recognize that the gift of knowledge and collaboration is sacred, I will honour my part of this sacred relationship.

From my people, the Michel First Nation, I thank you for your hospitality.

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Abstract:

This thesis asks, “what is an Indigenous perspective of reconciliation in Canada”? Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing have been a marginalized practice in Canada. Indigenous peoples have been harmed by colonization and their knowledge practices disempowered. This thesis seeks to examine the discourse of reconciliation in Canada through the lens of Indigenous knowledge practice.

Using an Indigenous research paradigm to challenge traditional narratives of reconciliation this thesis uses core values of relational accountability to derive a research framework. This practice centres around the concept of a research ceremony, the circular relationship between the knowledge holder and researcher, and interpretation of data through an Indigenous worldview that is cyclical between the researcher and their relationship with the world, knowledge, and the research.

Research on reconciliation has not privileged Indigenous knowledge practices as a central feature. Indigenous knowledge in academia, although emerging into mainstream practice, has been marginalized into Native Studies departments at Canadian universities. The practice of reconciliation has been top-down and informed by western practices rather than embedded in the contextual frame.

This thesis suggests that there are three main types of reconciliation that are linked and equally essential: social, structural, and existential. This thesis examined how connecting these three nodes created a nexus of understanding based on an Indigenous worldview.

Reconciliation could be described as a tree, it can be a healthy tree, vibrant and resilient where its roots, branches and leaves, and sustenance are all in harmony. It can also be a sick tree, its roots embedded in colonial harm, the branches and leaves suffering visibly, and its sustenance a trickle and insufficient. This thesis uses the image of the tree to frame the knowledge and experiences of reconciliation and contemporary Indigenous life between the two concepts.

This framework of a tree can be a useful concept for contextualizing reconciliation practice, embedding a deeper understanding of the relationship between different types of reconciliation and the need to privilege Indigenous voices in the reconciliation dialogue.

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Glossary of Terms

CBC- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

CFS – Child and Family Services

CEP – Common Experience Payment

INAC – Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

IRSSA - Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement

MMIWG – Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

NCTR – National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation

RCAP – Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

SA TRC – South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission

TRC – Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

UNDRIP - United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Their view of the land is different from ours. We're connected to that land. How I understand it, as a woman, and again, a mother, my position as a life giver, I'm in a ceremony now where I'm reflecting on how I'm going to grow a human and bring that life into the world. And I know that we're connected to our mother through our umbilical cord in that placenta that's attached to our mother. When you take that placenta and you've flipped it upside down, you can see that it resembles a tree. So, in our communities that still have connection to that ceremony, they dance with that tree, the tree of life. And so, with this mentality, I think I understand a little better now that I've started to embark on a journey of my own. Reclaiming my culture is that we're very much connected to this land, just the way that we were to our mother inside of her womb, by that tree of life or that placenta. And so, we view the world differently because we're so connected to what that land, what that world, has to offer us. That's our nourishment, that's our air, it's oxygen that we breathe.

(Spence 2017)

In their *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies* Smith, Denzin and Lincoln begin the epilogue with an epigraph: "until the lion can tell [their] own stories, tales of the hunt will be told by the hunter (2008: 563). Research stories on Indigenous Peoples are being told. Though a decolonial frame has been articulated within the research space, it can be difficult to establish the boundaries of a decolonial space as many of these originate in response to the Western academy. Audrey Lorde stated that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (1984). This is not to suggest that every culture does not have a hammer or an axe but explaining ones' own distinct worldview within the context of the Dominant practice can be like using the master's tools. Maya Angelou writes "I looked up the road I was going and back the way I come, and since I wasn't satisfied, I decided to step off the road and cut me a new path" (1993: 22-23). Taking a new path does not preclude reaching the same destination but there is a tension in how to get to that destination. bell hooks notes

that research can be a colonizing act, “[n]o need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself... [o]nly tell me about your pain. I want to know your story. And then I will tell... it back to you in such a way that it has become mine, my own... I am still author, authority. I am still the colonizer, the speaking subject. and you are now at the center of my talk” (hooks 1989: 204). This thesis is very much concerned with the voices of the colonizer as the author and authority of an Indigenous experience. Using the voices of three key figures of Black feminist thought is important because the challenges they speak are similar to those of oppressed peoples living under regimes of truth and hegemony in contemporary culture. Angelou, Lorde, and hooks authored their own voices within the hegemony of dominant American culture, and dominant patriarchal culture. This these two terms, patriarchy and culture, will be reflected upon later by those that shared their knowledge with me during this research journey. The image of walking a new path is important because this thesis, and any journey, is deeply contextual and individualized. The struggles that authors like those mentioned above are embedded within their own context, but their struggle to establish agency in the face of hegemony is relevant within this work.

This project examines reconciliation in Canada. Indigenous Peoples in Canada have suffered historical, intergenerational trauma and harm coming about from social, structural, and physical violence that has dated back since first contact in the 15th century. One of the main factors in the instigation and perpetuation of harm against the Indigenous Peoples has been a difference in worldview, these have been demonstrated in attitudes of racial and cultural superiority that support the agenda of colonization. Over time the need for reconciliation has increased, but as this word has entered the lexicon of Canadian society, there has been a tension regarding what reconciliation is, and who it is for. Some of the participants suggest that it is simply a way to make non-Indigenous people feel better about their role in the historic and intergenerational trauma. Some of these critiques come from the fact that reconciliation has been top down and has not privileged Indigenous voices and worldviews.

This thesis seeks to address that gap. As hooks cautions, I do not wish to be just the author and authority. Indigenous Peoples have their own ways of knowing, being, and doing. They have their own ways of doing research. This Indigenous research paradigm is based on Indigenous worldviews and privileges a relationally accountable frame, looking for connections within the physical and the spiritual world. It also recognizes that knowing is a personal experience, one that is contextually based rather than definitionally based. As I suggested, though the 'master's tools' cannot be used to deconstruct and reconstruct understandings of phenomena outside of a colonial frame, each culture may have tools that have their own names, their own genealogies, and their own values that can achieve the same task.

This thesis uses an Indigenous research paradigm to investigate reconciliation in Canada. It engages with Elders and leaders in the Indigenous community. It honours the knowledge shared by these individuals through the research ceremony, offering the sacred medicines, and maintaining a relationally accountable research practice. In analysing the data, it looks to find meanings in a manner reflective of Indigenous knowledge practices. Like the reflection from Spence in the epigraph of this chapter, it seeks to understand reconciliation by drawing out connections, looking for inspiration from the natural world. This thesis uses the symbol of the tree to explain the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous society. Like Spence's journey to reclaim her culture through the connection with the broader world, my own research journey reaches a similar destination, and like Angelou, 'cut me a new path'.

1.1 Situating this Research

This research examines reconciliation from an Indigenous frame. It analyzes the state of reconciliation in Canada for Indigenous People. I will now discuss definitions that will remain persistent throughout this thesis, and how I situate myself in research space.

1.1.1 Definitions

This thesis will use the term Indigenous Peoples to refer to the various nations and Peoples who make up the first inhabitants of Canada prior to contact with the west. This covers the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples (Nagy 2013: 55; Dickason 2006). The use of this term does not imply homogeneity across these Peoples and nations. There are more than 50 distinct linguistic groups within the First Nations. The Inuit have numerous dialects and the Métis mix First Nations and non-Indigenous dialects as well as possessing their own language, Michif (Dickason 2006).

‘Indigenous Peoples’ is widely used in the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (Canada 2015a).¹ Uses of other nomenclature regarding Indigenous People will only be used when it is contextually relevant - when citing a historical document, previously acceptable ‘academic’ terminology, or archaic and outmoded phrases to express policy and thought throughout the relationship between Canada and the Indigenous Peoples. Where there is a substantial breadth of cultural, social, or linguistic variance between the Indigenous Peoples of Canada, there is a universally unifying aspect to the Indigenous experience in Canada: harm and trauma.

In understanding harm, it is important to define it and then contextualize it within Canada. Harm can be defined as the act of damaging either physically or mentally. Within a legal context they expand the definition to state that harm is “loss of or damage to a person's right, property, or physical or mental well-being (2017). Trauma is the effects of harm; if harm is a seed then trauma is the roots. Aguiar and Halseth said that government policies and attitudes contributed to a system of historical trauma that is transmitted through generations in psychological, physiological, and social processes (2015: 5). Chapter Four will discuss these policies and their outcomes. Once harm is implanted it can self-propagate, historical

¹ Its use here as just Indigenous Peoples will be pertaining to populations located in Canada. When used in other contexts it will be accompanied with a geographical locator or the prevailing name for that population. (Such as Maori for New Zealand)

trauma can be re-enacted into addictive and harmful actions that are a means of coping with that past trauma (2015: 11). This is how it is transmitted intergenerationally, when these behaviours that occur out of past harm are externally manifested and experienced by future generations. *Gayanashagowa*² suggests that harm and trauma from today will manifest seven generations from now if it is not addressed and cleansed. Societal symptoms that are seen in Indigenous communities today are rooted in as a consequence of the past (Nutton and Fast 2015).

The harm of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada is deep, endemic, and persistent³. It has roots in first contact between the Indigenous Peoples and the early explorers. Linda Tuhiwai Smith discusses these initial meetings as the start of a process of harming and disempowering (1999: 80). Indigenous cultures and practices were framed through an external, western lens, and those first impressions even informing contemporary attitudes (Smith 1999: 80). Early indications of these attitudes in Canada were evident with the policies around the time of Confederation (Canada 1857: 84-88). Over time, these attitudes diminished, albeit gradually, but many of the structural and social mechanisms for harm persisted (Milloy 1999; Rice and Snyder 2008). This state-sponsored structural violence results in harm that is similar to societies emerging from conflict (Balint and Evans 2010: 5).

Accounting for harm of this scale in society is called reconciliation. But as Chapter 5 will discuss, it is difficult to find an exact realization of the term.⁴ The Executive Summary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada looked at two definitions. First, they note the “re-establishment of a conciliatory state” would indicate reconciliation (2015a: 6). The

² This is part of Iroquois law, it states that every decision must be made with the seventh generation in mind. It will be discussed in detail later in this thesis.

³ For a deep cataloging of past and present context see the 2016 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada Reports Vol I-IV, the 1995 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) Reports and Summary. For an assessment of RCAP see Chrisjohn and Young’s *The Circle Game: Shadow and Substance in the Residential School Experience in Canada* (1995).

⁴ In keeping with the idea of circle in Indigenous culture, this idea of ‘definitions’ should be revisited again after looking at Tafoya’s Principle of Uncertainty.

limits of this definition are that there may never have been such a state (2015a: 6).

Contextualizing reconciliation in the residential school experience allows for the definition to come “to terms with events of the past in a manner that overcomes conflict and establishes a respectful and healthy relationship among people (Canada 2015a: 6).

Both definitions of reconciliation are problematic, when contextualized, because they highlight two things. First, the limited scope of reconciliation in Canada, something that academics and advocates have noted (Jung 2009b: 4; Garneau 2012: 35). This limitation is troubling because it compartmentalizes the harm (Green 2012). Compartmentalizing harm and ascribing the broad goal of reconciliation to this limited frame widens the schism between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples (Ackerman 1992: 71-72). This is because of the perception that reconciliation is an outcome rather than a process (see Chapter 5).

Second, these definitions are articulated without reference to Indigenous understandings of truth and the realization of the national narrative in Canada. This narrative is seen as a false history by Indigenous scholars (Chrisjohn et al 2006; Young 1990). The TRC suggesting that a conciliatory position had once existed has legitimized this myth (Garneau 2012: 35; Rice and Snyder 2012). Through engaging with both the literature and this fieldwork, reconciliation might be better framed through the perspective of recognition and respect (Coulthard 2014). Overcoming past trauma and harm, righting past wrongs through mechanisms such as apologies and reparations is only part of what is necessary for reconciliation. This discussion will become more salient in the literature review where the idea of reconciliation is contextualized within several overarching discourses. These discussions will ultimately be placed in juxtaposition with how Indigenous perspectives define reconciliation.

1.1.2 Self in Research

The inclusion of the self in a research design is not new. Researchers can play roles in their own research denoting their ‘membership’ of the studied group or community (Adler and

Adler 1987). It can be argued that the closer one gets to the research subject, the more difficult it might be to recognize one's own bias. The researcher themselves are the sum of their experience, no matter how they self-identify, making any attempt to claim membership problematic (Angrosino 2005). There is also the challenge of over-estimating one's understanding of what they are trying to observe (Maykut and Morehouse 1994: 123). Yet despite these challenges, positionality and self can be powerful tools for the researcher.

The validity of the inclusion of a researcher's personal narrative in their research has been well-established within the field of autoethnography and feminist methodologies (White and Dotson 2010). In Chapter Two there is a suggestion that in Indigenous frameworks "true knowledge is personal knowledge" (Goulet 1998: 247). Raghavan stated that her work was "constitutively dependent on a constant, fluid movement between self-world" in the entire research space, not limiting this reflection in a 'typical' manner (2019: 2). This positionality and bias are not negotiated and placed within one box but reflected on throughout the thesis. My own interest in this study, in understanding Indigenous Canada, human rights, transitional justice, and Indigenous frameworks of understanding, is informed by my heritage and personal history.

I am descended from Chief Michel of the Michel First Nation, an Iroquois tribe that settled outside of their traditional territory. Michel's Band was enfranchised, wholesale, in the 1950s, this was considered a success given the priority of assimilation that has persisted since Confederation.⁵ Despite being enfranchised and not legally 'Indian', my father attended a residential school at Lower Post in Northern Canada. This process of assimilation left him with very little knowledge of his own culture and was further damaged by his own family's disconnect from their ancestral land and Peoples. He would often reflect on the pride of his

⁵ Band refers to a tribal or larger family unit, this is tied to a band number on the registration for Indian Status. It could also be a nation or a part of a larger nation. Enfranchisement was the process wherein Indian Status was surrendered to get the right to vote, own property, leave the reserve, and enjoy freedoms that other Canadians had. In practice it did not lift the restriction for those who chose it.

people, but in a more abstract manner that lacked specificity. During my fieldwork, this reflection has been noted to me by Elders as 'blood memory'. 'Blood memory' is difficult to reflect upon within a Eurocentric western academic conceptualization, but can be summarised as cultural values, teachings, and histories passed on through genetics and shared history. While difficult for me to embrace within my education and cultural framework, my father's feelings informed my intrigue for his culture, and my passion for work that empowers Indigenous Peoples. Raghavan stated that "identities and positionalities are messy, and always lived concurrently" (2019: 7). I do not just place myself within the research journey, I am the traveller of this journey. My research mistakes are stated, a method suggested by White and Dotson in their study within Afrocentric feminist research (2010: 76). I do this so you can see my path and understand my journey.

1.2 Research Question

The research question and the sub-question in this thesis have evolved as the understanding, definitionally and contextually, has increased. Reconciliation is a contested domain (Winter 2014; Matsunaga 2016: 25). One reason for this is that Canada have tried to limit the extent to which they are accountable (Jung 2009; Coulthard 2014), I call this trend compartmentalization. My initial research question did not take enough account of this contested nature. It asked how effective was transitional justice in Canada in dealing with Indigenous Peoples problems? This engaged with the broader literature on transitional justice, but it became evident that its capacity to address the Canadian context in a holistic manner was limited. This discussion will be highlighted in the Context Chapter and again discussed in the Literature Review. Early research in this project relied heavily on the themes of transitional justice. As explained in Chapter Six, this led to confusion.

This confusion was evident early in my fieldwork. The first interview the participant noted an unfamiliarity with the term altogether (Deer 2017), which aligns with literature on transitional justice in settler narratives. Symbolic frames (Wolfe 2013), redress on behalf of the state

(Winter 2013), and political realizations of compensation (Braun 2014) are all identified instead of transitional justice (Matsunaga 2016: 35). Externally, the Government of Canada is aware of transitional justice; it is a major donor of the International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), as well as a supporter of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) (Matsunaga 2016: 36). Internally, the Canadian government is reluctant to ascribe association to those instruments. In the context of Canada, reconciliation is transitional justice (Jung 2009b: 3). As such reconciliation is the term used going forward.

The modified understanding of the transitional justice realizations in Canada informed the framing of the research question to the participants. The original research question was amended to use the phrase ‘reconciliation’. This meant that there should be some tension between the definition of reconciliation, as seen by the Canadian government, and the definition used by Indigenous Peoples. The research question was then revised to become – ***‘what is an Indigenous perspective of reconciliation in Canada?’***

This question places an emphasis on understanding the conceptualization of reconciliation on behalf of Canada, and the realization of reconciliation to Indigenous Peoples. It allows a space for the Indigenous research paradigm to provide dialogue on what reconciliation means to Indigenous Peoples, and what they think it means for the rest of Canada. This meant that sub questions had to expand within the gaps of understanding or create a space for new knowledge and practice to be generated.

First, ‘Who is reconciliation for?’ Reconciliation, and its related industries, was identified earlier as a colonizing practice (Stanton 2011: 13). What should be a decolonizing sphere has used political, social, and cultural agendas to continue the act of colonization (Matsunaga 2016). Participants noted that they felt like they were outside of the reconciliation program in Canada, that it sought to disempower them further (Spillett 2017; McMahon 2017; Bone 2017). For Indigenous People, resistance to colonization has been a

common theme throughout their history since contact in the 15th century (Hill 2009; Jamieson 2017; Regan 2010: 28; Smith 2010; Corntassel, Chaw-win-is, and T'lakwadza 2009).

Resistance takes many forms, and it is not only violent and antagonistic. In reconciliation, resistance has occurred at the grass-roots level. There is strong evidence from the participants of Indigenous Peoples using grass-roots mechanisms where reconciliation has not been reached: policing and safety (Favel 2017), faith and social support (Redhead-Champaign), support for women and children (Spillett 2017), the arts (Adams 2017; Monkman 2017), cultural tradition (Bone 2017; Deer 2017), and environmental awareness (Mashkode Bizhiki 2017; Bone 2017; Spence 2017).

The second sub-question asks: what are Indigenous values and needs in reconciliation? Reconciliation needs to account for the inter-generational harm that it has caused. Structural harm and social harm still occur daily in Canada. To inform reconciliation so that it can be more effective at satisfying its implied federal and social agenda, accounting for Canada's past and present treatment of Indigenous Peoples, it needs to avoid repeating the same colonizing mistakes of the past and present. Roberta Jameson, a Mohawk from the Six Nations of Grand River, noted that any work meant to improve Indigenous lives should not come from non-Indigenous, but from those who have been harmed, those whose cultural, intellectual, economic, and spiritual framework has not been valued. To help we need to "open up the space... and listen, even to the silence" (*Ideas* 2017).

It is important to discuss why the research question changed and be reflective about the entire process. It is important because the change to the primary research question only occurred after the fieldwork started. Reflection after the first interview allowed me to re-examine the research question, and subsequently re-interview the participant. It was this

circular engagement, a key idiom in Indigenous culture, which kept reappearing throughout the process.

As discussed in the Chapter Two and Three, there is a need to go further when operating in the Indigenous research paradigm. The researcher must establish a relationship with the knowledge, the transmitter of the knowledge, and be mindful of the ownership of that knowledge (Wilson 2008: 126-127; also see Absolon and Willett: 112 regarding ownership).

This is their research, these are their actions, this is their knowledge. The Indigenous researcher within the Indigenous research paradigm is an observer, collecting a story, and finding a way to store and recall that story as a teaching tool for future generations.

Indigenous research paradigms do not eschew dominant practice, Anderson and Walter noted that methodologies, not methods, injure (2013: 131). This will be expanded upon in Chapter Two but dominant practice in research has sought to use concepts such as bias and positionality to navigate problematic research landscapes, repeating colonial mistakes under the auspices of good intentions.

1.3 Gaps in Knowledge and Original Contribution

Despite their status as one of the most researched groups in the world (Rigney 1999; Smith 1999), Indigenous Peoples have been excluded from contributing to this research (Harris 2002). This has meant that previous research that has studied on Indigenous Peoples, rather than with them, has contributed to the perpetuation of negative stereotypes (Wilson 2008: 16-17) and disempowered their knowledge practice (Smith 1999). From that frame, engaging with the previous research done on reconciliation in Canada has been helpful in outlining the shortcomings on reconciliation within the dominant discourse.

Critical assessments of reconciliation have noted its expansion to include settler narratives (Winter 2014). As the theoretical application of transitional justice scenarios has broadened it has provided a space to examine its capacity to provide remedy for Indigenous Peoples (Nagy 2012; Jung 2009b; Yashar 2012). Scholars have used these theoretical frames to

examine how transitional justice mechanisms can be utilized to be more effective for Indigenous populations (Balint, Evans and McMillan 2014).

Canada's use of transitional justice has been limited to the residential school experience (Matsunaga 2016: 25). Examinations of mechanisms used have centered upon the two truth commissions, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). These have been exercises in understanding their scope and effectiveness, but were done from an external, non-Indigenous, lens (Nagy 2014; Llewellyn 2008; James 2012). Transitional justice in Canada has been critiqued in relation to its capacity to operate in a decolonized setting (Green 2012; Matsunaga 2016; Park 2015; Nagy and Sehdev 2012) and its culture-bound understanding of truth (Nagy 2012). While these have provided a theoretical examination of transitional justice and reconciliation in Canada, there are no major studies on how these themes operate within Indigenous perspectives.

Some of the major works by Corntassel, a Cherokee scholar (Corntassel and Holder 2008; Corntassel, Chaw-win-is and T'lakwadzi 2009), look at connections to Indigenous values such as land and culture as a starting point to understanding reconciliation and transitional justice. Theoretical research has increased, but applied research has not. Research that seeks to engage with Indigenous Peoples, transfer knowledge across social, cultural, and economic nodes is lacking. As the definitions of reconciliation became clearer, they lost their connection to the contexts. This gap in knowledge is directly addressed by this thesis, using Indigenous knowledge practice and perspective to resist and retell reconciliation narratives.

This thesis engages with the traditional sharers of knowledge in the Indigenous communities, the Elders. It looks at contextualizing the definitions within their wisdom. But it goes beyond speaking with just Elders and engages with some of the new keepers of Indigenous knowledge; youth, academics, and artists. These participants were able to contribute their knowledge and provide insight through the Indigenous research paradigm.

While even the theoretical literature on reconciliation in Canada has been mindful of Indigenous cultural frames, it has made the mistake of operating in the same top-down mode, colonizing, or disempowering Indigenous voices. This has created a gap wherein silence (or absence of knowledge) is filled with analysis or assumptions, not with silence and stillness or contemplative observation. This opportunity to observe in the silence holds as much knowledge as a cacophony of chatter (*Ideas* 2017). The state and the academy have been guilty of poor understanding of Indigenous knowledge systems. Any expressed interest has had an agenda, been on their terms, and projected needs not of Indigenous Peoples (Simpson 2008: 75).

1.4 Methodology

This section outlines the methodology used and the considerations that were applied to inform those decisions. It looks at the landscape that the previous research occupied, identifies shortcomings in the representation of that landscape to the aims of the research question, and provides a clear vision for how this research can satisfy those needs. It justifies these decisions, noting the gaps in literature and practice, the needs of the research, and how despite misgivings of the academy, there is a place for the Indigenous research paradigm within the toolkit of research practice.

Research within the dominant frame of the Western academy is a colonizing act (Smith 1999; Wilson 2008; Harris 2002; Brown and Strega 2002). For Indigenous Peoples, research has been an attempt to problematize the Indigenous experience, to reduce their own capacity and consign them to a lesser than status (Wilson 2003; Smith 1999). The application of transitional justice, through the frame of reconciliation, has also been a colonizing act; continuing the harm of previous externally informed policies that placed the wants and needs of the non-Indigenous state at odds with those of the harmed Peoples (Matsunaga; Stanton 2011: 13). There has been an attempt to highlight this imbalance in power but little in the way of changing research practice and public policy (Bartleman 2007;

Cunneen 2001: 146). Noting this gap, this research attempts to contribute to an understanding of reconciliation in Canada through an Indigenous research paradigm.

The methodology chapter (Chapter 3) reflects on these themes. It looks at how the research question informs the methods⁶. Effective research is often caught between the need to define and the need to contextualize. Terry Tafoya borrowed Heisenberg's Theory of Uncertainty to explain this challenge, something especially relevant within Indigenous research. Heisenberg's theory postulated that you can never know for certain the velocity or the speed of an electron at the same time (1995). Tafoya proposed a Principle of Uncertainty wherein you could never know the definition and the context of an idea with absolute certainty, simultaneously. This is because the closer to certainty in defining it, the more removed it is from its context (Tafoya 1995). The same is true for the latter scenario, the closer one comes to the context, the less definitional certainty there is. In Indigenous culture this is characterized as the relational context within knowledge. This thesis sees reconciliation as a concept looking to be defined, categorized, and then solved. Indigenous knowledge, according to Tafoya, is seeing reconciliation as a system to be understood in context, less concerned with defining it and more concerned with seeing the interplay within a larger system. This will be clear when applying the analogy of the trees to the concept of reconciliation, that its connected nature is difficult to ascertain from one perspective or another.

The Indigenous research paradigm refers to a research design that places Indigenous values at the forefront of research decisions (Wilson 2008; Lambert 2014; Martin 2003; Rigney 1999; Steinhauer 2002; Wilson and Pence 2006). It moves the framing of Indigenous People as studied (Rigney 1999; Smith 1999) to studying (Wilson 2008: 15). It can be defined as the control of Indigenous Peoples over the areas of study, presents their

⁶ For using the research question as a guide for deciding methods see: Landman 2009; for using the research question for filtering case study methods see: Yin 2014

worldview as a means for informing the interpretation and dissemination of that knowledge, reflects their values as a collective, and works for the benefit of their communities (Wilson 2008: 15).

First, Indigenous culture has an emphasis on relationships. This is often symbolized by the representation of circles; omnipresent in their knowledge, culture, social practice, and society. The importance of this is that relationality is key to all facets of research. Research for Indigenous people recognizes that context may be the most important element of research. This research engages directly with community leaders, Elders, politicians, academics, activists, artists, and healers. It looks to inform the process of understanding through the eyes of these participants.

This choice allowed for the project to have a strong contextual base. The research was conducted within the Indigenous research ceremony, where knowledge was shared after the gift of a sacred medicine (Carleton University 2017). The emphasis was again this circular nature within Indigenous culture. Knowledge was shared so that it could flow out and back. I saw this process like that of a medicine wheel in Anishinaabe culture⁷. The process of learning and knowing are circular, they are juxtaposed with the need to interpret the knowledge and respect the knowledge. These tensions and attractions naturally fill out into a circular shape.

This research was conducted in Manitoba, Canada. It consisted of 16 semi-structured interviews that are based on the idea of a research ceremony and sharing of knowledge that is an essential part of the Indigenous research paradigm discussed in Chapter Two. The participants are primarily Indigenous -- the two who are not have Indigenous children and strong ties to the community through their work. They are all 'between' the Indigenous and non-Indigenous world through their roles in society. They represent many of the bands and

⁷ The medicine wheel is also present in other Indigenous cultures around the world.

nations of Manitoba, many are considered 'Elders' in the community, a title that is sacred and contains unique considerations for the researcher (Carleton 2017). The roles or titles range as well, there are academics, community leaders, Elders, healers, artists, activists, politicians, and civil servants.

1.5 Research Location

The makeup of the Indigenous nations in Canada is as diverse as is found on any other continent. There are over 60 nations in Canada, each with their own history, many with their own language, and all with different relationships to Canada. This research focuses on the Peoples in Manitoba, one of the provinces in central Canada. It is located geographically in the middle of North America and is a divide between eastern and western Canada. It operates in this middle ground; its economy and culture are unique to Canada having elements that are in many of the other provinces and territories in Canada. This is because Manitoba offers a rich tapestry of many overlapping factors that exist, at least marginally, in many of the other nations.

Manitoba has one of the highest densities of different treaty agreements. Of the eleven 'numbered' treaties in Canada, six are represented in Manitoba (Treaty Commission 2017). It also has the highest population ratio against non-Indigenous in Canada (Canada 2011). Winnipeg, the capital of the province, has the highest population and proportion of Indigenous Peoples of any city in Canada (Canada 2011).

This mix of urban and reserve experience is important to any research because the two experiences are similar, in the continued structural and social harm they face, but are quite different. Many of the legal rights identified with Indigenous Peoples are not valid in the urban environment. This comes with the trade-off of having better, in theory, access to social services, educational, and economic prospect (Ungar 2005: 116; Nadjiwan and Blackstock 2003).

Manitoba also has a very diverse number of Indigenous nations. There are five major nations: Cree, Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Dene, Dakota (Sioux), and Oji-Cree. It also has Inuit Peoples in the north and is considered the ancestral home of the Métis.

Manitoba's relationship with its Indigenous Peoples is also an important element of study. Due to the proportion of the population that is Indigenous, it has a high level of perceived intolerance. Winnipeg was singled out as 'the most racist city in Canada' by Maclean's magazine, a well-respected political and cultural publication (Macdonald 2015).

I also lived in the province for fifteen years. I did my undergraduate degree at the University of Manitoba. I was active in many communities and organizations that were Indigenous or had substantial contact with Indigenous Peoples. I have travelled to many of the reserves and have a social network that includes a wide sample of Indigenous experiences and backgrounds.

1.6 Structure of Thesis

This thesis examines the research question in the following manner. Chapter Two is the Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing Chapter. This chapter establishes the imperative for using an Indigenous worldview in research and introduces the concept of an Indigenous research paradigm. It begins with a discussion on worldviews, noting how an Indigenous worldview evolved in the absence of contact with non-Indigenous cultures for thousands of years. It looks at the elements of connectiveness in Indigenous worldviews, and how the circular pattern is an essential component of this worldview. It then discusses an Indigenous research paradigm. This discussion is guided through by articulating Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing within the research frame. I discuss my own ways of knowing, being, and doing, tying these reflections back to the Indigenous worldview and the concept in Indigenous knowledge that knowing is personal and contextual. Having established my Indigenous research paradigm, I will demonstrate its use within this thesis.

This section flows into Chapter Three, Putting the Indigenous Research Paradigm into Practice. It is important to deliberately establish how this process is occurring. Research has been a colonized space; this thesis is trying to understand reconciliation from an Indigenous perspective because these voices have not been privileged in previous studies and outputs. Some participants suggested that reconciliation has been a colonial project. Using the Indigenous research paradigm as a social contract, a map, and a framework I will state how I designed this study. This thesis interviewed Elders and leaders in the Indigenous community in Winnipeg, Canada. Chapter Three looked at the process of using this method, drawing a comparison to the literature on elite/expert interviews, noting the paradox of using a parallel with a method that could be associated with power imbalances. I then discuss the analysis portion; I explain how previous researchers using an Indigenous research paradigm have met the challenge of interpreting data. I suggest the use of an interpretive symbolic frame of the tree to frame the data in a relationally accountable manner.

Chapter Four establishes the context and background for this research. As suggested in the Introduction, reconciliation comes from historical harm and trauma. Indigenous People still live within a regime of structural and cultural violence. In this thesis I discuss how Galtung defines those terms as well as how the literature identifies their existence in Canadian society. The context looks at this historical harm and how policies and practices have maintained a colonial mindset despite a stated interest in helping Indigenous Peoples. This chapter also looks at the process of reconciliation and works to establish the gap in our understanding of reconciliation from an Indigenous perspective.

Chapter Five is the Literature Review. This examines the definitional aspects of reconciliation. It looks how the practice and theory has evolved historically from a concept within religious doctrine to a process of accounting for schism in society and cultures. It examines four key tensions in reconciliation: forgiveness, justice, politics, and religion. These tensions are mapped within the prevailing literature on reconciliation. The chapter then investigates how these frameworks are applied in practice. It looks at how Canada has

used reconciliation, how its own definitional reality fits within its theoretical space. I then suggest a different framework, based upon Indigenous worldviews and needs in reconciliation. I suggest how Indigenous knowledge acts as a means of interpreting and understanding reconciliation and look at the literature on memory, a key aspect of Indigenous worldview and knowledge.

Chapter Six is the Fieldwork Reflections and Initial Findings Chapter. This chapter is about my research journey. It looks at how my process and practice changed as my knowledge about myself and my subject grew. My original project and attitudes were dramatically altered by the fieldwork and data analysis portion. White and Dotson trace this process in their own research and suggest the importance in sub-altern, decolonial, and Indigenous research to be reflective of the 'dirty' aspects of research, be honest with your mistake and misconceptions, and establish trust with the reader and accountability in your research (2010).

Chapters Seven and Eight take the data collected and arrange it within the construct of a tree. As suggested earlier in this chapter, reconciliation is a tree. The roots of this tree are broad and hidden, as are the aspects of sustenance which support wellbeing. The only visible portion is the trunk, leaves and fruit. In many trees the bulk of the biomass is below the surface. I discussed in this chapter and the literature review how Canada's reconciliation program has been compartmentalized. In doing so it limits the extent that reconciliation can be conceptualized because harm is isolated and obfuscated. These two chapters discuss the concept of a sick tree and a healthy tree and suggest a means of understanding and articulating Indigenous knowledge on reconciliation into a useful frame.

Chapter Nine is the Conclusion. It looks back at the entire process of the thesis, and of reconciliation. It will reflect on some of the ideas that the participants had for reconciliation. These ideas offer new definitions, and new challenges for reconciliation. One important observation is the idea of environmental/existential reconciliation to coincide with the

structural and social forms. This centers around Indigenous values and understandings of the relationship we have with the earth. The real challenge is Indigenous worldviews are clear with their connection with this aspect of their lives, there is the suggestion that non-Indigenous Canadians have lost their 'drum' and do not hear themselves within the music of the earth. This chapter also looked at new gaps established by this thesis. In the process of generating an original and new perspective on reconciliation it was noted that reconciliation is becoming an industry. This industrialization of reconciliation is troubling, and one area of future study suggested is a systematic review of reconciliation literature involving Canada.

Chapter 2. Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing

For instance, a question to a Dene Tha' father of four was followed by a long period of silence. Five minutes went by, and then five more. Thinking that he had not quite heard me or understood the question, I repeated it. He turned his head toward me saying: "Do you think I am deaf? Can't you see that I am sitting here thinking what is the best way to answer your question?" (Goulet 1998: xxxiv)

2.1 Introduction

Indigenous Peoples have their own ways of knowing, being, and doing. Historical developments have informed these different than those of the dominant practice, a divide of geography spanning thousands of years creating a system of understanding unique from the frame used to categorize and, indeed, colonize them since contact (See: Smith 1999). This thesis uses Indigenous knowledge practice as a means of understanding the research questions. This chapter, Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing, serves to bridge the research questions established in the introduction chapter and the rest of the thesis. At the heart of this thesis is identifying both the need for an Indigenous perspective on reconciliation as well as providing a framework for articulating that perspective.

It is important to identify Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing because there is a space in the discussion on reconciliation that has not included them. Research has the capacity to continue the cycle of structural and social harm, undoing attempts at healing. It is important to reflect on the nature of knowledge and research before addressing the research questions themselves. This chapter will look at Indigenous knowledge and establish the framework that the methods chapter will use to answer the research questions.

Indigenous academics have noted that the lack of Indigenous people's agency in knowledge has created a gap in policy, practice, and outputs on social challenges and themes that directly address Indigenous people (Wilson 2008: 20). Wilson notes surveys of literature that identify needs of Indigenous Peoples in society that have not been reflected in practice

(2008: 19). This has meant that programs like education, healthcare, and government have been built upon practices that actively discount Indigenous needs based on their worldviews (2008: 19-20). Many of the participants noted the area of child welfare as an example of this. The child welfare system has been reluctant to build community capacity or resiliency, embrace Indigenous ways of life, and trust that Indigenous Peoples are capable of supporting children and parents in their communities. This is noted in the recent Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) (2019a: 194-195). Wilson sees three gaps created by these attitudes (2008: 20-21). First, the legacy of colonial western worldviews in the institutions promotes ineffective practices despite the increasing recognition that they are outdated. Second, Indigenous experts who are entirely based in a dominant worldview continue to inform change, and their status as 'experts' based on their station within the intelligentsia is seemingly unchallenged due to the dominant worldview. And finally, research and policy based in a western worldview looks at solutions to Indigenous 'problems' from that standpoint. Data is collected, analyzed, and disseminated based on a worldview that lacks relevance to the target population. These research outcomes problematize and hypothesize outcomes that do not reflect a very different set of social outlooks that inform Indigenous ideas of success or wellbeing. These three themes are identified by the participants in the data section, and indicated in the context, and the literature review chapters.

The literature review in this thesis analyses studies in this field that truly intended on generating research on the topic of reconciliation in Canada. But, research on reconciliation in Canada has seldom been framed through an Indigenous lens, has seldom used Indigenous worldviews or Indigenous research paradigms, and not sought to serve the communities that have been harmed with culturally relevant research. Increasingly, Indigenous academics are reflecting the need for Indigenous voices in the reconciliation discourse in Canada (Corntassel et al. 2009). These calls for action are not dissimilar to calls for a decolonized academy and research space (Kunnie and Goduka 2006). To serve

that call, this chapter articulates some Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing as a means of constructing an Indigenous research paradigm. This will be the means through which this thesis will study reconciliation in Canada.

This chapter discusses Indigenous ways of knowing, translates that frame into research practice, and assesses how these practices enable a response to the research questions outlined in the Introduction. Indigenous research has been emerging as a legitimate mode of inquiry within western institutions for more than 50 years (Rigney 2001; Hart 2010; Smith 1999). Its application has been used in a variety of fields: such as healthcare, social work, governance, justice, and education, increasingly, as the needs for culturally relevant inquiry has increased (Simonds and Christopher 2013: 2185). These applications have meant that Indigenous voices have found a space to speak where they had previously been excluded. Indigenous research practice, informed by Indigenous worldviews, has meant that this space has been increasingly decolonized to reflect sharing of knowledge and analysis that fits with Indigenous ways of knowing, reflecting their culture and values. But many of these spaces where Indigenous Peoples are central to the discussion still exclude not only Indigenous voices, but also an Indigenous worldview.

Reconciliation is one of these spaces that has failed to engage with Indigenous voices and knowledge frames. A survey of reconciliation literature notes that it seldom, as mentioned above, uses Indigenous research frames for analysis. And reconciliation efforts have, as this study's participants have noted, sought to build upon non-Indigenous values rather than Indigenous ones. This is further discussed below in the Context and Literature chapters, noting how reconciliation has continued in a colonized frame, both in application and outcomes. Reconciliation has been envisioned by non-Indigenous peoples as a means of solving the problem of the harm caused to Indigenous people, not to solve the structures and attitudes that have harmed. In other words, reconciliation practice has long sought to account for what happened, but not why. Regardless of the purpose of reconciliation, Indigenous voices and practices are essential to any solution because accounting for the

harm is only part of the process, the practice of rebuilding Indigenous society is another important part. To do so, there must be an emphasis on using Indigenous voices in a decolonized fashion to understand an Indigenous perspective, outside of the power structure and oversight of the dominant population.

Previous work on reconciliation in Canada has partially included Indigenous voices (such as the RCAP that evolved to a more comprehensive fashion in the TRC = See: Chrisjohn et al. 1997), but seldom has it engaged with the topic using an Indigenous research paradigm. Noting this gap, this thesis will use my own Indigenous worldview to inform an Indigenous research paradigm to understand an Indigenous perspective on reconciliation in Canada.

This chapter establishes some Indigenous ways of knowing. It will start with a discussion on worldviews and then look specifically at Indigenous worldviews. It will then examine Indigenous research paradigms, how these have evolved and examples of other Indigenous academics' research paradigms. This section will look at the role of relationships in Indigenous research. It will establish the importance of relationships within Indigenous worldviews and knowledge. This discussion will also reflect upon the circular, interconnected, and interdependent aspects which are common in many Indigenous worldviews.

It will then look at the discussion on the Indigenous research paradigm. It will look at how previous scholars have used the term, and how it refers to Indigenous worldviews and ontologies. This discussion will then look at Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing and how those three concepts are essential in creating an Indigenous research paradigm for this thesis.

Finally, this chapter will discuss some of the decisions that go into putting an Indigenous research paradigm into action. It will look at how these practices inform each of the chapters of a thesis. It is important that this chapter sets the stage for how I will conduct my research.

I see the Indigenous research paradigm as having analogues in the dominant practice. This section will translate Indigenous imperatives into these approximations.

This chapter arises from my interpretation of elements of Indigenous worldviews, ontologies, epistemologies, axiology and their tie to forming an Indigenous research paradigm. I have tried not to homogenize all Indigenous Peoples, and I have also tried not to ascribe my worldview for all Indigenous Peoples. This is merely a discussion on the practices that go into defining these categories for Indigenous research and noting the emancipatory, resistance, and cultural imperatives that many have noted before me.

2.2 Worldviews

Worldviews define how a society perceives reality (Underhill 2009: x). These are lenses through which people view, deconstruct and reconstruct the world (Olsen, Lodwick, Dunlap 1992). Hart describes them as “cognitive, perceptual, and affective maps that people continuously use to make sense of the social landscape (2010: 2). This process is largely unconscious, informed by societal practice as well as national and racial mythmaking, and informs almost every facet of one perception. This means that worldviews inform modes of analysis, defining what seems ‘right’ through the familial paradigm. This is described as the ‘dominant’ worldview (Olsen, Lodwick, and Dunlap 1992).

These dominant worldviews can create a system whereby alternative perspectives are discounted based on one’s knowledge frame, or way of knowing. Michael Foucault presented the idea of truth as a regime through the perpetuated dominant worldview (1991). While Foucault recognized that conceptions of truth derived from one’s worldview, were globally in flux (1998), society unconsciously held onto the dominant worldview during periods of crisis. Indigenous academics have noted how this dominant worldview has been used to disempower Indigenous Peoples and subaltern.

Smith describes the process of contact wherein a form of ‘othering’ occurs, which places less value on Indigenous practices than those of the colonizer (1999). Said developed this

idea of 'othering' in his work, *Orientalism* wherein dominant practice created narratives based on the author's worldview and disseminated these 'factual' accounts while disempowering the 'other' culture (1978). bell hooks noted a tension between the practice of Othering and a culture of acknowledgement, the engagement with culture outside of the hegemonic as a voyeuristic, touristic, and re-interpretive practice (1992: 380). As society re-examined the disempowering practices that it had engaged in, it began a second regime of disempowering fueled by the unconscious influence of worldviews. This second regime is the acceptance of alternative worldviews, but filtering them, and judging them, through the lens of the dominant practice. In academic practice, Indigenous ways of knowing are often examined through a foreign lens (Agrawal 1995), as Foucault might suggest, in keeping with the dominant hegemony.

Ermine invokes a strong argument against the dominant worldview and the practices that have emerged from it (1995). Ideology, a function of worldview, in science has defined a schism between the metaphysical and the physical (de Tracy 2004). Critics point out that Western science has validated and categorized the practices of Others in a mode conducive of promoting Western ideology (Ermine 1995: 102). Engels contributed to this discussion, defining ideology as the "attitudes and ideas concealing the real nature of social relations to justify and perpetuate social dominance" (in Battiste and Barman 1995: 102). This mode of thought in Western intellectual practice has encouraged a 'false consciousness' that isolates the construction of knowledge to what is known. It encourages the distrust of the metaphysical or intangible until such point that Western practice could isolate and quantify it within its own realm of understanding. Ermine notes that this has produced a system that is intolerant at best, or outright hostile, at worst, towards worldviews that operate in a frame wherein the metaphysical and the physical are intertwined (1995: 102).

Post-Enlightenment Western approaches to knowledge relied on the assumption that what is known is the sum of what can be deconstructed. Positivism relied on quantifiable evidence as a means of constructing or deconstructing our reality. To compose our reality, the nature

of that reality had to exist in scientific fact. The problem with this attitude is reflected upon by one of the participants in this thesis, Jason Bone, who reminds us that for many Indigenous Peoples dreamworld and the physical world are one and the same, something echoed by other Indigenous scholars (Bastien 2004; Martin 2003; Hart 2010; Cajete 2000; Rigney 2006). Ermine suggests that this 'atomizing' of knowledge, reduces it so that it has no contextual frame (as Wilson and Tafoya might suggest), and places it into an 'objective' frame (1995: 103). Objectivity, according to Ermine (1995: 103) and Bohm (1980) creates a 'fragmentary self-world view'.

The use of objectivity as a mode to transpose data into a sanitized and safe frame is a problematic trope within positivist practice that has emerged in the West. Albert Memmi suggests this is a form of academic apartheid, "[t]he distance which colonization places between him and the colonized must be accounted for and, to justify himself, he increases this distance still further by placing the two figures irretrievably in opposition; his glorious position and the despicable one of the colonized" (Memmi 1957: 54-55). LaRoque adds that this is on the distance (both real and symbolic) the colonizer employs to rationalize and to maintain his power over the colonized" (LaRoque 2010: 3). She continues by adding, "[o]bjectivity is a self-serving tool used by those accustomed to managing history" (28). The challenge, however, is that to seek legitimacy by the academy and society, Indigenous researchers have increasingly had to find a means to operate and promote their ways of knowing within this highly contested space.

In many cases Indigenous academics have used the tools of the dominant practice to inform and evolve cultural norms (Kunnie and Gudoka 2006: xii-xiii). They have also challenged practices by invoking their own tools, ignoring attempts to code them in dominant analogues (Wilson 2008: 13). Worldviews evolve as awareness of other practices become mainstream. In fact, practices and values are often adopted as they become normalized (Sue and Sue 2003). Indigenous worldviews have increasingly been represented in academic discourses. This has led to an understanding on what makes up many Indigenous worldviews. Rather

than define the dominant worldview, the next section will discuss the Indigenous worldview, noting the commonalities in many of them, as well as celebrating the differences.

2.3 Indigenous Worldviews

In a survey of perspectives on Indigenous worldviews by Hart it was noted that commonalities exist (2010: 3; Fitznor 2006; Gill 2002; Rice 2005). It is also suggested that these worldviews, their interpretation, and application is quite personal (Goulet 1998; Ermine 1995: 104; Wilson 2003; 2008; Bastien 2004). It is common for an Indigenous researcher to provide their interpretation of both their worldview and research paradigm prior to stating their data and findings (LaBoucane-Benson 2009; Hart 2010; Martin 2003; Ermine 1995). These frameworks will often include language that indicates the personal and singular nature of their view but will tie this view into a larger worldview. This reflection on agency, who can speak for whom, and the attribution of knowledge to the original source is part of process of knowing that draws on the personal nature of knowledge, or as Goulet reflects, “true knowledge is personal knowledge” (1998: 247). This section will examine some of those commonalities and highlight some of the themes and elements in Indigenous Worldviews identified by others.

Wilson notes that an Indigenous worldview exists not to define itself in contrast to other worldviews (Wilson 2008: 16) but to privilege its relationships, contexts, and connectiveness. This framework can be quite different than those of the rest of the world, caused by thousands of years of isolation from the rest of the world (Ermine 1995: 101; Little Bear 2000; Pedersen et al. 2004). Indigenous ways of knowing are informed by an interconnected weave of idioms. The natural and metaphysical realities are sewn together into a paramount belief (Cajete 2000; Cardinal and Hildebrandt 2000; Bastien 2004; Goulet 1998: xxiv-xxv). This looks inwards at an individual level, and outwards at a communal level (Ermine 1995). In a manner, Wilson contests, that contrasts what he describes as to outward looking worldviews that seek to impose an order, and externally focused solutions to Indigenous

questions (Wilson 2008: 16). As some western modes of inquiry use the objective frame, as a means of creating distance between the researcher and the researched, Indigenous practice seeks to close that distance and embraces not the subjective frame, but a realization of a wholistic, circular approach (Wilson 2008: 136-137). This circular fashion is derived from how Indigenous knowledge is transmitted and received.

The idea of knowledge being disseminated through stories, experiences, and observations and utilized in a circular fashion is universal amongst Indigenous Peoples (Wilson 2008; Hart 2010: 2-3). Indigenous ways of knowing, although contextually separate, have been demonstrated to utilize similar values (Berkes 2009; Robson et al. 2009). This has meant that applications of Indigenous knowledge frames in research have produced similar results. Berkes contends that in Indigenous knowledge practices are not the transmission of specific information, but a way of observing, interpreting, and teaching that constitutes knowledge (2009: 152-153). Goulet's work with the Dene Tha' and his examination of other researchers' reflections in the field support this hypothesis (1998). These ways of knowing emphasise the self-growth in the knowledge circle, Elders do not teach what you should know, but how you should know. Goulet confirms this with his observations within the Dene Tha'; contextual understandings and personal growth define many formations of Indigenous knowledge practice (1998). The personal journey on behalf of the researcher/learner has been noted by many scholars (Rice 2013; 2005; Martin 2003; Fitznor 2006).

Indigenous worldviews are defined for some by this circular relationship that is personal, close, and connected beyond what is seen and felt, to the metaphysical and the environment (Hart 2010 2). Little Bear adds that, "[i]n the Native view, all of creation is interrelated" (1998: 18). This closeness with knowing and understanding has been described by the Anishinaabe through six interconnected beliefs: the 'principle of survival' defines everything. My interpretation of the term survival within this context reflects the interconnectedness in Indigenous thought. Rather than the definition derived from sustaining or existing in opposition to a force resisting that existence, survival is about maintaining balance that is

necessary for a continued existence. This ties to Indigenous perspectives in many areas, it is difficult to talk about Indigenous knowledge practice and not talk about seemingly unrelated aspects of life because there is not beginning or ending in how everything is connected. Survival is connected to the energy of the earth and its cycles; which are part of a grand design, everything must operate in harmony to maintain the balance of these relationships. Everything is connected to that grand design, and thus essential and through this relationship, balance, and harmony, it is noted that everything is linked, physically and metaphysically (McKenzie and Morrisette 2003: 259). In the Cree culture *mamatowan* also links the present conscious with the metaphysical. *Mamatowisowin* is the Cree word that translates as the life force used for creation/procreation. Ermine describes this connection as the energy used for all creation, including the creative energy such as arts and sciences (1995: 104). The earlier concept *mamatowan* is the connection to the life force, but most notably to relate to 'happenings'. Ermine suggests that *mamatowan* "also recognizes that other life forms manifest the creative force in the context of the knower. It is an experience in context, a subjective experience that, for the knower, becomes knowledge itself. The experience is knowledge" (1995: 104).

These relationships inform Indigenous peoples' ontology, and their ways of knowing as Wilson makes clear (2003: 175; 2008: 137). This connection, the circular relationship between life energy, the environment, and the physical world at a personal, contextual, experiential level is important because it requires the researcher to respect sacred beliefs and to understand how Indigenous people see the world. Simpson outlines an Indigenous worldview that is based on seven principles, which establish a circular hierarchy with which many Indigenous understand the world (2000). Knowledge depends upon the holistic and cyclical relationship and connections between living and non-living. There are multiple truths that are subjective and dependent on one's own experience. There is life in everything, even in what Western worldviews define as inanimate. All these things are equal, required, and interdependent. Land is sacred. There is equal importance between the physical and the

spiritual. Humanity is seen as the least important part of the world (Simpson 2000; Hart and Whatmann 1998: 3).

Indigenous worldviews revolve around three distinct themes. First, there is the relational aspect that frames knowledge as contextual, not atomized. This is also connected with the idea of community, family, and nation, extending knowledge beyond that individual as seen in teachings such as the Iroquois Seventh Generation Principle which is discussed further in the first data chapter. Second, despite the broadening of connections noted, there is a strong sense of individuality. Knowledge is personal and subjective. Through teachings of respect and interconnectedness the individual can express themselves as they interpret those teachings. It is based on this worldview that Indigenous people have expressed their research paradigms.

Finally, interpersonal connections are just one aspect of the relationship. One of the ways that the participants of this research framed these values within the framework of reconciliation, reflecting back on the Indigenous worldview was, “who is talking about reconciliation for the beaver, who is asking the bear, or the water. Nobody is asking the earth about reconciliation (Bone 2018).” The findings suggest that there is a schism in reconciliation in Canada that does not consider the relationship beyond humanity. Some Elders in Canada suggest that this divide is endemic of a culture that has prioritised the value of accumulation over the value of interdependence. At the *Pathways to Reconciliation* conference in Winnipeg, Canada in June 2017, a drumming circle event at the conference elicited discussion on this theme. Drummers, Elders, and participants collectively offered that this difference in worldview was summarized by the notion that Europeans had ‘lost their drum’. In many Indigenous cultures there are proxies that facilitate the connection with aspects of life seen and unseen. What those Peoples were reflecting on when they referenced the ‘lost drum’ was the ability to connect with the earth, nature, life, and the metaphysical through these proxies. The drum, for instance, was as much of a physical item as it was a mode of connecting with these ‘abstract’ intangible aspects that, to many

Indigenous Peoples, were very real. In Sami culture the drum served multiple roles; ceremonial, spiritual, and cultural (Keski-Säntii et al. 2003: 122). This connection also allowed for a tangible connection to the physical world, like a map but without markings or drawings. For a shaman in the Sami culture, the drum was “a sleigh”, allowing for the shaman to make a spiritual journey through the drum to navigate and locate (Keski-Säntii et al. 2003: 122). In North America, the Iroquois used *wampum*, a belt or sash made of shells. These would not merely be decorative, but serve as a library, recalling stories, laws, histories, policy, and heritage. Participant and Indigenous scholar Jason Bone noted that these connections, essential to Indigenous people’s worldview, were not unique only to the Indigenous Peoples, but accessible to everyone (2017). The challenge in articulating these within a dominant and overarching positivist worldview is that the ‘lost drum’ becomes a barrier to understanding Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing.

2.4 Indigenous Research Paradigm

Indigenous research paradigms inform the way in which Indigenous scholars translate their worldview into formal research that reflects the imperative of these values. Examples of this are healthcare and social work research (Simonds and Christopher 2013; Varcoe et al. 2010). These paradigms either work within the existing structure of Western methodologies or seek to provide a different mode of transposing research needs into research outcomes. The primary motivation for these decisions when designing a research paradigm is to satisfy the needs of the worldview, rather than make an indictment on dominant or alternative methodologies (Martin 2003: 205).

Working from Indigenous worldviews, scholars have used their own judgement on how best to build a suitable research paradigm, but many aspects are shared across Indigenous Peoples (Wilson 2008). Martin uses Rigney’s framework as a guide for her Indigenous framework (2003: 205). This paradigm was built upon the following principles. First,

worldviews, ontologies, and ways of knowing are distinct for Indigenous Peoples, the researcher has an imperative to support these as they are essential for survival and existence. Second, honoring tradition and doing so within the context of the land is part of learning and knowledge. Finally, research must support and build upon the cultural, political, social, and historical factors and building up these capacities for future generations; and, the imperative to privilege Indigenous voices, especially regarding contexts specific to them (205).

Smith reflected the oppression that Indigenous people have faced since contact, and suggested that research should reflect a resistance stance, noting that the harm caused by 'othering' has not dissipated over time but increased (1999). Indigenous researchers have built upon Smith's analysis. Bastien called upon researchers to "break the cycle of dependency and to assert the tribal paradigms of Indigenous cultures through affirmative inquiries based on culturally appropriate protocols" (2004: 1). Bastien's research imperatives include rebuilding culture and practices destroyed through colonialism (2004: 2). These efforts recognized the colonized nature of knowledge, knowing, and research.

In practice others have attempted to 'decolonize' existing paradigms by focusing on aligning the Indigenous worldview with research aims. Smith agrees that there is a need to decolonize research but cautions that the tools used in research are still the tools of the colonizer (1999). Smith's reflection of the lion telling the story of the hunt, noted in the Introduction, is relevant to restate here. (Denzin, Lincoln, and Smith 2008: 563). But in fields like healthcare and social work decolonized methodologies have made use of the hybrid approach. Simonds addressed the needs of an Indigenous community while modifying community based participatory research methods (2013: 2185-2186). She noted that while participatory methods fit with some of the worldview and ontological needs of Indigenous research, they must be modified and informed by the community to truly satisfy outcomes such dealing with contextualization and relationality.

This means that Indigenous research paradigms need to be thought about from the ground up, rather than modified ad-hoc during the research process. Garrouette said that research should be rooted from Indigenous principles, rather than accompany them (2003). Wilson provides one roadmap for designing a research paradigm, first by looking at what a research paradigm is. For him a research paradigm is “a set of beliefs about the world and about gaining knowledge that goes together to guide people’s actions as to how they are going to go about doing their research” (2001: 175). This is a relational concept of research that informs many of the Indigenous research paradigms examined. Wilson’s argument that Indigenous research should be relational is twofold: it serves to satisfy Indigenous worldview and ontology for interconnectedness; and it serves the imperative of supporting Indigenous communities (2008: 71-72). Rigney suggests that an Indigenous research paradigm include three principles: act as resistance, both individually and culturally, to disempowering traditions and practices; reflect the politics of Indigenous research, and privilege Indigenous voices (1999: 116).

These maxims reflect a commonality, which Wilson calls relational accountability (2008: 97). This is multi-faceted, and its multiple interpretations fit within Indigenous worldviews and ontologies reflecting on connectedness of all aspects of life. Thayer-Bacon uses the term relational ontology to describe this process, noting that these relational epistemologies “focus our attention on our interrelatedness, and our interdependence with each other and our greater surroundings” (2003: 206). Relational accountability as a central factor in many Indigenous research paradigms requires an understanding of how the term is defined, contextually. First, relational accountability means that research must reflect the values of the community, both the worldview and an ethical obligation not to continue the disempowering traditions projected upon Indigenous Peoples. Second, relational accountability refers to the relationship with knowledge - the relationship between the knower, the learner, and the knowledge. And a third interpretation, that again is connected to all the previous definitions is relational accountability refers to Ways of Knowing, Ways of

Being, and Ways of Doing (Martin 2003: 208). The following section presents these three 'Ways' and embeds these concepts within the context of this thesis. I will also explain my own perspective on these three and how they relate to my worldview.

2.4.1 Ways of Knowing

Indigenous ways of knowing show many common factors, but each has their own unique mode based on their connection with the world, their worldview and ontology (Martin 2003: 209). The dominant discourse, according to Indigenous scholars, often sees knowing, and knowledge, within a constrained parameter of truth. Wilson suggests that Indigenous knowledge is not so much concerned with truth, as much as it is concerning with one's relationship to it (2008: 73). Multiple realities exist within an object (an experience, a physical or non-physical entity, an instance in time, or any other item which can be defined in word or thought), and multiple relationships affected each of those realities. By focusing on the relationship, rather than removing an object from its multiple realities, Indigenous Peoples have developed their systems of knowing. Terry Tafoya stated in his *Principle of Uncertainty* that it is impossible to know the definition and the context of an idea simultaneously, as to define it you must remove it from its context (1995: 7-27). Indigenous knowing is less concerned with defining knowledge, there are so many relationships connected to an idea it would be impossible to provide an entirely accurate definition. Instead, there is an emphasis on individual, experiential, contextualized knowing. This was demonstrated with Goulet's work with the Dene Tha'.

This contextual understanding is an essential part of Indigenous ways of knowing (Goulet 1998: xvii-xviii). It has been suggested that much of Indigenous science is beyond 'literal description' (Cajete 2000: 2). This could be frustrating for non-Indigenous people because it means that ideas lack the systemization they would have in Western practice. But for Indigenous Peoples, knowing in this manner is essential because it is part of their entire worldview. Ways of Knowing are interconnected with their Ways of Being, the tie between

them cannot be separated (Martin 2003: 209). In her survey of Blackfoot Ways of Knowing, Bastien suggested that knowledge is in the 'self' in relation to what is being known (2004: 39).

The way in which my Ways of Knowing as an Indigenous researcher are framed is based on my growing understanding of the relationships between knowledge and all other things. I have sought to inform my Ways of Knowing by increasing my personal understanding of Indigenous worldviews and ontologies, recognizing that, like my father, I have not had the privilege of growing up with his cultural heritage surrounding me. I am comfortable with my understanding of the dominant worldview and am increasingly comfortable with my understanding of an Indigenous one. As my Ways of Knowing become more articulate I incorporate them into my Ways of Being.

2.4.2 Ways of Being

Martin classifies Ways of Being as the recognition of ourselves within the larger network of relationships within the physical and metaphysical world (2003: 209-210). This again has links back to worldviews and ontologies and the idea of relational accountability. Reflecting on Simpson (2000) and Hart's (2010: 3) hierarchy that put humans at the bottom and the interdependence of all the factors, Ways of Being is the focus upon the worldview and the imperative to build a research paradigm that supports that worldview. It is the assent on one's relationships, the acknowledgement of that, so that one's Ways of Doing are relationally accountable to that end.

My Way of Being is that I am a half-Indigenous (Iroquois) and half-non-Indigenous academic attempting to understand Indigenous research and conduct that research within the walls of a Western institution. I know my relationship to the communities I have come from, but also my relationship to the institution that I study at. Through my Ways of Knowing, that I am interconnected within the earth to things that are seen and unseen, and that knowledge which was shared with me is not mine but rather part of my personal journey and the

connected nature of that knowledge to the world, I hope to use Ways of Doing to honour those relationships and my obligations.

2.4.3 Ways of Doing

Ways of Doing relates to the manner the Ways of Knowing and Ways of Being are put into practice. Martin says that Doing is “a synthesis and an articulation” of Knowing and Being (2003: 210). These are traditional practices in all levels of Indigenous society and culture. They are present in tradition and ceremony, as well as political and social life. They are also present at the community, family, and nation level. They are often the visible or tangible indicators of Indigenous worldviews, as well as their Ways of Knowing and Being, and are the way in which society articulates its beliefs. Traditional Indigenous practices were some of the first to be banned or disempowered as the colonizers took control over Indigenous life. Indigenous Peoples worldwide were dispossessed, losing their land and their wealth. And finally, their children were taken away or re-educated in a manner that was not culturally relevant.

With the destruction or marginalizing of Doing practices, knowledge of the worldview, ontologies, Ways of Knowing and Ways of Being were eroded. Many scholars call upon Indigenous researchers (Moeke-Pickering et al.2006; McClean and Waters 2017; Ermine 1995; Martin 2003: 214; Hart and Whatman 1998) to help rebuild these practices in the academic and policy practice as Elders and leaders are doing in social life. These practices are evident in how knowledge is transmitted, and the role of the learner in relation to that knowledge. There are several ways of Doing that many academics working with Indigenous Peoples have identified.

Indigenous Ways of Doing are about honouring relationships and are framed within a relational accountability which connects with the Indigenous understanding of knowledge more as a personal journey than the finding of truth. Goulet suggests that “real knowledge is personal knowledge” (1998). Bastien notes the reciprocal relationship between Elders and

the learners. The cyclical relationship that is evident in this process honours the teachings of the Elders and the “responsibility to share it and give it away” (65). And rather than teach a specific meaning, as discussed earlier, the Elders share stories that represent “their understanding of the knowledge that has been revealed to them” (65).

Indigenous knowledge is less concerned about establishing one truth, as noted earlier. Ways of Doing are important because that personal journey of research and knowledge is the primary outcome. In fact, Ways of Doing actively articulate the presence of Indigenous worldviews and ontologies. “We,” to cite Martin, “become tangible proof of our ontology and its construction of our Ways of Being and Ways of Knowing” (2003: 210). And in Doing, through Indigenous research paradigms, a researcher honours the Peoples and their protocols and imperatives. This builds a moral facet of research, something expressed by many of the Indigenous research paradigms. And this moral facet is again expressed as an imperative of Indigenous worldviews, that in “the broader Indian idea of relationship, in a universe that is very personal and particular, suggests that all relationships have a moral content” (Deloria and Wildcat 2001: 23).

My Ways of Doing honour the imperatives of Indigenous research, they note the circular relationship in Indigenous knowledge and reflect the Ways of Knowing and Ways of Being as a part of a worldview and ontology. This thesis is an attempt to address the gap that Indigenous scholars have noted in applications of social sciences to Indigenous centred research themes. This will be demonstrated in a research design that is less concerned with defining a truth, and more concerned with giving a voice, using culturally sensitive methods and theory, and embedding myself in the narrative that is being shared with me.

2.5 Closing the Circle

The circle is an important element of some Indigenous worldviews. It reminds us that everything is related and interconnected, it also reminds us that we have an obligation to

take care of these relationships. This section discusses the relevance of circles in Indigenous research and locates my own circle within the research.

Tafoya reminds us that:

Stories go in circles. They don't go in straight lines. It helps if you listen in circles because there are stories inside and between stories and finding your way through them is as easy and as hard as finding your way home. Part of finding is getting lost, and when you are lost you start to open up and listen. (1995: 12).

The use of circles reflects the personal nature of Indigenous research, the Tafoya quote emphasizes the journey. Research is personal, and in this paradigm of Indigenous research it is important to combine the personal, the Indigenous worldview, and the research paradigms outlined above. As my research demonstrates, discussions of reconciliation in Canada have not paid attention to the importance of Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing. This thesis corrects that oversight. Because the research is a personal journey, and part of a broader aim of rebuilding knowledge traditions and resisting continued attempts to colonize it is important to make it personal.

“Learning through personal experience is the cornerstone (Goulet: xxx)” of Indigenous knowledge. Knowledge [is] ...personal knowledge derived from experience (Goulet: xxxi). Brian Rice, writing on the Rotinoshonni, notes that it is essential for the researcher to recognize the circular relationships that occur. Rice describes the importance in not limiting one's scope but being aware of the connections beyond that scope (2013). Emma LaRoque challenged herself to make her research personal. She stated that storytelling and personal connections in research are essential to Indigenous research paradigms, and they are also essential to Indigenous resistance. In practice,

“Native use of “facts of biography” is a counter-discourse to emphasize a point made by the earliest Native writers; namely, that we are not savages,

we have cultures. This is why we write about our places of birth, our landscapes, our grandmothers and grandfathers, our parents, our kin, our networks, our social regulations, our livelihoods, our use of resources, our foods, our ways of organizing, our faiths and ceremonies, our technologies, our music, our languages, our arts, and our stories. These attentions are pivotal to our strategies. They are not to be dismissed as anecdotal, confessional or advocacy biases but are offered to address colonization in academia, most especially, to personalize the depersonalized “Indian” (LaRocque 2010: 164)

The circle is the journey and finding your way home. The personal journey is a prerequisite for research journey (Rice 2013: 1) Honouring Indigenous ways: the use of Elders, storytelling tradition, and relational accountability are how I chose to conduct this research. This thesis and my own personal practice are an exercise in the telling and retelling of stories as means of finding new forms of knowledge, new narratives, and new understandings. In Iroquois culture there is the concept of the longhouse as a means of explaining their political, social, and cultural identity. Each group within the confederacy has a certain role, a certain place within the structure of the longhouse. The Seneca were the ‘Keepers of the Western Door’, the Onondagas the ‘Keepers of the Central Council Fire and Wampum’, the Mohawks were the ‘Keepers of the Eastern Door’. Each group had their culture and traditions as well as their history, informed by their context and relation to the structure of the longhouse. How we hear knowledge is much the same way, at one moment we are entering from the Eastern Door and it means one thing. As we hear the story again our context has change, when I re-present a quote again it is not because I forgot that I used it already, it is because you as a reader are in a different place than when you heard it the first time.

Elders would tell the same story to different audiences; each would derive their interpretation on it depending on the context of their listening. I spoke earlier about researchers working with Indigenous peoples being shared some knowledge but not others, only to be shared the rest of the knowledge when the Elder had deemed them ready to hear it. Looking back at the

Tafoya quote again one can now hear his words and reflect on how different they are now, that stories go in circles and that part of learning and hearing is getting lost, and part of getting found and finding your way is being lost.

2.6 In Practice

This section will look at the use of Indigenous research paradigms in practice. This will serve to decipher the method decisions I have used to undertake this thesis. This is important because dominant practice has analogues to Indigenous practice, and Indigenous practice can utilize the tools of the dominant practice. This chapter explains Indigenous worldviews, Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing, and provides my frame for utilizing these principles. It illustrates my imperatives; elements that are important to Indigenous research that are important to my research. There is not a schism between dominant practice and Indigenous practice, Indigenous scholars do not see Indigenous methods as infallible. LaRoque reminds us that the imperative for Indigenous research paradigms “is not to say that Aboriginal material cannot be criticized, or that it is either too transparent or too different, but it requires a new critical approach and way of reading” (2010: 12). This critical approach starts at the very beginning of research design.

2.6.1 Research Question and Setting

Martin suggests that the research questions directly relate to Indigenous themes; spatially, culturally, or temporally (211). Wilson says the idea of relational accountability needs to be part of this process too (2008: 127-128). Topics are shaped by those who have gone before you and honour the work that they have done to contribute (Martin 2008: 128). They should also “seek solutions to issues that we prioritise” (Martin 2009: 212).

2.6.2 Literature Reviews

The literature review seeks Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives on themes relevant to this thesis. Martin cautions that non-Indigenous sources should be reviewed while “keeping in mind the cultural assumptions, standpoints, and biases of the author” (2009:

212). Hart and Whatman add to this by noting that research on Indigenous Peoples by Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike have been informed by attitudes that were formed at the time of contact and colonization (1998: 1). I have noted a gap in Indigenous sources, this is part of the rationale for using this methodology. Many of the sources from Indigenous perspectives fit within the context chapter. Wilson was able to use Indigenous sources while crafting a thesis on Indigenous research paradigms. He noted that the style of the literature review does not lend itself to the circular approach of many Indigenous scholars but was well suited for a linear or tiered style of presentation, fitting in with many dominant practice examples (2008: 44).

2.6.3 Research Design

Indigenous research design uses a combination of methods, while keeping an awareness to worldview, cultural sensitivity, and relational accountability. Martin suggests that flexibility is a positive attribute of Indigenous designs (2009: 212). Data collection is secondary to honouring the ceremony of research as well as the wishes and needs of the researched. It is in research design that the ontology, as well as the Ways of Being, Doing, and Knowing are articulated. It is also at this point where approaches that built contextual understandings, rather than definitional understandings, are evident. It is important to be reflexive, building a space to decolonize the methods and methodologies employed. Martin says that reflexivity allows for Indigenous researchers to centre themselves from their worldview and “ensure that we work the relatedness of self and Entities” (2009: 212).

My research design, discussed in the Methods chapter, was informed by several choices that will be discussed here. This is because I feel it is essential to justify the decisions in the Methods chapter as well as establish a map or cipher to understand how I have articulated my Indigenous research paradigm within this space. The analogue within Indigenous research that I suggest is Elder knowledge. Hart’s assessment of Indigenous epistemologies noted the role of Elders and individuals that serve to aid the individual journey of the

researcher and the knowledge with which they are working (2010: 8). The word Elder can be problematic in the Western context, though it is understood by Indigenous Peoples (Bastien 2004: 60). The Blackfoot use the term Kaaahsinnooniiksi. The Kaaahsinnooniiksi are considered living knowledge (2004: 64). By engaging with Elders, I am honouring Ways of Knowing. Bastien says Elders are important because “[t]heir experiences, including the time they spent with their teachers, embody the accumulated knowledge that has been passed through the generations” (2004: 65). The best analogue for describing this research design, but albeit a problematic term within a power framework, would be the elite/expert interviews. This is the framework I chose to define within my Methodology chapter. Although it may seem to be a counterproductive practice, privileging specific voices over other, I am satisfied that the following paragraph defining an Elder within Indigenous society, and the rationale within the Methodology chapter serve to impose limits on the scope of the knowledge. This was also reflected, as mentioned in the Data Chapters, by the participants self identifying the limitations of who they could speak for.

The conferment of the honourable title of Elder is subjective to the community considering the honour. There are those within the community who are deemed such, but there is not a universal practice for naming one as such. My definition reflects this fluid nature; I look at individuals who possess a knowledge or wisdom from their personal journey. Age is not a factor in the decision (Varcoe et al. 2010: 155). Some definitions see Elders as “keepers of Indigenous knowledge, dynamic ethical consultants, community protectors, and credible sources of information” (Flicker et al. 2015: 1149). The research setting is not dissimilar, in an Indigenous knowledge context, than that of a teacher/learner. The role of Elders is not solely as a source of knowledge, but a guide for the research process. Their role is “holistic and shows connections rather than ‘objectivity’” (Varcoe et al. 2010: 155).

My own reflection on Elder knowledge as a research practice was initially reflective of my training within a western liberal academic institution. I understood the role of an Elder in Indigenous society within the frame of learning and knowledge from western stance. I have

reflected my own journey throughout this thesis and as my understanding of Elders changed so to was the importance of their role within this thesis. One of the important functions of Elder knowledge is its contextual nature, as noted above an Elder is a title given within a specific frame, not by virtue of age or accomplishments alone. The need to embed this thesis within Indigenous practice has been highlighted in this chapter but Indigenous scholar Leanne Simpson draws upon the need to contextually embed Indigenous research, that knowledge becomes bereft of its relationships when isolated (2004: 380).

Critiques to the use of Elder knowledge being too embedded in the discussion to offer an objective frame center around notions of objectivity discussed in section 2.2 of this chapter. Indigenous knowledge is about stepping into context rather than stepping out. A study without the use of Elders is like travelling without one's senses. Tafoya asked that we allow ourselves to be lost, but finding our way is about the personal journey and each step navigates the immediate terrain that is contextually defined, not abstractly traversed.

2.6.4 Research Practice and Conduct

Wilson comments that "research is a ceremony" (2008: 137). In the field this becomes evident. Regardless of if one uses research practices such as sharing of sacred medicines and offerings, such as I used with many of my participants, the ceremony of research with Indigenous Peoples is the knowledge, because it is part of the process. It is not the knowledge shared, but the experience of the knowledge being shared. Cree law of *miyo-wicehtowin* is about maintaining and increasing good relations with others (LaBoucane-Benson: 23-24). This ceremony, being embedded within Indigenous worldview and ontology, is part of research. Ermine talks about *mamatowan*, the Cree word for the connection between self, the corporeal, the incorporeal, and the experience (1995: 104). The ceremony of research is the experience of research that is the knowledge. Ermine summarizes this as, the ceremony "is an experience in context, a subjective experience that, for the knower,

becomes knowledge itself. The experience is knowledge” (1995: 104). The research ceremony is on the one hand observable ceremony, an exchanging of sacred medicines such as tobacco, to represent value and respect of the knowledge and its sharer as well as the nature of the tobacco itself. Tobacco is burnt to cleanse as serves to prepare the learner for the knowledge itself. On the other hand, the ceremony is the relational accountability and culture acceptance on behalf of the researcher, in this case. The ceremony acts as a sort of social contract and the exchange of the sacred medicine is both part and separate to this, in many ways this research ceremony has its antecedents in the learner (or researcher) being prepared to partake in the sharing of knowledge in an Indigenous manner rather than the actual knowledge being shared. It shows, looking back at our discussion on Elders and learning, that the researcher is ready to learn.

2.6.5 Data Interpretation and Analysis

Regarding data interpretation and analysis, Martin notes that it may require “an Indigenist researcher to watch and wait with patience as the interpretations and representations of these patterns emerge. This may occur as dreams, or in the form of words and pictures seen in our daily lives, which are not expected to carry messages” (2009: 213). I reflect on this during the methodology and the data chapters, but I can attest that I came to my understanding with the data after much time was spent reflecting upon it. Even then the notion of a framework occurred when I was walking in nature, this idea of reconciliation being like a tree. It struck me as I had been walking around York in the spring.

Martin notes that data interpretation in Indigenous research is often inspired in this fashion. Stories and patterns have a way of telling themselves in their own ways. The introspective element of Indigenous research has been a part of the praxis of Knowing, Being and Doing in Indigenous communities (Hart 2010: 8; Ermine 1995). Ermine recalls that exploring the inner space allows for encoding and decoding findings “as a way of synthesizing knowledge derived from introspection” (1995: 104). In Indigenous communities the people became the

repository of knowledge, rather than documents or sole individuals. This living knowledge means that interpretation is often inspired from life rather than extracted on demand. The structure of an Indigenous research paradigm allows for subjective interpretations based on the personal journey, facilitated by Elders and the community (Hart 2010: 8).

Cardinal suggests that this unpacking is the most difficult part of the research process (in LaBoucane-Benson 2009: 28). But Martin advises that in interpreting, it is important to be less concerned with 'truth' than maintaining connection and contexts. Research interpretation should be "the re-connecting of self, family, community and Entities that can be claimed and celebrated," rather than drawing conclusions (2009: 213).

2.6.6 Reporting Findings

Martin outlines one protocol for reporting findings (2009: 213-214). Summarizing the steps, she outlines, relational accountability and cultural awareness are expected guidance in writing up and presenting research data. Reporting is one of the most problematic parts of Indigenous research. Problems of ownership, representation, interpretation, and agency are some of the challenges identified.

2.6.6.1 Ownership

The commodification of knowledge under current knowledge regimes is a real problem for Indigenous work (Denzin, Lincoln and Smith (2008: 6). Universities have their own imperative to produce research that increases their standing and status. This can create problems with Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing that see knowledge as collective.

2.6.6.2 Representation

Representation in Indigenous research is still done from a non-Indigenous perspective, which is not necessarily a problem but is problematic. Concepts of 'Othering' persists, namely old stereotypes that occurred during the colonization and contact period. Indigenous Peoples and their knowledge were "collected, classified, and then represented back in the

West (Smith 1999: 1). Smith further adds that “They came, They saw, They claimed” (1999: 80). Despite shifts in attitudes and ideas on Indigenous Peoples, these problems of representation still exist. “Neocolonial dominance of majority interest in social [science research]” (Bishop 2005: 110) still exists. The objective frame, as discussed earlier, can be viewed as a form of apartheid reinforcing the distance between Us and Them.

2.6.6.3 Interpretation

Interpretation represents another opportunity to alienate and disempower Indigenous Peoples. This chapter identified how knowledge is a personal journey, with truth being subjective. Because Indigenous Peoples’ ‘problems’ have been the subject of research, the interpretations under this ‘problem-based’ frame serve to perpetuate a dehumanizing narrative. Indigenous methodologies are challenged in the frame of academic rigour, this is especially true when reporting on ‘innerscape’ research (LaBoucane-Benson 2009: 30). She notes that the outerscape discourse is straightforward due to accepted paradigms of systemic practice. The analogues of participatory action research are useful in transposing Indigenous methods into a dominant frame but have served to “validate colonizing knowledge about Indigenous Peoples” (Denzin, Lincoln and Smith 2008: 11).

To overcome challenges of interpretation within an Indigenous research paradigm, it is important to refer to the imperatives of Indigenous research and worldviews. Contextualized understandings built on cultural practices (Elders) and reciprocal relationships are some of the guidance offered by those who have been there before (LaBoucane-Benson 2009; Simonds 2013; Hart 2010; Wilson 2008; Martin 2003: 213-214). Putting this into perspective based on Tafoya’s observations: although a journey is linear, stating where you went (the definition) is not as important on how you got there (the context). Similarly, reporting findings outside of their contextual frame disregards the countless connections that were essential for that ‘truth’ to exist. This means that many Indigenous research practitioners are mindful that the experiences within a subject personal frame reflecting on the relationships

between oneself and the knowledge (and knowledge giver) should be maintained (Cajete 2000). This is often done by leaving the data in a similar state to how the research found it.

Storytelling tradition is one practice used by Indigenous researchers (Bastien 2004: 140).

“Storytelling is a very important aspect of Native America. It is not just the words and the listening but the actual living of the story” (Cajete 1999: xii). Using storytelling begins to contextualize the knowledge by the relationships created through the storytelling process.

The storytellers’ personal understanding informed by their experience is the entrance to that context (Cajete 2000: 140). The listener experiences the story and is imbued with not only the knowledge, but the contexts of the teller. This is because of the relationship that is formed between the teller and the listener, it serves as a facilitated understanding of knowledge presented (Cajete 2000: 140). In this study storytelling was facilitated by long interviews that were designed thematically rather than based on questions. This is further discussed in the Methods chapter.

The phrase story, and by extension storytelling, is a problematic term for scholars such as Wilson due to the definition often used outside of Indigenous contexts (2008: 97-98). Stories in this sense carry with them a sense of entertainment or ‘make-believe’. Indigenous storytelling is based around the culture of oral traditions, this means, fitting with some of the Indigenous knowledge practices discussed earlier, that multiple meanings and uses exist for stories and storytelling practice (Wilson 2008: 97-98).

Wilson reflects on a conversation with Cree Elder Jerry Saddleback who noted three levels that could be derived from the practice of storytelling. Sacred stories represent one level of engagement, these stories are the histories, teachings, and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples (Wilson: 98). They shift in form based on the context of the listener and speaker (Wilson: 98). Second level stories are myths and legends that serve to teach, entertain, and promote Indigenous culture and identity (Wilson: 98). These stories take on the personality of the storyteller as they see fit to present the story, for the purpose they deem necessary.

Finally, personal stories, based on experiences; this might be a reflection on one of the other two stories, a personal anecdote, observation, or reflection (Wilson: 98).

Wilson notes that as a researcher it is important to be mindful of each of these levels of stories, and note their uses as a research tool (to collect data from the stories at the different levels), to analyse that data (often using the third level of storytelling), and to articulate that data (most likely using the second and third levels) (2008: 98). Wilson says it is important for the researcher not to dominate the discussion, such as through analysis (2008: 98). This is also noted in the Methods chapter. There should be a dialogue, like a good story, between the voice of the researcher and that of the participants. To create this dialogue storytelling is promoted using another process.

A second process that is used to maintain a contextual understanding is to privilege long quotes. Other practitioners have done so as a means of transferring knowledge and avoiding the introduction of objective frames and othering, “in fact, reading Aboriginal voice and discourse differently demands that I cite generous portions from the Native documents and writing without excessive intrusion” (LaRoque 2010: 12). Anne Zimmerman argues for a critical approach that allows for “extensive quotations...to stand for themselves, perhaps as voices that are not in tune with the speaking subject’s and allow for dissonances of a kind like those which occur in conversation or discussion” (1996: 100 in LaRoque 2010: 12).

Non-Indigenous researchers looking for storytelling applications in Indigenous research might note the lack of story in the sense that Wilson and Saddleback cautioned (2008: 97). The research becomes its own story, each of the participants adding their voice and knowledge with the researcher reflecting their own journey, but their narrative never rising above the volume of the other voices.

2.6.6.4 Agency

Finally, agency is an essential discussion for conducting research that is disseminated in the structures of dominant practice. Many academics have cautioned about ascribing too much

agency to themselves when reporting Indigenous knowledge. In her work with Navajo storytellers, Terry Tempest Williams remind us that “we are not Navajo... their traditional stories don’t work for us. Their stories hold meaning for us only as examples. They can teach us what is possible. We must create our own stories” (1984: 5). The communities where the knowledge originated must be empowered by the work, through their own frame. This is evident in many outcomes from programs designed in a dominant frame seeking to help Indigenous Peoples. These communities have existed through their resistance and the power of their cultural practices. Research that does not benefit their community is no different than the colonizing practices that preceded them (Bishop 2005). Agency is tested through Wilson’s imperative of relational accountability. This means that the researcher must be accountable to themselves, rather than the community enforcing obligations (2008: 123). Researchers are accountable for the consequences of their research (Smith 1999: 137-139).

2.6.7 Conclusion

My understanding of Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing articulated in this chapter represents the frame through which I conducted this research. This includes the methods chosen to answer the research questions. Indigenous research paradigms do not place a hierarchy between themselves and other research paradigms. This practice was merely an attempt to address the research question in a way that reflected the research had previously been done, while paying favour to whom the research was conducted upon and for. Reconciliation should be understood from an Indigenous research paradigm as it is the reconciliation of Indigenous Peoples of Canada from the harm projected upon them by non-Indigenous Canadians. Using the research paradigm outlined in this chapter, the Methods chapter will present a realization of the ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing espoused herein.

Chapter 3. Putting the Indigenous Research Paradigm into Practice

3.1 Introduction

This study examines how Indigenous leaders perceive reconciliation in Canada. Subsequent chapters will analyse the historical frame of reconciliation, the extent of harm, the effects of colonization, and the contemporary contexts within Canadian society. This chapter explains how I addressed the research questions and the rationale behind my research design.

The primary research question asked: what is an Indigenous perspective of reconciliation in Canada? This thesis also examines what Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing are and how they intersect with the study of reconciliation. It also asks, critically, who has reconciliation been for. The study of reconciliation in Canada is a wide-reaching and complicated field. The role of survivors, for instance, is one that has been extensively studied and something that I do not seek to replicate here given the brief opportunity to contribute to that discourse.⁸

This study is concerned with engaging with participants that are uniquely situated to understand reconciliation, some of whom may be survivors or intergenerational survivors. To 'survey' the landscape of reconciliation this study engages with participants who see multiple perspectives due to their roles and personal experiences. To confront this challenge of providing a relevant perspective I have chosen to use interviews with Elders and leaders within the Indigenous community. As discussed in Chapter 2, Elders are part of an

⁸ Three notable outputs would be the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) reports span 5 volumes and over 4000 pages. It is based on public hearings and consultation with almost one hundred Indigenous communities in Canada. The scope was broader than subsequent top-down examinations such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) which itself spanned seven volumes but was criticized for its emphasis on the Indian Residential School (IRS) program. The TRC gathered residential school survivor testimony from across Canada over several years. The recent National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls completed its final report in 2019. It consisted of two volumes and engaged with survivors, families, police, social workers, community leaders and other front-line individuals and organizations.

Indigenous knowledge system that prioritises experiential, personal knowledge. Goulet suggested that “willingness to learn experientially is the prerequisite to grasping [knowledge]” (1998: 247). I would conduct interviews with these individuals, conducting myself through the research ceremony, using my Indigenous research paradigm. My observation and recollection of my own experiences from this research, by engaging with these Elders and leaders, increase my capacity to learn, and in turn be afforded greater access to their knowledge. Goulet suggests that his own participants would share based on the level of experiential knowledge the researcher suggested they had. That is to say, the knowledge-giver would assess in real-time the capacity of the researcher and then share based on that capacity. In that end, interviews were two sided. This process of experiential learning is central to many Indigenous cultures and what could be considered true knowledge. Working with Athapaskan communities in Northern Canada, Scollon and Scollon extrapolated that mediated knowledge, in Indigenous cultures, is regarded with doubt (1979). True knowledge was that which was derived from experience (Scollon and Scollon 1979: 185). So although this research process was through interviews with Elders and leaders, it should be mentioned that this process was what Wilson contends is a research ceremony (2009), reflects the individualized nature of knowledge and not “imparted through instruction” but rather gained through the individual responsibility to learn (Goulet 1998: 29). This means that although I conducted my research in a manner familiar with social science practitioners, the role of the researcher and the participant was reflective of an Indigenous learning perspective. This would play an important role in how I chose my methods, and the specific interpretation of those methods within this research effort. My use of Elders and as interview participants is framed within social science research through the model of experts within a field. This mode of inquiry is used to provide insight not readily accessible because of the participants’ “important or exposed positions” (Riesman 1993: 528). Dexter suggests, and this is key for processing the term of Elder into a research frame, that this form of interview is defined by the willingness of the investigator (or researcher) to “let the

interviewee teach [them] what the problem, the question, the situation is-to the limits, of course, of the interviewers' ability" (Dexter 2006: 18). This description fits with much of what was discussed in Chapter 2 regarding the purpose and practice of learning and understanding, as well as the role of the knowledge holder in giving knowledge when one is capable of understanding. Goulet summarizes this by noting the need for knowledge by the researcher does not determine the flow of knowledge, but the knowledge keeper's assessment of the capacity of the researcher, their ability to consume and understand the information given in the manner of the Dene (1998: 247). The role of Elders in an Indigenous community is likened to a teacher (Wilson 1996: 36). But they also act in a variety of other capacities, Flicker et al added in a participant recollection that "Elders... are our experts, they are our review boards, they're our academics, they're the people that have the knowledge" (2015: 1150).

There is a needed discussion on how Elders are framed within the research space, articulating their stated agency in a contested space of who can speak for or on behalf of whom. Reconciliation is a colonized space; this thesis' research question is based on the need for agency of the harmed. There is no question that at initial glance the method itself is problematic (Riesman 1993: 528), more so in the colonized nature of Canada and its Indigenous Peoples, but it does offer a means of inquiry that satisfies the research question's needs. The term itself reflects a power imbalance that can be problematic within a decolonial frame. The use of elite/expert serves as a proxy to frame the process of interviewing individuals with a unique set of knowledge and experiences. These were an essential element for my understanding of the research topic, reconciliation in Canada. This was reflected in the Introduction, they operate in a unique space, understanding their own Indigeneity and culture, but also seeing the policy and practice of non-Indigenous culture from a privilege position. I reflected earlier on the work with survivors of the residential schools, these works require a breadth that would be difficult to replicate and would be challenging within the scope of this format.

These interviews, combined with a contextualized understanding of reconciliation in Canada, an analysis of the literature surrounding reconciliation, and the use of Indigenous-led research practice, serve to examine reconciliation from an Indigenous perspective in Canada, show how reconciliation has been perceived and received by Indigenous Canadians and identify opportunities to improve reconciliation, and understanding Indigenous viewpoints on effective reconciliation.

Rather than stating a definitive opinion, these participants were clear that they were speaking for themselves, providing the opportunity to examine a unique Indigenous perspective as a case study to generate theory on reconciliation, namely the challenges and opportunities that contemporary efforts have afforded. The notion of agency is important to address as a caveat, or as a limitation. Noted above, the participants were clear of the limits of their agency. Within the normative social science frame of elite/expert interviews this would be problematic in analysis and theory generation on the findings because it would seem counter-intuitive to the imperative I addressed earlier. Indigenous knowledge was not about the collection of 'mediated' knowledge (to borrow from Goulet 1998: 28). It is the reflection of this knowledge was to be contextualized by the learner, or researcher, and that knowledge was based on the capacity of the individual, or in this case the researcher, to create their own understanding (Van Stone 1963: 44). The process I am suggesting is that the agency to speak, and for whom, is for the researcher, that they (or I) are merely cataloguing their experiences and interpretations as the knowledge is shared with them.

One final note when preparing this chapter, there are many proxies that are like social science research methods within the dominant practice. Audrey Lorde suggested that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (1984). In this context, the tools of social science research are similar but not the same. As noted above with elite/expert and Elder/leader dichotomy, these serve as valuable proxies to offer a basis for understanding their application. This study is not an overt critique of Western academic practice, nor an exercise in decolonial practice. Though critiques of these practices in relation to Indigenous

research contexts are presented in this thesis it is not important to justify Indigenous approach but rather justify the need for an Indigenous approach. Elina Hill suggests that 'Indigenizing' the academy does not lead to an educating of the oppressors but rather a continual reinforcement of the patriarchal and colonial norm (2012). It is the process of learning and knowing about reconciliation from a culturally relevant frame. Critiques of Indigenous methods, discussed in Chapter 2, have been around since contact (Smith 1999). In Said's work 'Representing the Colonized: Anthropologies Interlocuters' he suggested that "crossing boundaries... can therefore provide us with new narrative forms" (1989: 225). The use of these proxies is to serve to create new narrative forms, they themselves are not inalienable but critiques should be examined, as Goulet suggests, within the context of the derived "social positions and interpretive assumptions" (1998: 251).

Part of the rationale for placing the idea of coloniality in its own frame rather than embracing the discussion on decolonization is that recognition derived from placing one form of knowledge practice to another reasserts the colonial and patriarchal process. Smith's early reflection of coming and seeing and conquering was based on assumption of the colonizers as to the quality of the Indigenous peoples (1999). This thesis will introduce the work of Fanon and Coulthard with regard to recognition in Chapter 5 but in this space with relation to coloniality it is important to reflect that Indigenous peoples validate their own knowledges in their own way, these are contextually derived and relevant to their research situations. My argument against making this thesis a discussion on colonization is that it would undermine the merits of Indigenous research as a means of articulating an Indigenous response to an Indigenous context. Colonization as a theme occurs in this thesis, that is certain, but these too are contextualized. Fanon's reflection on the politics of recognition notes the process by which legitimization occurs in various manners. Antagonism serves to facilitate a process of devolution in argument rather than an articulation done outside of politics.

3.1.1 Qualitative Study

Landman's continuum provides a framework for this study. Combined with the analysis of the research needs the next step is to assess what broad decisions are needed to address those needs. This study seeks to understand how success within reconciliation can be interpreted through multiple conceptual frameworks. In examining the two prevailing methodological hegemony, quantitative and qualitative, this project is deeply concerned with providing "considerable room for interpretive inquiry" (Guest, MacQueen, and Namey. 2012: 5).

It is that concern that designates this project as a "situated activity that locates the observer in the world" (Denzin and Lincoln 2005: 3). That need to reflect on the spatio-temporal fix of the research and its context suggests the need for a qualitative approach. This approach is the most flexible, within the research paradigm already outlined, at devolving constructs while also being reflective to the limitations of the researcher.

Previous Indigenous research and the practice of transitional justice have seldom been reflective of Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing (Smith 1999; Elgersma 2011). Qualitative research can allow for a contextual appraisal of the limitations of the researcher. Given that the project examines the actions of one group, their explicitly and implicitly stated goals, and another group's interpretation of those outcomes, and reflections as to what their own goals were, it seems fitting that the methodology offer that 'considerable room' as Guest et. al. suggests (2012).

Part of this decision is because the research question suggests that there are unknowns. There is a lack of understanding that must be satisfied before there can be explanation. Qualitative research acts as a theory generating mechanism that satisfies "social science needs to know what kind of object to count before counting it" (Landman 2009: 41). Qualitative methods "seek to identify and understand the attributes, characteristics, and

traits of objects of inquiry, as well as the meanings, processes, and context” (Landman 2009: 40).

In addition, there is need for qualitative research in human rights scholarship (Sano and Thelle 2009). Analysis of two leading human rights journals showed that both quantitative and qualitative cited sources were below 1% of the total sources cited (Sano and Thelle 2009: 96). Evidence based human rights research provides generalized theories based on data. It shows that while human rights may be a substantial topic of study, policy and decisions are still being made without theory and knowledge generated from primary research (Sano and Thelle 2009: 108-109).

3.2 The Sample

The process for building this study focusing on reconciliation from an Indigenous perspective began with identifying the candidate to engage with, then establishing a means for soliciting those engagements. Elite/expert⁹ interviews have been used in similar projects on reconciliation (Vine 2016) as a means of understanding processes and considerations within phenomena that are not readily accessible to the lay person. In those studies, small samples of less than twenty were used due to the breadth, complexity and depth of information that elite/expert participants impart (Beamer 2002: 89). Elite interviews “generate highly reliable and valid data” (Beamer 2002: 86). Beamer highlighted several studies using elite interviews to understand a political or policy context.

⁹ Elite and expert interviews are used interchangeably regarding the data generated from the interview. Both are uniquely situated within a discourse and both offer challenges for access, the ability to facilitate trust with snowball sampling, and operate within a space that other participants might not occupy. This thesis will endeavor to use the phrase elite, or elite/expert, when referring to this type of participant.

Elite, or in this case Elder, interviews allow for a rich data set, as Beamer (2002), Dexter (2006) and Riesman (1993) suggested. Chapter Two discussed the process of knowledge and understanding from Indigenous cultures, noting that the same story or reflection can result in a new understanding as the researchers own capacity to know expands. Goulet suggested that in his ethnographic work with the Dene Tha' that he was initially "writing from a position of relative knowledge and ignorance, unaware of all that I have been unable to grasp" (Goulet 1998: 58). Because of this there has been an emphasis in this study to keep the 'sample' to sixteen participants, noting the rich data and potential for the researchers understanding to grow within the Indigenous research paradigm. In looking at similar studies in a human rights perspective Landman noted that is was important to "focus on small number of units of analysis" (2009: 40), when the research needs dictate.

Range	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
Type of Approach	Hermeneutic/thick description	Discourse Analysis	Theory-driven empirical	Theory-driven empirical	Theory-driven empirical	Theory-driven empirical	Nomothetic
Reasoning	Inductive	Inductive and analytical	Inductive and analytical	Inductive and analytical	Inductive and analytical	Deductive and analytical	Deductive
Evidence vs Inference	Evidence without inference	Meaning and understanding from language and action	Qualitative evidence and inference	Quantitative/qualitative evidence and inference	Quantitative evidence and inference	Inference with confirmatory evidence	Inference without evidence
Nature of Knowledge Claim	Particular context specific	Particular context specific	Universal with room for exceptions	Universal with room for exceptions	Universal with room for exceptions	Universal	Universal
Scope of Coverage	Single countries, Subnational analysis	Single countries, limited comparison	Comparative and single case analysis	Comparative	Global comparative	Small-N comparative	Theoretical construct only

Figure 1 – Mapping social science research

Adapted from Landman 2006: 60

Landman (Figure 1) identifies seven types of social science research scenarios, each with a unique need based on the research inquiry (2009: 26). There is an epistemological/methodological continuum, according to Landman, which consists of four categories. The categories within the continuum are divided based on categories of analysis and desired outcomes: type of reasoning (inductive, analytic, or deductive),

evidence/inference dichotomy, the nature of the knowledge claims (particular context specific to universal), and the scope (from single country sub-national comparative, to global comparative, to small-N comparative, to theoretical) (2009: 27).

This thesis, as noted in the introduction, is a study that is particular context specific, inductive, focusing on evidence without inference. Landman describes this as a 'thick'/hermeneutic approach that seeks to understand more than explain (2009: 27).

Regarding sample size, Landman notes that previous works in this research scenario focus on a small number of participants with a highly intensive contribution (2009: 28).

This sample used a combination of snow-ball sampling and opportunity sampling. Snowball sampling is a common practice in elite/expert interviews due to the opportunity for access from gatekeepers (Beamer 2002: 90). Access, in elite interviews, is essential. Elite interviews pose challenges for the researcher due to the amount of pre-planning required, difficulty gaining trust, and difficulty in gaining access. Snowball sampling facilitates two of these challenges, trust and access, by using previous participants as a legitimizing agent for the researcher (Richards 1996: 200).

Regarding sample size, snowball sampling, and elite interviews, Beamer remarks that the researcher can note a convergence of recommendations on behalf of participants as a means of identifying a complete sample (2002: 91). I noted this effect as many of the participants asked if I had spoken to another participant or recommended a participant as the study progressed. Early in the sample and study these recommendations served to help find participants. Closer to the end they served to validate previous decisions. Many of these recommendations were not in the affirmative, meaning they were recommended but with the reservation that the opinion offered would contrast to theirs.

This study was based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, because I had previously lived in Winnipeg and had contact with some Indigenous People who could satisfy as gatekeepers to start my

investigation. I also identified participants based on their contribution to the discourse, such as participation in an event or news story.

3.2.1 Selection and Participants

There are many approaches to effective research design, but this study chose to privilege Indigenous voices operating through an Indigenous research paradigm. Reconciliation studies have often included participants from a spectrum of Canadian society but seldom emphasised Indigenous voices or used Indigenous research design. This is problematic for two reasons: first, reconciliation is seen as an extension of colonization, as it is facilitated, transmitted, and designed by non-Indigenous actors. Second, academic practice has modes of inquiry that attempt to operate in a decolonized frame. They use of bracketing, reflective practice, or disclosure of bias, among others, but Indigenous academics note that these practices are still embedded within the dominant research discourse. This does not mean that these practices, nor that the act of reconciliation itself, are harmful, but that Indigenous academics and scholars suggest that research that is relationally accountable, and contextualized within the society it is studying, might invoke new discussions and data.

Participants in this study are Indigenous with two exceptions. Two participants Raymond Currie and Sean Loney are not Indigenous, but both have Indigenous children through marriage or adoption. Both are also significantly tied to the Indigenous community through their work and research. All the remaining participants are Indigenous, their affiliation is diverse and there is representation from many groups within Manitoba and Canada.

I was conscious not to build a sample that was heavily invested in one field over another. Many of the participants are academics but in many different fields. Some are traditional academics in that they have a PhD and are primarily affiliated with a university (Frank Deer, Raymond Currie, Jason Bone), others teach in specific fields but are not primarily affiliated with a learning or research institution (Leslie Spillett, KC Adams). It was important to engage with 'grass-roots' actors because they offered an original opinion on realizations of

reconciliation and opportunities for further engagements (Shaun Loney, Raymond Currie, James Favel, Michel Redhead-Champagne). I also looked to engage with those who worked in the government, either in a policy capacity as a sitting member of a political party (Nahanni Fontaine), working with an organization that provides services to Indigenous Peoples (E.P.), or as an extension of reconciliation efforts (Tricia Logan).

Indigenous organizations were another area of participation, these would be people who engage with communities of Indigenous Peoples, but also work closely with governments. They would understand policy practice and implementation and have an idea of political machination that influenced reconciliation (Shaun Loney, Leslie Spillett, Damon Johnston). Whereas these participants were static, in a sense, community organizations, activists, and advocates, might be more fluid. These groups engaged less with government from a collaborative perspective but were not less important in resisting policy, creating awareness, and pressing for change. (Ryan McMahon, Mashkode Bizhiki Kapiitaatoong, and Spence).

Finally, it was important to understand reconciliation from other modes. From those who work with understanding the reconciliation from a perspective quite different than that of the bureaucracy, activism, community engagement, or academia. I sought the perspective of two artists whose work engages with reconciliation. Both participants are respected enough to have works in the National Gallery of Canada, and both engage with reconciliation in their work (KC Adams and Kent Monkman).

But these roles do not completely define each of the participants. They all have multiple roles, and their perspective on reconciliation comes from the fact that most are Indigenous, all engage in the manner outlined above, but from overlapping and divergent viewpoints. Ryan McMahon, for instance, works educating Indigenous youth, is a filmmaker, writer, and activist. But he is also a successful stand-up comedian. His comedy work, which has allowed him a television special in Canada, and attendance at many of the largest comedy

festivals in the world, is very much focused on relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians.

I summarize the biographies of each of the participants below and show how many of them have multiple perspectives and approach reconciliation from different frames.

Dr Frank Deer is the Canadian Research Chair on Indigenous Languages. He is also the Executive Lead for Indigenous Achievement at the University of Manitoba where he is also a professor in the Department of Education. He is a Mohawk from Kahnawake.

Dr Raymond Currie is a Dean Emeritus at the University of Manitoba where he was Dean of the Faculty of Arts from 1991 to 1999. He is currently one of the primary wards of Circles for Reconciliation, a grass-roots reconciliation initiative that emerged out of the TRCs Calls to Action. He has two children who are Indigenous.

Dr. Tricia Logan is the Community Engagement and Outreach Officer, National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. She was the Curator of Indigenous Content, Canadian Museum for Human Rights but left that position in protest over their portrayal of Indigenous harm in Canada. Tricia is Métis.

Leslie Spillett is the Executive Director of Ka Ni Kanichihk, an Indigenous led, culturally based organization that provides numerous services for Indigenous Peoples in Manitoba. She was a member of the Winnipeg Police Board of Directors. She is also an advocate for Indigenous Women's rights and protections, most notably her work increasing awareness for the need for an Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), speaking before the UN. Leslie is Cree. She is also a member of the Order of Manitoba, the highest honour in the Province of Manitoba.

Damon Johnston is the CEO and President of the Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg an organization that works with the urban Indigenous community. Johnston is also on several non-Indigenous organizations board of directors. He is Ojibway.

James Favel is the co-founder and leader of the Bear Clan Patrol, a grass-roots community organization most known for its work patrolling the streets of the North End of Winnipeg assisting the community and residents. The Bear Clan was re-founded by Favel after a hiatus and focuses on community security for all Peoples and serves a traditional responsibility to protect. James is also a business owner and notes that he was previously incarcerated for dealing drugs. James is Métis.

Nahanni Fontaine is a Member of the Legislative Assembly for the Province of Manitoba. She is also an activist and advocate. She was Special Advisor on Aboriginal Women's Issues in the Indigenous Issues Committee of Cabinet in Manitoba. She has also taught at the University of Manitoba. She is Ojibway.

Shaun Loney is an author as well as the founder and director of BUILD Winnipeg, an organization that engages in grassroots and community economic development and training. Shaun has written on social enterprise in Indigenous communities and has done extensive work with economic and social development in these communities. He has an Indigenous son.

Mashkode Bizhiki Kapiitaatoong and Spence are both identified by a pseudonym due to their work with the Warriors, an Indigenous activist organization that often challenges governments, businesses, and society on structural harm perpetuated against the Indigenous Peoples. They have occupied government buildings, organized and participated in protests, and increase awareness of the conditions that Indigenous Peoples still live in. They are both Indigenous but for their anonymity I have chosen not to identify their affiliation.

Jason Bone is a doctoral student at the University of Manitoba and a lecturer in Indigenous languages at the University of Brandon. His research work looks at Indigenous storytelling and interpretations. He is also a high-level athlete, having played professional ice hockey. Jason is Ojibway.

Ryan McMahon is a comedian, filmmaker, writer, actor, and activist. He writes for publications such as the Globe and Mail. He has been at several international comedy festivals as well as the feature of a television special. His work engages with colonization, reconciliation, and cultural relations. He has also produced and directed film and radio series on the topic of reconciliation, travelling across Canada to engage with participants to increase awareness and understanding. Ryan is Anishinaabe.

E.P. is an executive with Anishinaabe Child and Family Services. This organization serves five communities from a culturally relevant perspective, focusing on rebuilding capacity and reducing the effects of harm on Indigenous youth. E.P. is Ojibway.

KC Adams is an artist. Her work is in the National Gallery of Canada. She uses multiple mediums and specializes in rebuilding Indigenous techniques in pottery. Her work often focuses on Indigenous themes and engages with stereotypes and stigma. She is Anishinaabe.

Kent Monkman is an artist. His work is at the National Gallery of Canada. He engages directly with colonization and reconciliation, appropriating dominant culture themes to invert meanings and challenge the status quo. His work is nationally and internationally recognized. Kent is Cree.

Michael Redhead-Champagne is a community organizer. He is involved in grass-roots movements, especially supporting urban Indigenous youth. His work was featured in Time magazine, gaining awareness for grass-roots movements in Canada to support where contemporary structures have failed. Michael is Cree.

These participants represent a sample of Indigenous leaders and Elders within Winnipeg, Canada, a city with the largest Indigenous population in Canada (Canada 2017)¹⁰ and one of the largest of all the cities in the world (Tammemagi 2014). As noted above, efforts were

¹⁰ From the 2016 Canadian Census – The Daily, Oct 26, 2017

made to provide a diverse group of women and men who engage with the idea of reconciliation from different perspectives. This diversity means that convergences in narratives offer some robust inferences for further study. Just as many of the participants reminded me that they do not speak for anyone but themselves, I do not intend to use this thesis to speak of for all Indigenous Peoples in Canada, merely a moment to understand and reflect.

3.3 The Interviews

The interview process began with initial contact, wherein I discussed the scope of the project, my personal connection with the subject material, the parameters of involvement¹¹, and how I came to select them.¹² The interviews were schedule to last an hour and all, but one was done face to face at a mutually agreed location, usually at the participants' discretion. These interviews were recorded, and the way in which each participant would be

¹¹ This would be the time required for the interview, the obligations of the researcher, the extent to which their material would be used, suitability for the project, and location and date of interview.

¹² Here is a sample of an email I used when I contact MLA Nahanni Fontaine:

Nahanni,

My name is Ian Calliou, I am a PhD student from Coventry University in the UK. I am originally from Canada; my father was a member of the Michif First Nation in Alberta. I was given your name by my wife who saw you speak last week. I am doing research about reconciliation and would love for the opportunity to speak to you about my project and perhaps have a short interview.

I have looked at informing my understanding of this from several perspectives, from Elders, leaders, academics, community members, artists, and advocates. I am interested in the role of top-down mechanisms, such as the apology, the TRC, and the settlement. I am also looking at how grass-roots mechanisms, such as Circles for Reconciliation, the Bear Clan, arts, and community initiatives augment or fill gaps in top-down efforts. I am not looking for an overly critical or sympathetic assessment, merely an honest one from people who operate in a place between the discourse.

I hope that this case study will inform other research as well as reconciliation efforts in Canada. I understand that you may have a very busy schedule over the next few weeks. I am in Manitoba until the end of August and could meet at your convenience. I could also do the interview over the phone if that would be more suitable for your schedule. I would love to add your perspective to the discussion, my work has been very promising and informed my understanding beyond anything I could get from the literature on the subject. Feel free to contact me if you have any more questions. I would be happy to supply a list of some of the topics we might discuss.

Thanks for your time, I appreciate it.

Ian Calliou

described in the thesis was agreed upon at the time of the interview with the opportunity to amend that prior to publication.

The interviews, as noted, were recorded with the agreement of the participant. This was a need identified by myself, as I wanted to represent the participants in their own words, in fitting with Indigenous research paradigms and to avoid an analysis that could be disempowering. These recordings were augmented by fieldnotes that I made during the interview. Later, field notes would serve to contextualize my understanding of the meetings. I would record the mundane, such as place, time and location, and I would also note my own thought trajectory throughout the interview, trying to fit my understanding within the entire fieldwork process. The emphasis was being reflective on my own attitudes and understandings. Prior to these interviews I made notes on questions or themes that I might investigate based on the pre-interview study I did on the participants and reflection based on their responses in the pre-interview period. These pre-interview notes allowed me to ensure that the broad themes identified in the pre-fieldwork period were interrogated.

I have noted in the Introduction how the literature differed from the data and that required me to rethink how I conceptualized my approach in the field. An example of this, which will be discussed in Chapter Six wherein the idea of 'transitional justice' was out of sync with the realizations of that term in Canada, or lack thereof. These disagreements between the literature and what was being said served as a point of interrogation, for instance, the interview with Leslie Spillett, an Elder and advocate, invoked a discussion on the South African Truth Commission and legal redress, something that Canada does not engage in. These discussions, as we will identify in Chapter Seven, discussing reconciliation as a sick tree, and Chapter Eight, where we look at growing a healthy tree of reconciliation, allowed for interview protocol to adapt, something we will discuss in the next section.

3.3.1 Structure

The previous chapter described how Indigenous research can operate with non-Indigenous methods. The decision to translate non-Indigenous methods into an Indigenous research paradigm allows for tools to be co-opted for Indigenous researchers. This enabled a culturally relevant operationalization of the methods utilized. The interviews were in a semi-structured format that allowed for thematic discussion that could adapt based on the data presented, trends in the data across participants, and the queries of the participants themselves. Semi-structured interviews were chosen for two reasons.

First, they are characterized by their “unique flexibility... [that is] sufficiently structured to address specific dimensions of your research question while also leave space for study participants to offer new meanings to the topic of study” (Galletta 2013: 1-2). In practice this allowed for the interviews to evolve as my understanding increased, and themes began to emerge. This is in keeping with Indigenous research themes informed by cultural values, such as the use of circles. This is discussed in the chapter on Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing.

Marshall and Rossmon suggest that semi-structured interviews are “[c]onversations with a purpose” (Marshall and Rossman 1995: 80). This idea of conversations suits the second rationale for their inclusion. The previous chapter on Indigenous research noted the value of storytelling cultures and oral tradition in the transmission of knowledge. Semi-structured interviews allow for the researcher to pose a question, but the participant gets to decide how best to answer, determine how they would engage with themes rather than questions (Bernard 1995: 209). Participants determine the content (Bernard 1995), rather than the interviewer. The interviewer’s job is to ‘get out of the way’. Participants often stated things that they found important about the general themes, rather than allow me to tell them what I think they should find important, ‘a priori’ categorization (Fontana in Frey 2005: 653).

In many ways using semi-structured interviews allowed me to 'get out of the way' as a researcher, and simply record what was being shared, rather than dictating the narrative to suit my research needs. What surprised me is how these new themes and narratives occurred when I did this. Had I 'stuck to the script' I would have missed Jason Bone telling me about *Miish'akomoo*, the *sasquatch*, and the connection to Indigenous worldview that one can only learn from knowledge being shared orally.

These stories came from sincere reflection, not from a precise list of questions. Other studies have created a space for moments of introspection. At the RCAP an Indigenous presenter said, "I have no written speech. Everything that I have said I had been carrying in my heart, because I have seen it. I have experienced it" (Canada 1996). This process of privileging the knowledge holder will be seen in the analysis as well and is informed by an Indigenous perspective on research outlined in the previous chapter.

3.3.2 Research Ceremony

Working within Indigenous communities, or with Indigenous Peoples, requires a cultural protocol to ensure respectful relations. The idea of the research ceremony, not just the exchanging of the sacred medicines prior to speaking with Elders, informed this reflection. The research ceremony is a process of establishing relations and understandings that will persist throughout the research cycle. Carleton University in Canada published a protocol for engaging with Elders, this was based on the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans (TCPS), a framework that was established through the Federal research councils. One of the practices identified and used in this research was the offering of a sacred medicine as a means of honouring the gift of knowledge as well as acting as a social contract for respectful research (McAdam 2009).

Tobacco offering is a common practice when dealing with many Indigenous Peoples in Canada (Bird-Naytowhow et al. 2017: 8). Tobacco is one of four sacred medicines: the others being sweetgrass, sage, and cedar. Tobacco has an important role in the spiritual

side of the Indigenous knowledge practice. One of its uses is for smudging. Smudging, a process of burning the tobacco and wafting the resulting smoke over oneself or another, serves to purify both the individual and their surroundings. It is used “to enter into sacred communication, to receive spiritual knowledge, and when entering processes of collaborative learning” (Bird-Naytowhow et al. 2017: 8).

There is also a social contract element of the research ceremony that is facilitated by both the process and outcome. Ermine et al suggest that the ceremony of research creates an “ethical space” between Indigenous knowledge and the research practice (2004: 18-19). Though I consider much of my intent as operating within the space of Indigenous knowledge, my frame emerges from a Western institution and my output is bounded by that.

3.3.3 Themes

As implied above, interviews relied on themes rather than explicit questions. These interview themes were derived from the literature review which was heavily influenced by examining reconciliation contexts. My understanding of reconciliation evolved during the fieldwork portion of the thesis, this is discussed in Chapter Six which examines my own positionality and my pre-fieldwork attitudes. That chapter also has deeper discussions with each of the five themes and how they evolved over the course of the study. Wilson describes this process, noting, “as I was listening, I was learning, and as I was learning I was sharing” (2008: 131). I was often reflecting with the participants about how my understanding had grown. The draft of what became my Interview Protocol is attached as Appendix 3.

The first theme was Creating and Claiming a Space. This theme addressed two things and centred the participant and how they chose to be identified within the research space. It was also an opportunity to allow for the participant to discuss, openly, the idea of reconciliation in Canada. It was the first theme, and often occurred right after we concluded the research ceremony, discussed consent and ethics, and I had addressed any initial questions about the interview and the project.

The second theme focused on understanding the State of the Indigenous Experience in Canada. This theme looked to the participants to describe the contemporary Indigenous experience, through the eyes of their organisations, observations, activities, and lives. It was an attempt to go beyond the media, statistics, assumptions, and literature collected outside of Indigenous voices. This was a chance to build a contextualized understanding that would inform the examination of the research questions.

The third theme was titled Reconciliation Efforts. It looked at reconciliation in Canada. It was interested in how these participants perceived its inputs, outcomes, intent, and realities. It served as an opportunity to deconstruct the narrative around reconciliation that we see propagated in the academy, media, and society, and understand an Indigenous perspective.

The fourth theme was called Looking Forward, Thinking Back, which enabled me to revisit past harm and reconciliation, reframe it, much like the previous theme, and to reconstruct it through an Indigenous lens. This would provide an opportunity to build reconciliation with not only the interests of Indigenous people, the harmed Peoples, but also with their worldview. The previous chapter identified that worldview, within the research practice, and how it informed this case study. This worldview is, for many of the participants, the missing ingredient in the recipe for reconciliation; both from a realization of reconciliation (what the government, public, industry, or church has done to account for past harm) and the design and assessment of reconciliation (how it has been talked about theoretically, in an academic or public frame, how actors have planned or assessed their realizations of reconciliation).

The fifth theme was Making Sense. It was a way to ask about reconciliation, with an appraisal of the current applications and its potential to continue the harm. Some academics have questioned the role of reconciliation to continue the colonial project (Henderson and Wakeham 2009; Corntassel, Chaw-win-is, and T'lakwadzi 2009, Martin 2009). This theme was an extension of those whispers, to increase the volume on that claim, and reinforce those claims about reconciliation to counter. These counter and reinforcing narratives serve

to combat the perception that the 'reconciliation project' seeks to "directly or indirectly impugn the testimony provided by Survivors [in mechanisms such as the TRC]" (Chrisjohn and Wasacase 2011 :229). Participants could address some of the concerns about reconciliation that they felt non-Indigenous society might not see.

These themes were borne out of my own experiences as an Indigenous Canadian, my knowledge of the residential school experience, reflection upon what Indigenous peoples who attended residential schools may be experiencing, and an examination of the literature of reconciliation and transitional justice. One question that often emerged when examining the literature of reconciliation in Canada juxtaposed with the lived experience of Indigenous peoples was 'who reconciliation is for' and 'what are the needs of reconciliation'. Looking back at the themes identified above and embedding the literature contextually it was clear that reconciliation is a journey. The themes sought to reflect the landscape that a reconciliation journey would encompass. This discussion and its evolution are again discussed in Chapter Six.

3.4 Interpreting Data

There's no beginning in a lot of Indigenous stories. The stories just stand alone in this other structure. (McMahon 2017)

In the previous chapter there was an examination of Indigenous research, Indigenous research paradigm, and a discussion on translating those concepts into western practice and this thesis. It looked at the analogues for research methods and decisions: elite/expert for Elder knowledge, snowball sampling for honouring relationships, and semi-structured interviews for storytelling traditions. The analysis of data within an Indigenous frame has similar analogues.

Traditional methodology chapters have discussions in ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological practice. These discussions frame the author and the thesis through the lens of philosophical assumptions (Creswell 2013: 16; Denzin and Lincoln 2011: 12). I have adhered to the Indigenous idea that epistemological and ontological considerations should be relational, as discussed in the previous chapter, rather than utilize an external construct to create distance between myself and the work (Wilson 2008; Simonds and Christopher 2013; LaRocque). In practice this means that I am much closer to the data and embrace Indigenous practice for engaging with knowledge (Goulet). This section will examine the process of analysis that was undertaken for this thesis.

3.4.1 Pre-analysis

The data collected over the three months of fieldwork represented a personal journey as well as a research journey. Coming back from the field, investing efforts into studying Indigenous research, informed my understanding of the relational and contextual needs of the Indigenous paradigm. I was comforted by the literature that suggested the individualised nature of the Indigenous research journey, and that much of the work of the research is the personal journey to unpack the knowledge shared with them (Cardinal in LaBoucane-Benson: 28). This is also represented in non-Indigenous methodologies.

The idea of research referring to the relationship between the researcher and the researched was identified by Creswell (1998). In his work with the Dene Tha', Goulet noted that knowledge is experiential (1999: xxx). Corntassel et al suggested that experiential knowledge can serve as a counter-narrative to colonial thought (2009: 140). This experiential knowledge is built through interactions, rather than passively through just listening or observing. Ermine summarizes this as "experience in context, subject experience that, for the knower, becomes knowledge itself. The experience is the knowledge (Ermine 2000: 104).

The fieldwork allowed me to experience the knowledge shared in its context. After returning from the field I undertook what LaBoucane-Benson describes as a 'grounding-in process' (2009: 80). This was described as allowing multiple exposures to the data to create a deeper sense of meaning within the researcher. In practice this was achieved by listening to all the data multiple times, beyond the necessary moments such as transcribing and coding.

The process of long exposure to the data fits with identified trends in Indigenous methodologies. Research is personal, and Indigenous knowledge is derived from experience. This personal knowledge has basis outside of Indigenous methodologies, such as Kolb's experiential learning theory (1984). Knowledge is derived from conceptual and practical experiences through a process of reflection and application. During the writing-up process I would often form drafts of my data chapters, see how they fit, and then discard all that work to start anew. These 'experiments' formed the basis for developing my understanding of the material and building my 'knowledge' in an Indigenous, experiential frame.

3.4.2 Contextualizing

After the pre-analysis period, where the researcher becomes aware of how they place themselves within their personal journey of learning, there is a need to place the knowledge within a contextual frame. Wilson talked about the importance of 'relationship' as the paramount concern within analysis (2008: 118). Relational accountability as the frame with which to analyse data looks at how things are connected, rather than how they are analyzed and isolated (Wilson 2008: 119). Understanding comes from a contextualizing frame, rather than a definitional, isolating frame.

This idea of isolating knowledge, analyzing and understanding it outside of its context, is seen as a western practice (Wilson 2008: 119; Bone 2018). In doing so, knowledge loses its relationships, and its meaning. This practice of maintaining relationships forces the researcher to think intuitively rather than linearly (Wilson 2008: 119). But in understanding

concepts from the perspective of the 'Other' rather than the dominant, it is essential. Bone discusses how the study of *Miish'akomoo, sasquatch*, creates a paradox between the contextual and definitional states. *Miish'akomoo's* current state is within the dream world, to study it outside, capture it and remove it to our realm, would not provide a realistic representation (Bone 2018).

Within storytelling traditions, representing whole quotes, or 'privileging large quotations', as LaRocque describes it, is one way to maintain context (2010: 12). This allows for an embedded process whereby the reader becomes part of a conversation, even an observer, rather than operating in a curated periphery (Zimmer 1996: 100). Indigenous scholars working with Indigenous material is not about dissonance so much as it is about mediation and reiteration (LaRocque 2010: 12). We are retransmitting knowledge for the reader, not necessarily interpreting for them (LaRocque 2010: 12). In practice this means that the reader may draw their own meanings or, hopefully, see through a contextualized frame the original meanings of the sharer of knowledge. LaRocque discussed this approach in the following way, "[i]n fact, reading Aboriginal voice and discourse differently demands that I cite generous portions from the Native documents and writing without excessive intrusion" (2010: 12).

Finally, contextualizing work by using large quotes or passages also deals with the challenges of the ownership of knowledge. Indigenous knowledge, according to many scholars, has been caught up in the western notion of ownership with their stories often being interpreted, misinterpreted, co-opted, or outright stolen (Smith 1999; Wilson 2008; LaRocque). Obviously, this is a thesis at a western university, but there is still a need to account for the fact that this knowledge was shared through ceremony. Wilson contends that using an Indigenous research paradigm demands shared ownership of knowledge (2008: 132-133). The use of long quotes, contextualized and directly attributed to their original keepers, is a way of maintaining that chain of ownership. This practice is also essential, as we will see, to finding a framework for interpreting data. This tension caused by the

interpretive frame is important. Choosing quotes, albeit attempting to contextualize them, is a process of selective interpretation. Ermine et al state that, “Research conducted into Indigenous spaces, as a legitimated process of academic freedom, is seen as problematic process of ethics for Indigenous Peoples because of the latent biases, inherent misconceptions, and outstanding issues of power and control” (2004: 28).

3.4.3 Drawing out meaning

Using an Indigenous paradigm draws upon a contextualized understanding that is based in relationships. Wilson relates this to a fishing net, each knot on the net is a node of data, but all those knots are connected by the string (2008: 120). To isolate, as Bone pointed out, one knot for study would be to entirely disassociate it, thus lose its literal meaning. A new meaning would be derived, not organic.

At the same time, Indigenous worldviews also imply connections that are beyond the literal. For instance, lessons from a single story can have multiple meanings (Bone 2017). It is meant to borrow on intuitive learning and calls upon the researcher to bring in the entirety of their life, rather than compartmentalize it and disassociate it (Wilson 2008). Meanings, for this thesis, were slowly established starting with the first two practices of pre-analysis and contextualising. I revisited the research questions and thought about the data, drawing upon my personal experiences, as Goulet suggests (1998: xxx).

Many analysis methods rely on a reduction of knowledge through coding, winnowing, and theming (Creswell 2013: 184; Wolcott 2001). While such method does not exclude data, it does reduce the connections and contexts of that data (Simonds and Christopher 2013: 2187). Simonds found this to be a challenge when applying a decolonized Indigenous research methodology to healthcare programming among the Crow Nation in Montana (2013). Using a community-based participatory research approach (CBPR) to address the lack of Indigenous frameworks at the time, Simonds found that there were still challenges that were difficult to overcome. Within her research the participatory practice served as a

vehicle to identify the limitations of a Western-centric worldview in data analysis, even unconsciously. Simonds and the participants helping to interpret the data found that the way the data was presented in this participatory model did not reflect Indigenous practice of contextualization. The data had been reduced through pruning and coding. It wasn't until the data was seen in a manner that was more reflective of the original speaker, contextualized, that those involved in data analysis could make sense in a useful manner. This suggests that at their worst, methodologies that are built from a Western worldview at their core can suffer from problematic implementations. Henderson critically engages with this paradox noting that "to assume that the Aboriginal past or knowledge can be adequately explained from a totally foreign worldview is the essence of cognitive imperialism and academic colonization" (1987: 23).

Simonds' use of participatory method allowed for the participants to aid in the process, but even Simonds was finding problems using traditional western practices, even decolonized participatory practices, which divided the data (2013: 2187-2189). Over four successive rounds of data analysis through methods that had previously been applied to participatory research, one of the Crow participants remarked, "the themes were confusing because even when making themes, everything became scattered. ...Crow people don't break things apart" (2013: 2188). Simonds recalled that "for Crow people, storytelling is a way of honoring tradition and honoring ways of knowing" (2013: 2188). What was more, it could be harmful to do so, because the removal from context disempowers the storyteller and removes the connection. (2013: 2188)

Simonds' struggles to find a way to analyze the data was the same challenge that I had. This challenge was also faced by other Indigenous researchers (Lavallee 2009; Baskin 2005). Her solution was the same that I used, even prior to encountering her research story. This intuitive-based learning is common in Indigenous research and researchers. For Simonds, her participants helped build a framework of analysis that used the Crow tipi, breaking down its structures and reinterpreting the data through that analogy (2013: 2188).

Once she had this model, data analysis just fit. A tipi, a traditional dwelling for some Indigenous Peoples, uses three or four poles placed vertically so that their tops cross together. A fabric, usually animal hides sewn together, is draped across it to provide cover. Simonds use each of the poles to represent one theme in the data, with the connection of the poles at the top providing a point of convergence for all the data (2013: 2088).

My analysis used a more generic analogue, a tree. The tree represents a useful proxy for understanding reconciliation. I discuss how this imagery came about in Chapter Seven and Eight, but I will explain its utility here. First, the idea of reconciliation being a tree became relevant through the literature review which supported this idea of reconciliation being a living thing, and its care entrusted to the harmed populations with support coming from civil society and government. Themes identified in the literature review created this notion of what could be construed as good and bad reconciliation. The literature also suggested desired outcomes from reconciliation and placed the consequences of bad reconciliation as continuing the harm, that it could be construed as a pacifying discourse (Alfred 2011: 182), or that it emphasised that the past was a page that could be turned (Martin 2009: 54).

One of the main themes noted, and thus the need for reconciliation, was this idea of deep intergenerational harm. That had two meanings, first it was an indicator of the underlying structural damage caused by previous policies, attitudes, and practice. This formed the basis of the idea that the 'roots' of this tree were diseased. The second meaning was an idea of what healing that harm would do for Indigenous Peoples. This projected frame, as these values were often derived from an external worldview, was to be the wellbeing of the tree. Because it was projected, it became the wellbeing of the sick tree, it was what non-Indigenous Canadians expected Indigenous Peoples to do to prove that reconciliation was working. Again, this frame was useful to understand reconciliation in the sick tree analogy.

3.4.4 Analysis and finding circles

Rather than finding conclusions, this process was circular in that each exposure, or mode of analysis, meant a deeper understanding that generated more questions and theories. This fits with Yin's definition of case study method (2014), Landmann's framework for hermeneutic/thick description research (2009: 27), and Wilson's representations of circles in Indigenous research (2008).

Storytelling and Indigenous methods lend themselves to a circular process of knowledge. This is part of the Indigenous worldview where the emphasis on connection is a central theme. Simonds stated that "breaking apart stories changes the relationship between the storyteller and the receiver of the story and loses the relationship of the piece of the story to each other" (2013: 2089). It also breaks the contextual connection which is essential for knowledge to be understood (Wilson 2008: 6; Tafoya 1995: 12). In practice this process will be drawn from inspiration from the Indigenous research paradigm.

The Worldviews chapter discussed two practices that are used here. First, noting that 'truth' is a subjective frame and research is a personal journey to one's understanding of knowledge, this research will contextualize the understanding rather than 'atomize' (Ermine 2000) and isolate knowledge. Denzin and Lincoln suggested that these "narrative, performative methodologies – research practice that are reflexively consequential, ethical, critical, respectful, and humble (2008: 6)," modes of inquiry serve to decolonize and deconstruct western academic practices.

Second, other research using Indigenous research paradigms has been sought to embed the researcher in the knowledge (LaBoucane-Benson 2009; Simonds 2013) and build upon the interconnectedness of knowledge and knowing beyond the human element of understanding. These have sought to inform analysis from nature, dreams, or spiritual. My frame for analyzing and finding connections was through the concept of a tree. The data discussion chapter articulates this by taking the narratives presented by the participants and

using that 'tree' informed theoretical/conceptual framework, and cataloguing the narratives presented to me, in comparison with what the literature suggests.

3.4.5 Conclusion

This chapter built upon Chapter Two and bridges the imperative for Indigenous voices in understanding reconciliation by articulating a research practice built upon an Indigenous research paradigm. Having established the framework with which to travel towards understanding reconciliation it is now important to examine the specific context for Canada. This discussion looks at how colonization and coloniality built an institutional, structural, and cultural apparatus that sought to harm and disempower Indigenous peoples from the outset. Looking at how this historical process was part of an embedded practice it is important to reflect again upon the imperative for Indigenous peoples to articulate their own research identity, not in contrast or comparison to the dominant practice, but rather in co-existence.

Chapter 4. Background and Context

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will examine the historical context that informs this thesis. Understanding what harm Indigenous Peoples have faced in their history since contact is important when establishing the need for reconciliation in Canada. This chapter analyzes the policies and practices that have informed the experience of Indigenous Peoples in Canada since first contact, up until the contemporary period. The process of colonialism has had an immense effect on the Indigenous Peoples; cultural practices have been eroded, identities have been stripped, land dispossessed, and families torn apart. Rice and Snyder note the importance of understanding this history in building effective reconciliation (2008: 51).

Next this chapter examines reconciliation and assesses how it has been framed by the agents who espouse and instigate the programs that have been used thus far in Canada. This discussion will also happen in the Literature Review, but the discussion here focuses on definitions of the term 'reconciliation' and its use in Canada. This discussion about the use of reconciliation centres on those programs that occurred since the mid-1990s when the discourse around reconciliation began to take shape.

4.2 From Contact to Colonization

To understand the need for reconciliation, there is a need to contextualize the harm perpetrated upon the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. The legacy of their trauma and pain has not dissipated because the harm runs deeply within Canadian culture as it does in Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples in Canada have operated under a regime of colonization for hundreds of years (Rice and Snyder: 51). This experience was a product of imperialism that goes back 500 years (Canada 2015b: 23). The actions during the imperial and colonial period emerged from a worldview that justified its actions based on perceived

superiority (Canada 2015b: 24). Though decolonisation entered the public lexicon in the mid-twentieth century, it did not erase its legacy, nor change colonial attitudes. Though the process of decolonization is ongoing, Indigenous Peoples worldwide entered an era that recognized their agency but has failed to account for the legacy of trauma, its effects persisting (Canada 2015b: 24). Programs like residential schools were part of a long line of policies and practices informed by a dominant worldview. Understanding the history of these actions is essential to forming reconciliation. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples noted that, “it is impossible to make sense of the issues that trouble the relationship today without a clear understanding of the past (Canada 1996a: 36). This section will present some of that history.

Scholars from the mid-twentieth century discussed the consequences of colonialism and the structures embedded due to the apparatus of colonisation. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak built upon the work of Fanon and Said by operationalising the concept of othering embedded in dominant thought (1999). Othering and disenfranchising knowledge systems, identities, and even recognition as equals are embedded within the attitudes of colonialism. Coloniality of power is the process of embedding dominant norms within Indigenous societies. It is an important framework to examine the historical context of Canada as well as frame the praxis of reconciliation as it has been currently applied in Canada.

Anibal Quijano suggests that coloniality of power is based on a systems of hierarchies, knowledge, and culture (2000). Systems of hierarchies establish the process for dividing humans; ‘races’ and genders, based on constructed definitions. These hierarchies could then be used to justify structures in a colonised society such as the excluding certain social groups from culture, society, and knowledge systems. Systems of knowledge is an extension of the hierarchies that used the stratified structure to impose the dominant colonial worldview upon an Indigenous society. Finally, systems of culture is an embedding of colonial hierarchies and knowledges within the structure of a society. This is through the use of the other two systems and is a process to manage and enforce coloniality of power.

Frantz Fanon examines the extent that coloniality promotes a legacy that is embedded in the attitudes and behaviours of a colonised culture, reinforcing the hegemony of the coloniser while further disempowering the colonised cultural traditions, structures, and worldview.

This chapter is framed within the context of colonialism and coloniality. The history of Indigenous peoples in Canada is one of harm perpetuated by a system that sought to enforce a hierarchy, legitimize a foreign worldview, and embed the entire action within a structure that self-regulates and self-enforces colonisation through disempowerment of the Indigenous peoples.

4.2.1 Pre-Contact, Contact, and Clash of Worldviews

Prior to the turn of the 16th century, Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples lived in isolation from each other. This period of separation resulted in a divide of culture, society, and perspective. One of the primary developments from this isolation was a distinct worldview that reflected a connection with nature and the metaphysical. This was evident in recollections on both sides of early contact.

As contact increased, initially with those on the eastern shores of the continent, Indigenous Peoples often took a cordial stance, coming to the aid of the explorers and newcomers as they faced the challenges of their new environments. As the numbers of arrivals from Europe increased, so too did the integration and cooperation between the non-Indigenous and Indigenous Peoples. There were frequent alliances, inter-marriages, and trade. Over time, however, as the numbers of Europeans increased, there was increasing tension over the resources and territory. Non-Indigenous did not see the original inhabitants as equals. Accounts strike a dehumanizing stance with notes of a lack of 'technological' development and sophistication. This has been interpreted by contemporary scholars as a difference in

worldviews colliding (Smith 1999). Indigenous Peoples did not operate under the guise of capitalism, imperialism, and religious imperatives.

Increasingly as the number of European nations took interest in this 'empty' territory, there were divides, as the newcomers often exported their domestic squabbles to the Americas. Alliances between the different European nations had long-term consequences for the destruction of several notable nations but would also reinforce stereotypes of violence. These would reflect in subsequent interpretation of Indigenous Peoples, portraying them as warlike savages.

From the early 1800s as the non-Indigenous populations increased, either from immigration from Europe or internal growth, those Indigenous who had not been driven off their land or destroyed by war and disease negotiated agreements with the dominant powers. These treaties would determine the basis of relations between the two groups until present day. The first agreements, such as the Royal Proclamation of 1763, formed the basis of subsequent political, social, and cultural policy. What had started as a culture of cooperation had deteriorated into a hostile and disempowering environment wherein the savage 'Indians' had to be colonized and saved from their backwards ways.

In contemporary Canada there is a national creation myth that celebrates that original cooperation. This is untrue, however, as the idea of a nation of Europeans in place of the lands of many Indigenous nations began to take shape. Indigenous people were destined, in the eyes of the new state, to assimilate or disappear. They were content, in that original contact, to share (Jamieson 2017). For many of them, the Creator had meant 'Turtle Island' to support all its children. This was due to the Indigenous perspective of non-exploitive cooperation with the physical world.

The teachings of Indigenous people reflect this ideology. The Great Law of the Iroquois, *Gayanashagowa*, intoned that, "every decision that we make relates to the welfare and well-being of the seventh generation to come" (Erikson and Vecsey 1994: 173-174). Their idea

was that this world was not just for them, but for their children and their grandchildren, the earth was not something to be owned. This is quite different than the newcomers. This circular relationship with the earth and its creatures was reflected in many of the teachings that Indigenous people share.

The *Anishinaabe* story of the sturgeon is reflecting of this circular connection. My participant, Jason Bone, a *Keeseekoowenin* Ojibway, told me this story. The sturgeon loved the *Anishinaabe* people so much that it asked the creator to come in from the great saltwater to be with them. The sturgeon was so old that it was around in the beginning with the creator. This story has multiple points from which knowledge and understanding can be derived, but in this context, it illustrates how Indigenous Peoples see the environment as part of an entire system with interdependent relationships.

Though this chapter is a presentation of a linear, western style history, Tafoya reminds us, as we have discussed in the Worldviews chapter, that stories go in circles (1995).

Indigenous Peoples often see history as circular. For some, even time is circular. As knowledge is relational the perspective of time reflects this in that the lessons learned are often repeated. Time is a “circle that returns on itself and repeats fundamental aspects of experience” (Canada 1996a: 39). This is brought up to give perspective as this chapter progresses. Again, the narrative is linear for the purpose of this thesis but respecting Indigenous perceptions of history and time are essential to honouring traditions and cultures.

4.2.2 Contracts, Treaties, and Colonization

Early contracts and agreements between non-Indigenous and Indigenous reflected the spirit of cooperation. This does not mean that non-Indigenous allayed their feelings of superiority or their need to colonize and civilize. One of these early contracts was the Royal Proclamation of 1763. It was created based on an early framework of cooperation and was also used as the template for the patriarchal relationship between the two Peoples. It was used to define the early emphasis on treaty making, but in doing so it was also deferential

towards Indigenous land use and territory. The process of acquiring land from Indigenous Peoples was addressed within it. Guidelines have informed contemporary practice and have been used by Indigenous Peoples to protect and promote claims (1763). It guaranteed the protection of Indigenous territory from being acquired by any outside of the government (Miller 2010).

The Royal Proclamation is still present, both legally and spiritually in Canada. It is in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms wherein it is stated that, “certain rights and freedoms shall not be... derogate[d] from [and]... any rights or freedoms that have been recognized by the Royal Proclamation of October 7, 1763” (Canada 1982). But while the Proclamation identified that Indigenous were a part of the original Canada, the willingness of Indigenous to cooperate was perceived as weakness and evidence of a lesser people. This would be used as justification for what would happen over the next 150 years.

4.2.3 Dominion Control and Early Policies

As Roberta Jamieson noted, the shift from cooperation to colonization emerged as the discussion turned towards a dominion (2017). Whereas Australia operated under the auspices of terra nullius, the Dominion of Canada would move towards assimilation. The 1857 Act for Gradual Civilization would begin to create a system of oppression and disempowerment. It would introduce the widespread use of reservations as a means of clearing the land for settlement, and the use of ‘industrial schools, the precursor for residential schools as a means of removing the ‘savage’ from the Indian (Canada 1857: 84-88).

This Act was to push towards Indigenous Peoples to be ‘civilized’, thus gaining franchise. They would still be Indigenous, suffering under a system of oppression and racism without their own cultural identity. They would often still live under the state and the tribe’s jurisdiction, the land they were given cease to be collective but was titled and therefore removed from being protected for future generations (Canada 1857: 86). This idea of

collective ownership of land, especially remaining reserve land, was one area where traditional Indigenous values were still evident. By enfranchising Indigenous Peoples, the state achieves two ends, the reduction of land and economic obligations and protections under treaties.

The 1859 Act for Civilizing and Enfranchising further promoted idea of enfranchisement to reduce the obligation of the state in the upkeep of its treaties. A gradual reduction of rights began during this period. The prohibition of alcohol was one such measure (Canada 1863: 165). This act retained the previous act in spirit and application. Candidates for enfranchisement had to be male, over 21 years but under 45 (Canada 1863: 165). They had a requirement to write and talk in English or French, despite the lack of education that persisted across all segments of society then. (Canada 1863: 166). Their 'moral character' was taken into consideration, as to their financial standing (Canada 1863: 166). Having satisfied these requirements, they would still have to wait for three years before gaining enfranchisement. During that period, they had to be registered in whatever local community they lived in and subsequently had to prove their enfranchised status even after gaining it (Canada 1863: 166).

Whatever lands that were granted upon enfranchisement was to come out of the collective allotment for the reserve, along with any monies. (Canada 1863: 166). Descendants gained enfranchised status and no future concessions would be made for hunting or land use, along with any annuity (Canada 1863: 168). Another trade-off was that the individual and their heirs would have to pay tax, and the land they occupied was not considered reserve land for the purpose of taxation. But as confederation became a reality in 1867, the relationship that Indigenous Peoples had cooperatively negotiated with the British crown would change.

The founding of the Dominion of Canada under the 1867 British North America Act shifted responsibility for 'Status Indians' from Britain to the new confederation (Leslie 2002: 23). Even though treaties and agreements had been negotiated between the First Nations and

Britain, the 'uncivilized' Indigenous Peoples of Canada had no say as they were wards of the state. 'Ownership' and the duty to govern and pay for Indigenous Peoples was now in the hands of the new government (Leslie 2002: 23-24).

Under the responsibility of the dominion, "policy, administrative, and legislative frameworks," would continue as they had before (Leslie 2002: 24-25). The ideas of racial superiority were reaffirmed through policy and practice and would inform future actions and attitudes. This government would continue the project of assimilation, bringing in new policies to support that agenda.

There was little change for Indigenous Peoples in subsequent years after Confederation. The idea of civilizing the savage was transposed from one entity to another. The model "established in colonial times became the basic model [until the 1940s]" (Leslie 2002: 25). The dominion made efforts to further identify the Indigenous Peoples as an 'other,' outside of the citizenry of the new nation, assimilation had by now replaced any pretence of cooperation (Leslie 2002: 26). A 1951 amendment to the *Indian Act* gave Indigenous Peoples the rights to perform cultural ceremonies that had been banned decades earlier, as well as the right to press land claims, but it did not allow Indigenous people to vote, nor were any of the outstanding issues with regard to treaties examined.

This agenda was furthered in the 1869 Act for Gradual Enfranchisement (Canada 1869). 'Blood quantity' was added to the determining factors for status, effectively preventing intermarriage. Women who married 'non-Indians' would lose their status, as would their children (Canada 1869). Men, however, were free to marry who they liked. If an Indigenous male married a non-Indigenous woman, she would gain status, as would her children (Canada 1869: 6). This policy of sexism would continue until 1985 when Bill C-31 would restore Indian Status to thousands of women and their children who had lost it under the previous law.

Efforts were made to reduce cultural practice in local governance. This meant that hereditary chiefs, a custom of some of the nations, were forbidden, as well as the role of Elders in governance. Limits were placed to prevent local Indigenous leaders from acting in their roles for longer than three years. The emphasis here was for the government to maintain control, rather than support Indigenous sustainability and capacity. (Canada 1869: 11). The state would choose the role and powers of a Chief. The Indian agent was effectively the one in charge, and they could punish the tribe as they saw fit for dissent to government policies. (Canada 1869: 12-13). The use of Indian agents on the reserve was one of the most overt patriarchal aspects of this period, a practice that would continue until the mid-twentieth century.

4.2.4 Indian Agents and Pass System

Indian agents enforced a system of segregation in Canada. They used their state derived powers to determine economic, social, educational, and spiritual practice on reserves. Laws that enforced segregation, along with the Indian agent, included bans on gatherings of more than a few individuals, and prohibitions on being allowed into towns after sundown (Jamieson 2017). The pass system, whereby a slip would be issued to allow an Indigenous person to leave the reserve for a specific purpose, was in effect until 1941. This document was required to be carried to identify the Indigenous person and limit the freedom that they had outside of the reserve to that official sanctioned by the Indian agent (Carter 2003: 162-164). These policies on the reserve were informed by an increasing desire to answer what was being called the 'Indian question,' in non-Indigenous Canada. The legal structure to answering that question was the *Indian Act*.

4.2.5 The *Indian Act*

The definition of 'Indian' began with the Royal Proclamation. It was up to subsequent policy to deal with Indigenous People who had, through the Proclamation and treaties, a legal right to exist in Canada. The *Indian Act*, which first came into force in 1876, would amalgamate

previous policies and practices and would serve as the primary article for determining the anticipated fate of Indigenous Peoples to present day. At the time, non-Indigenous leaders felt that the “process of Indian assimilation would be rapid” (Leslie 2002: 24).

There was no intent on preserving Indigenous society; the intent was absorbing them into the homogenous myth of Canadian identity. First Canadian Prime Minister John A. Macdonald stated that, “providence has been pleased to provide us with one nation, unbroken from sea to sea, to be peopled by one people with one common heritage and one common religion (Macdonald as quoted by Jamieson 2017). The *Indian Act* was derived with the sole purpose of achieving that vision. It is noteworthy for being “the only legislation in the world designed for a particular race of people (Anon 1978: 20).

The *Indian Act* was used as a means of destroying Indigenous culture. It banned many forms of cultural expression such as the *potlach*, a cultural ceremony of many of the Indigenous communities in the Pacific Northwest, and the Sun Dance, a ceremony central to many Plains cultures (Eshet 2015: 125; Canada 2012: 15). This practice of banning Indigenous forms of expression and culture began in 1884 and was not repealed in Canada until 1951. In the early 1900s this was expanded from certain ceremonies to include a ban on dancing outside of the reservation in 1914, escalating to an outright ban in 1925 in an effort to limit the influence of cultural practices and gatherings such as the *pow-wow* (Henderson 2006). In addition to this, the added harm of residential schools resulted in “lost cultural practices, traditions, and oral history” (Hanson 2009). Indigenous people were ‘savages’ who were under “guardianship as of persons underage, incapable of management of their own affairs” (Macdonald cited in Milloy: 20). The *Indian Act* was seen by the federal government as a tool to bring about “enfranchisement as an ultimate goal” (Canada 2015b: 108). But if the *Indian Act* was the theory on the Indian question, the residential school was the tool devised to make it a reality.

4.2.6 Residential Schools

By the time the last residential school shut down in 1998 more than 150,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students had attended, often by force (Canada 2015a: 2-3). The goal of the residential school was not education, but to “break their link to their culture and identity” (Canada 2015a: 2). The school should be off the reserve, because:

When the school is on the reserve the child lives with its parents, who are savages; he is surrounded by savages, and though he may learn to read and write his habits, and training and mode of thought are Indian. He is simply a savage who can read and write. It has been strongly pressed on myself, as the head of the Department, that Indian children should be withdrawn as much as possible from the parental influence, and the only way to do that would be to put them in central training industrial schools where they will acquire the habits and modes of thought of white men (Macdonald in House of Commons Debates 1883: 1107-1108).

Residential schools were usually run by religious organizations such as the Anglican Church, the United Church, and Presbyterians among other groups (Canada 2015a: 3). Life for students was poor as conditions were often terrible even by contemporary standards. Staffing was poor, and treatment was harsh (Canada 2015a: 3-4). Students were not expected to learn; the eugenics movement was robust during this period and Indigenous were considered to have a lower capacity than their non-Indigenous counterparts. They were forbidden from talking in their home language, carrying on traditional custom or dress, and, due to the intent on de-Indigenizing, contact with family was minimal (Canada 2015a: 3-4). But for some, harsh treatment at the hand of a priest or nun was the best they could hope for.

The residential school “created situations where students were prey to sexual and physical abusers” (Canada 2015a: 4). Survivors tell stories of common place molestation from authority figures that could span for years, more than 6000 witnesses attested to the conditions inside these schools (Canada 2015a: preface). But the harm that the residential

school system caused was not just on these victims who spoke, or the over 150,000 who were part of it. The harm is intergenerational and cross cultural.

The legacy of the residential school system has hardened stereotypes against Indigenous Peoples (Canada 2015: 142). It has affected the economic, health, social, educational, emotional, and cultural wellbeing of an entire people (2015: 142). One of the impacts today that is often discussed by many is the continued contact with the child welfare system that has occurred because of disempowering Indigenous Peoples' families and communities (Logan 2012: 79). This has the consequence of further reinforcing negative stereotypes about the capacity of Indigenous People to care for themselves and their children. This further harms relations between the two groups and prevents structures from being put into place to rectify the harm.

4.2.7 Sixties Scoop

The residential school program was not an isolated program but emerged out of a culture that sought to disempower and delegitimise Indigenous institutions, culture, and society. This built upon the stigma that Indigenous Canadians lacked the capacity to parent children fit for contemporary society (Hanson 2009: 1-2). Hanson suggest asynchronous cultural attitudes contributed to conditions, noting that social workers who entered Indigenous households would use their own cultural frame to examine conditions such as food and clothing (2009: 1). Seeing Indigenous foods such as dried fish instead of Western foods, Indigenous handmade clothes instead of mass-produced garments, social workers were inclined to assume that the children were not well provided for (Hanson 2009: 1). This led to a period, starting in the late 1950s to the 1980s, where about 20,000 children were removed from Indigenous households and placed into the foster system (Fournier and Crey 1998). By the 1980s, social workers were having second thoughts about their own complicity in this program. This was followed by an official report in Manitoba where the author Judge Kimelman stated that, "cultural genocide has been taking place in a systematic, routine

manner” (1985: 51). Kimelman’s analysis also agrees with the idea that differing cultures played a role, stating that social workers did not consider Indigenous childrearing practices that included community involvement for young mothers as a support system (1985).

4.2.8 White Paper/Red Paper¹³ and the Multinational State

But even with the passing of time, the United Nations Declarations of Human Rights, and gaining of universal suffrage in 1960, the spectre of assimilation was still a fact of life for Indigenous Peoples. Though government funded researchers established the status of Indigenous Peoples as ‘citizens plus’, meaning that the historical treaties along with the gradual establishment of peremptory norms and inalienable rights within the global (or at least liberal democratic) discourse, the attitude in Canada at the federal and provincial levels of government was that Indigenous Peoples were burdened by the baggage of these ‘additional’ rights (Hawthorn 1966: 396). As with previous assimilation efforts, this effort was conceived by non-Indigenous as a means of ‘saving’ the Indian. Like the efforts of the Church after contact and the Dominion after the birth of Canada, the Liberal government of Pierre Elliot Trudeau wanted to release Indigenous people from the chains of inequality that prevented them from participating in Canadian society, from “the equality and benefits that such participation offers” (Chrétien 1969).

The Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy, or the White Paper as it would be known, was such an instrument. It opened by stating, “to be an Indian is to be a man, with all a man's needs and abilities. To be an Indian is also to be different” (Chrétien: 4). It then began to emphasize the otherness of Indigenous People, “it is to speak different languages, draw different pictures, tell different tales and to rely on a set of values developed in a different world” (Chrétien: 4).

¹³ The White Paper was officially called the *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy*. It came in response to the Hawthorne Report, also called *A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada: Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies*. That project was funded by the federal government six years prior (1963)

But the White Paper continued by stating that, “to be Indian meant to lack power” (Chrétien 1969: 4). This lack of power resulted from the fact that Indigenous people were not part of Canadian society and did not ‘compete’ against other members of Canadian society (Ideas 2010). The intent of the White Paper was to get rid of the *Indian Act*, which it argued that the act hindered participation within Canadian society. In the White Paper the federal government suggested the removal of Indian status¹⁴, Department of Indian Affairs, the *Indian Act*, collective/crown ownership of reservation land, economic development funding, treaties, and federal responsibility (Canada and Indian and Northern Affairs 1969).

It argued that the separate systems in place: the *Indian Act*, the treaties, lack of franchise, the Indian Agents, the pass system, residential schools, events such as the Sixties Scoop, and other forms of structural, social, and cultural violence, caused Indigenous Peoples to lack the same quality of life as non-Indigenous, and not, in fact, the lack of commitment to treaty obligations, not the system of disempowerment that had occurred over the last several hundred years, and certainly not the omnipresent racism and intolerance: social and structurally, that existed in 1969.

Indigenous Canadians saw the White Paper as a direct attempt to erase Indigenous identity. In his response the Trudeau’s *Just Society* called *Unjust Society*, Harold Cardinal called the White Paper “a thinly disguised programme of extermination through assimilation (1969: 1). This was troubling because Indigenous Canadians did not see themselves as less than non-Indigenous Canadians. They were not less-than, in fact, a government report done two years prior had said they were more. The Hawthorn Report had gone as far as to call them ‘citizens plus’ (Canada 1966: 13). The report summarized that “Indians are citizens plus; that in addition to the normal rights and duties of citizenship they also possess certain rights simply by virtue of being Indians” (Hawthorn 1966: 396). This concept expressed the belief

¹⁴ Status is the legal definition of being Indigenous. Status Indians are on a master band list, it is not based on blood quantity, as in the US.

that they had additional rights that were added onto citizenship to enhance it rather than detract from it.

The Indigenous response to the White Paper's obvious discrepancies between the paper and the legal standing of Indigenous Peoples before the eyes of the law in Canada is noted in the 1966 Hawthorn report. The Red Paper, written by Harold Cardinal noted that, "equality in law precludes discrimination of any kind" (Cardinal 1970: 5).

The Indigenous people saw the White Paper as yet another attempt on behalf of the Canadian government to force the assimilation of Status Indians. It could be argued that the naive notion that Trudeau was just trying to extend his idea of a Just Society to a marginalized people is an idealized falsehood. Hawthorn cautioned against the spirit of egalitarianism being used to erode their unique status, "citizenship must be without prejudice to the retention of the cultural, historical and other economic benefits which they have inherited" (Hawthorn 1966: 396). The 1996 *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* recognized this and other attempts to innocently guide the Indigenous population up the 'Civ-Sav Dichotomy' stating, "successive governments have tried - sometimes intentionally, sometimes in ignorance - to absorb Aboriginal people into Canadian society, thus eliminating them as distinct Peoples" (RCAP 1996). The 'Civ-Sav Dichotomy' is a theory that notes the Euro-centric mode of rationale whereby Peoples that are 'civilized' are higher up than those that are 'uncivilized' or 'savages.' The classification of a 'savage' is supposed to demark proof that Europeans were 'evolved' (LaRocque 2010:39).

Other academics have commented on what they believe were the real intentions of the Trudeau government. In the book *Creating Choices: Rethinking Aboriginal Policy*, Richards argued that, "policies in place prior to Trudeau's White Paper had been racist, and that the White Paper's goal of Integration was itself misguided if not racist" (Richards 2006: 103). Richards contends that the actions of the Liberal government is an attempt to use the 'liberal' spirit of the age to finally eradicate any vestiges of the old treaties and thereby eliminate any

future claims by the Indigenous Canadians. It was a sort of buyout package to 'enfranchise' the entire 'Indian' population and eliminate that people from Canadian society.

Canadian government stated that they were trying to help. At the ceremonial presentation of the Red Paper to the Liberal government in June 1960, Pierre Elliot Trudeau perhaps summed up the entire process to create the White Paper: "we had perhaps the prejudices of small 'L' liberals and white men who thought that equality meant the same laws for everybody and that's why we said let's abolish the *Indian Act* and make Indians citizens of Canada like everyone else" (*IDEAS* 2010).

The spirit of liberalism expressed was very much alive in North American politics during the late 1960s. This liberal spirit was imbued with a notion of equality (Dworkin 1985: 183). Some discussed the idea that at its foundation were the principles of rationality, emancipation, and progress (Gerstle 1994: 33). It is not an unreasonable analysis by the Canadian government that at 'first blush' the Indigenous Peoples of Canada had designs on breaking down 'barriers' that limited their participation within contemporary Canadian culture. Trudeau's quote goes far in identifying this but also identifies the shortcomings of the government's actions.

Using Quijano's coloniality of power as a structure for analysis liberalism became a cultural system used to reinforce notions of a superior non-Indigenous culture that used its stated 'liberal' goal of an equal or just society to reinforce a system of hierarchies in Canadian society. Bereft any tangible remedy for centuries of disempowerment the removal of the *Indian Act* would serve to consign Indigenous Canadians to a permanent underclass based on their uneven development within the cultural system enforced by the coloniser since colonisation. Indigenous peoples ability to build their own system based on their cultural and social structures embedded in their communities was threatened by liberalism that would effectively remove the ability to live in their communities and ancestral territories, remove their cultural rights to live and sustain themselves through their relationship with the

environment. Having provided the structure to dismantle Indigenous identity the liberal narrative would effectively eliminate Indigenous systems of knowledge that are tied to worldviews derived from a lived experience.

Somewhere in the rhetoric of the White Paper and the statements by government leaders like Trudeau and Chrétien, they forgot that treaties were not documents between two people but two nations. Indigenous leaders were too concerned with maintaining a safe life in a third-world community within a first-world country to recognize an impetus of the White Paper, a possibility to strive into a new era of prosperity for Indigenous people without the 'shackles' of a plywood home up the path of a long-forgotten dirt road. Through the White Paper the Canadian government expressed their overt ambition to emancipate Indigenous Peoples. The federal government was finding the responsibility of managing Indigenous Peoples to be a burden on the state, the framework of liberalism offered a panacea for this responsibility (Canada 2015h: 40). But the reality was historical treaties guaranteed Indigenous people a right to their distinct society as nations within Canada.

Roberta Jamieson notes that this fight against the White Paper was one of the first times where Indigenous resistance would be felt by broader Canadian society (*Ideas* 2017). It was during this time that the leadership of the Indigenous Peoples were awakened for the cause of all their Peoples, not just their own nations. This was when the National Indian Brotherhood was formed, a precursor to the Assembly of First Nations that exists today.

The Red Paper, also known as *Citizens Plus*, was one of the first broad expressions of Indigenous values being injected into the political discourse and being effective. The authors noted on land ownership that land was “held forever in trust... [because] the true owners of the land are not yet born” (Cardinal 1969: 10). One of the intentions of the White Paper was to dangle the prospect of ownership as a vehicle for development before Indigenous Peoples. Here too Indigenous leadership educated the government on the legal status of the land and on the value framework of the Indigenous Peoples as it related to the land, saying

that the “Indians are the [actual] owners of the land” (Cardinal 1969: 9), and that the Crown held the land insofar as to mitigate the threat of the “sale or breaking of our land” (Cardinal 1969: 9).

The Red Paper was the response to the White Paper. It challenged the notion that Indigenous peoples had aspirations to be white men despite liberalism attempting to homogenise the idea of race in Canada while enforcing a hierarchy based on opportunity derived from the legacy of colonialism. It outlined the opportunity for Indigenous peoples to articulate their own reality in a relationship with Canada that was not subordinate, but in keeping with the negotiated treaties and contracts listed in this chapter. It sought to dismantle the control of Indigenous peoples by the state, or the devolving of Indigenous rights to the provinces. In many ways it was the beginning of a discussion on what could be described as a plurinational nation state, the idea of multiple nations existing within a border.

The Red Paper proposed a reality for the ambitions of Canada negotiated in the *Royal Proclamation of 1763*. Indigenous peoples would govern themselves, as had been the intent of both the treaties and contracts, while maintaining a relationship within Canada.

Resistance to the concept of multinationalism or plurinationalism stems from themes identified in the colonality of power discussion earlier in this chapter. This suggestion could be validated by concessions made to Francophone Canada in subsequent revisions of policy and practice while Indigenous peoples still find themselves negotiating with the federal government, never achieving the rights appointed legally binding treaties. The Red Paper was an attempt to suggest that Indigenous peoples could manage their own affairs within Canada, but while it was successful in overturning the White Paper, it merely started the discussion on the role that Indigenous peoples would play in controlling their own lives.

It was not until the 1990s that reconciliation became a word used in the Canadian lexicon to discuss the experiences of Indigenous Peoples within the context of society. A survey of literature within academic databases referring to Canada, Indigenous Peoples, trauma,

residential schools, policy, and the past shows the development of the term after 1991, the beginning of the RCAP, the Oka Crisis, and the Meech Lake Accord. But throughout the history of assimilation and harm, Indigenous People would find a way to resist, and within that resistance, a means to assert their unique cultural framework and stay true to their values.

4.3 The Residential School Experience and Effects

The harm caused by many of the previously mentioned moments in relations between non-Indigenous and Indigenous has been tremendous. But the residential school experience truly informs the extent to which this trauma impacted Indigenous life. The previous section described some of the outcomes of the schools, this section will broaden those descriptions to further explain the harm and trauma.

For over one hundred years, Indigenous children were forced to attend either residential schools or day schools. It has been argued that the primary aim of these schools was to “eradicate their values, traditions, and beliefs” (Eshet 2015: 128). The *Indian Act* of 1876 mandated Indigenous education as a federal responsibility. It was a combination of colonial attitudes of religion, culture, and superiority that saw the marriage of the church and the state to civilize the ‘savage’. Despite criticism from many outside of the Indigenous community (Milloy 1999) including those from the churches who ran them (Woods 2013), the efforts to use the residential school was a tool to enforce what many have called a ‘cultural genocide’ (Canada 2015a: 133; 2015; Chrisjohn et al. 2006; Woolford 2009; MacDonald 2007) until 1996. At their peak there were 80 schools across Canada (Woods 2013: 173; Milloy 1999), overall there were 130 schools throughout its existence (Elgersma 2011: 90).

Conditions were generally terrible (Elgersma 2011: 90; Eshet 2015: 118), there were high levels of illness resulting in the outright deaths of over 6000, officially, out of a population of 150,000 students (Eshet 2015: 118; Tasker 2015; Elias 2014). Physical conditions were unsanitary and dangerous. Tuberculosis was so rampant, with mortality rates well beyond

the general population, that it caused one health department official to publish a public report stating the disregard for the obligations of the state for the welfare of its Indigenous wards was 'criminal' (Bryce 1922:14). Bryce had previously spoken out about the conditions experienced in the residential schools in an official capacity in 1907, echoing previous sentiment published in official reports in the 1890s (Milloy 1999: 85). Woods suggests that there were some within the Churches who shared these attitudes but is at a loss to explain why support persisted (2013: 4). Stories of children escaping the school were commonplace. Milloy recalls conditions and apathy so bad that in 1937, four boys aged 8 and 9 ran away from Lejac Indian Residential School (1999). Their departure on New Year's Day, 1937, wearing only overalls, rubber boots, and shirts, resulted in no action on behalf of the staff of the school. They were found the next day, dead from exposure to the elements, as they attempted to cross the frozen lake from the Nautley Reserve (Milloy 1999: 142).

This was not the only case where a child attempted to escape from their residential school only to succumb to the elements. Chanie Wenjack died in Northern Ontario as he attempted to walk 600 kilometres from the school to his home (Adams 1967). He was twelve years old, wearing only a light jacket and jeans in temperatures below freezing. Maclean's magazine in Canada compiled a partial list based on accounts of other Indigenous survivors (2018). Conditions in the schools, beyond the culture of assimilation and disempowerment of Indigenous values, contributed to these deaths. Students were often assaulted: physically, emotionally and sexually (Eshet 2015: 128).

There are instances of medical experimentation, starvation, and sadistic punishment. One survivor recounts children around five or six years old being subjected to an electric chair. Survivor Edmund Metatawabin recalls his own experience in it with the nuns and brothers laughing as his feet flew off the floor from the shock (Metatawabin and Shimo 2014). This dehumanizing process was, part of a mentality that saw Indigenous Peoples as a lesser race. Under this rationale the church and the state were fulfilling an obligation to save Indigenous Peoples from themselves

Many residential school survivors recall their first moments at the school, when their clothes were stripped, and they were bathed roughly. Some of the survivors recall the new clothes resembled more prison wear than children's clothes (Knockwood 1992: 28). Their hair was cut short; braids which were common for some Indigenous Peoples were removed (Knockwood 1992: 28). The removal of their physical markers of culture were a sign of what was to come.

The use of Indigenous languages was often banned at residential schools. Punishment for speaking in one's 'native' language was often severe. This made it especially difficult for some who had never spoken English or French (Eshet 2015: 137). When the survivors returned home, many had lost their ability to speak their own language. Many of the Indigenous languages are shifting towards extinction as a result of these practices (Canada 2015e: 3). But the loss of language, identity, and culture was not the only by-product of the residential school system.

Those who came home were not prepared for life on the reservation. Many did not know how to hunt, fish, trap, or other necessities for survival in the remote locations that many of the reservations occupied. There was stigma and shame for both the parents and families who had their children taken away from them, and on behalf of the children who had spent years away from any support system that could help make sense of their trauma. Survivors had lost a sense of self-worth, and the teachings of the residential schools further alienated them from their own culture. This trauma was deep and endemic within the community, but those outcomes would last much longer than just their generation.

Indigenous Peoples had their circle broken, what was once tradition built upon their worldview and Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing, was replaced with a broken circle. This broken circle did not see the reciprocal relationships that Indigenous Peoples cherished. The destruction of cultural practices that had existed for centuries was not replaced with a

knowledge of how to cope with their reality. Teaching was underfunded and of poor quality. But this broken circle would also inform the next generation.

Many of the survivors suffered from post-traumatic stress and depression. Alcoholism and violence were high amongst survivors, and this in turn darkened whole communities.

Children were not raised with the practices of their community, and in turn did not know how to act as parents themselves (RCAP 1995: 323). Given the long-term trauma that many faced, it was difficult to find solace in their own lives, let alone provide that for their children.

The new circle that would be present in many of these communities was one of addiction, abuse, apathy, and aimlessness. Without their cultural practices to ground them, many Indigenous people floated without a connection.

Over time this trauma along with policies and attitudes of governments and their populations would serve to build and reinforce stereotypes about Indigenous Peoples (Canada 2015e: 4). In many aspects, contemporary attitudes and practice in Canada are not much different than those of 150 years ago (Canada 2015e: 4; Eshet 2015: 2). The Final Report of the MMIWG Inquiry suggested that colonial attitudes embedded within Canadian culture from decades of policies centred around assimilation rather than recognition have perpetuated a culture of cultural violence (2019: 77). The child welfare system was informed by these early attitudes. By the 1950s after decades of “severing the link between Aboriginal children and their parents (Canada 2015e: 5),” many Indigenous children within the residential school system were ‘identified’ as having problems at home that would necessitate state intervention (Canada 2015e: 5; RCAP: 232). Prior to the 1990s there was little discussion about the root of this problem, there was only further attempts to blame Indigenous Peoples. But as the stories and pressure about the residential schools, day schools, pass system, poor conditions on reservations, and continued social policy became evident within the public sphere, the need to address these harms increased.

4.4 Reconciliation

Indigenous authors like Chrisjohn and Young increasingly presented the Canadian public with a reality of their own making. School survivors had chosen to resist the idea that they were the problem and told their stories (Rymhs 2003: 113). Many Canadians had no idea of what had happened over the last hundred of years, and the policies that had existed in contrast to treaty obligations prior. And as Indigenous voices presented their anger and anguish there was silence from those institutions that had been at the forefront of the practices (MMIWG 2019: 78).

4.4.1 Apologies

By the beginning of the 1990s the church and the state were reluctant to offer any form of affirmation for their actions. Chrisjohn and Young note:

When it comes to providing details of individuals' experiences in Residential School or drawing generalizations about the form and function of the institution, there's ... official silence. The churches and federal/provincial governments have produced no histories, incident reports, legal opinions, psychologies, or sociologies of Indian Residential Schooling. There is uniform inattention to these particular details. (2006: 27)

By 1990 only the United Church had offered an apology for its role in residential schools, acknowledging the effects and harm that it had caused intergenerationally (1986). This had come because of an internal conversation within the Executive Council of the United Church at the request of a survivor. (Eshet 2015: 155). When the idea of an apology for past actions first came up in 1981 at the behest of an Indigenous activist, it was met with astonishment from United Church Executive General Council (Trojan 2014). In 1990, the Grand Chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Phil Fontaine spoke of his experiences in residential schools on national television (The Journal 1990). Fontaine noted that in his class of 20, every single one was sexually or physically abused, many had been both (The Journal

1990). The leadership of Fontaine created national space for other survivors to come forward. Other accounts, such as Haig-Brown's book *Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School* in 1988 had outlined the abuse for public dissemination, but scholars were sceptical of the work, feeling that survivor testimony was not enough to condemn the church (Gresko 1999). Fontaine's voice added weight, he was well respected within the Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. This would put pressure on the state and the church to find a way of acknowledging the past.

The churches had been discharged of their responsibility of running many of the residential schools by 1969 (Eshet 2015: 219). Though some of the churches maintained residential schools until the final closures in 1996, the state was the primary agent of their propagation in the subsequent decades. It wasn't until 1994 that most of the major denominations acknowledged their role and the extent of their harm. In 1991, many of the Catholic Dioceses had offered an apology, noting that they had projected "cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious imperialism that was part of the mentality with which the Peoples of Europe first met the aboriginal Peoples, and which constantly lurked behind the way the Native Peoples of Canada have been treated by civil governments and the churches" (Crosby 2001). They would further link the harm and trauma that caused a breakdown in Indigenous society, leading to high rates of suicide, depression, alcoholism, violence, incarceration, as well as other social and cultural ails, which were a direct result of these imperialist attitudes (Crosby 2001). The Anglican apology was less specific about the harm, and its language talked more about forgiveness for the harm (Peers and Anglican Church of Canada 1993). Particularly troublesome was the language hinting that not all within the church had accepted its responsibility, noting, "[a]nd I do this even though there are those in the church who cannot accept the fact that these things were done in our name" (Peers Anglican Church of Canada 1993). These apologies acknowledged the harm caused and were instrumental in legitimizing the experiences of the Indigenous Peoples but were problematic in that they also legitimized the actions as part of a civilizing of another. This act of

doublespeak was not disassociated with the discourse of power, noting that even in apologizing there was an attempt to rationalize their actions.

The Federal government's apology, to residential schools and the survivors alone was not made until 2008. There had been an apology on behalf of the Minister of Indian Affairs to Fontaine and the Indigenous community in 1998 but this was far from an admission of wrongdoing by the state. The 2008 apology came after a class action lawsuit filed on behalf of the survivors, the subsequent 2006 Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, before the Prime Minister issued an apology on behalf of the Canadian government. Reactions from the Indigenous community were mixed (Jacobs 2008).

In his analysis of the discourse and framing of early anxiety about the treatment and effectiveness of residential schools on behalf of the Anglican Church of Canada, Woods noted that residential schools had become a sacred enterprise on behalf of the colonizers (2013). This led to the persistence of the schools despite mounting criticism. The apologies offered by the state and the churches reinforce the concept of a sacred enterprise. Woods invokes Turner's concept of social drama, a means in which an act is contested by involved agents (1974; 1982; in Woods 2013: 4). To expand on Woods' analysis, the apology was another social drama that contested the sacred enterprise of the residential school apologies, rather than the experience itself. This suggests a troubling trend within reconciliation, that there was a discussion on the limits in which to include the Indigenous needs over the needs of the colonizers.

4.4.2 Truth Commissions

To date there have been two commissions set up to examine and report on the treatment of Indigenous Peoples by the state, the challenges facing Indigenous Peoples in contemporary Canadian society, and allow Indigenous voices to tell their own stories. One of the challenges within the discussion about reconciliation in Canada has been the competing

narratives and truths. Just like Woods' suggestion of a sacred enterprise, the identity of the Canadian state has presented a problematic dilemma for citizens to contend and contest.

It was difficult for many Canadians to believe that they had been complicit in the overt harm of other human beings. One major study examined awareness of the residential school program and found that prior to the TRC and the apology only about 50% of Canadians had even heard of the program (Neuman 2016: 26). Even today, attitudes surrounding guilt within the public are not unanimous. Truth has been a bitter pill and reconciliation has been much as 'forgetting' as 'healing' (Green 2012). As mentioned earlier, accounts like Haig-Brown's were often dismissed by academic gatekeepers. Resistance movements in the late 1980s and early 1990s put Indigenous voices at the forefront of Canadian society (Eshet 2015: 61).

The Oka crisis, a land dispute between the ambitions of the non-Indigenous community of Oka who wanted to expand their golf course into *Kahnawake* and *Kanesatake* territory in Quebec, spilled over into a national movement on behalf of Indigenous Peoples against their treatment by government and society (Canada 2015a: 185). Elijah Harper's refusal to ratify the Meech Lake Accord in 1990 caused a constitutional crisis. Indigenous Peoples across Canada were forcing both the public and the state to recognize their voices. The Meech Lake Accord, especially, increased the agency of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Quebec had been given concessions in constitutional talks by the Mulroney government. These concessions, and the lack of representation of Indigenous Peoples in the Canadian constitution forced Harper, a Member of the Legislative Assembly, to vote against a motion in the Manitoba Legislature. Pressure to pass the vote to avoid a referendum in Quebec on the growing desire to separate was palpable. Elijah Harper's refusal on the grounds of Indigenous representation increased dissent of many Canadians towards Indigenous Peoples, but it also forced the government to acknowledge their existence as a political agent.

This opened the space for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples in 1991, a process that would take five years to complete (Eshet 2015: 62). This was set up not to address the need for reconciliation, which had not yet entered the public vernacular, but to look at the state of Indigenous Peoples and their relationship with Canada. The findings were in line with commissions and reports that had preceded it but had been overlooked. Still, they noted, “just how bad things had become (Canada 2015a: 186),” between the two groups. If the government went into the process unaware of the idea of reconciliation, there was not escaping its omnipresence after (Canada 2015a: 186-187; Eshet 2015: 62; RCAP).

But the idea of reconciliation was contested. The state saw reconciliation that “entails Aboriginal Peoples’ acceptance of the reality and validity of Crown sovereignty and parliamentary supremacy, in order to allow the government to get on with business (Canada 2015a: 187),” whereas Indigenous Peoples saw it as “an opportunity to affirm their own sovereignty and return to the ‘partnership’ ambitions they held after Confederation” (Canada 2015a: 187). Both sides saw reconciliation as a necessity, but many within the state wanted to limit the extent to which reconciliation was redress, in the legal sense, and steer it towards the notion of ‘therapy’ (Green 2012). Reconciliation was a word without a context, and the 2008 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) would provide that context.

The TRC was built based on transitional justice mechanisms. This is discussed in the literature review, but it is important to note that the TRC was not legal, had no authority but to report, and would not result in any direct action save for that which the government decided to take. Given that the recommendations of the RCAP had been ignored (Canada 2015a), optimism was not high early on, as the commission languished under poor leadership and mandate for several years (Green: 131). Part of these problems were ascribed to the idea of reconciliation outside of the transitional justice framework (Eshet 2015: 65; Green 2012; Jung 2010). Canada had effectively ‘watered down’ transitional justice to fit within its own agenda.

But the TRC allowed for powerful survivor testimony and its magnitude increased the awareness of the public. Hearings at the national and local level coincided with public events. Over 7000 survivors testified over the process and there was substantial press coverage. The TRC provided a substantial amount of data that gave non-Indigenous Canadians a glimpse into the experiences of those student, and the harm and trauma that has persisted within Indigenous society. While it was Indigenous Canadians who attended residential schools, facing the dehumanizing colonization project as early as five years old, it was the Canadian public which would be educated by the experience, through the TRC (ICTJ in Eshet: 66).

4.5 Conclusion

Indigenous peoples experiences in Canada since contact fit the framework of coloniality of power articulated at the beginning of this chapter. Harm and trauma perpetuated across several generations has occurred out of colonial thinking embedded within the coloniser and their approach to managing their agenda. In Canada we have seen how liberalism played a role in undermining Indigenous peoples own agency and further disempowered their cultures. Despite attempts to entrench hierarchies and cultural structures Indigenous peoples have used movements such as the Red Paper to counteract harmful narratives. This resistance to the legitimacy of the state and the assertion of embedded rights of Indigenous peoples to self-govern or participate within a plurinational state are emerging trends in other countries. In Ecuador national identities have sought the road of pluriculturalism and recognition as a pathway to plurinationalism (Pallares 2002). These themes will be suggested in Chapter Seven and Eight, the idea that reconciliation is a re-negotiation of a historical relationship, or that it might even be a re-meeting of two equals in a contemporary period. The next chapter will investigate the idea of reconciliation, its definitional roots, and suggest an Indigenous alternative to understanding and untangling a colonial legacy.

Chapter 5. Literature Review

There can be no peace or harmony unless there is justice.

(The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1996a: 2)

5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the ways in which the term reconciliation has been understood within academic discourse. Bloomfield suggests that despite its importance in addressing social harm, trauma, and divide, there is confusion over the definition of reconciliation, especially as it pertains to application and practice in the political sphere (2003: 3). It is a paradox in practice, as tensions abound with its application (Rigby 2001: 12-13) and definition (Brouneus 2003: 13-20). This chapter discusses these paradoxes, looking at how the definitional aspects of reconciliation intersect with these tensions. Most notably, the tension between forgiveness and justice will be discussed. The challenges between interpersonal operationalizations of reconciliation and a political reconciliation will be discussed. This chapter will analyze the frameworks, debates, practices, and challenges surrounding reconciliation and demonstrates that reconciliation is a contested term. Its application in society shifts between political, social, cultural, and theoretical realities. These impositions lead to the conclusion that reconciliation is a 'rhetorical' concept, something discussed in this chapter. As such, the process of reconciliation is claimed by many but controlled by the less, as agency is the bedfellow of those four previously mentioned realities. We will come to a conclusion in this chapter that for Indigenous people to negotiate agency there will need to be an acknowledgement of these realities, on the one hand, and a claim of agency and necessity, on the other.

5.2 Definitional Challenges

Finding consensus on a definition of reconciliation is difficult (Bloomfield 2003: 4; Canada 2015e: 112; Avruch and Vejarano 2002: 41; Brouneus 2003: 13). The lack of agreement is

highlighted by many scholars (Galtung 2001; Dwyer 2003). Galtung said that it was an embedded concept, one central to many themes of human identity, understanding, and being that “nobody really knows how to successfully achieve (2001: 4). Dwyer cautions that this lack of definitional clarity is problematic in practice. That reconciliation is being promoted in relation to populations who have experienced immense harm and suffering at the hands of the state, non-state actors, and others; it is being presented as the remedy to those harms (2003: 92). This is not always the case, reconciliation is not always essential in society, a minimalist projection of reconciliation would state that it does not operate in a vacuum, but as a function of history (Dwyer 1999: 21-22). Understanding reconciliation is a difficult task, but necessary in order to understand its utility and application (Bloomfield, Barnes and Huyse 2003; Bloomfield 2006: 5).

Brouneus begins her discussion of reconciliation by tracing the roots of the word (2003: 13). She notes the Latin roots of the term, the word *reconcliare* (2003:13). This breaks down to *re* (again) and *concliare* (make friendly) (2003:13). As noted in Chapter One, this closely resembles the definition using in the Canadian TRC. Brouneus considers how the compounding of these terms suggests a rebuilding of a previous relationship or status (2003: 13). But this exercise in the provenance of the word requires further scrutiny.

Reconciliation as a word in contemporary usage is a hybridization of religious and secular concepts (de Gruchy 2002; Phillips 2005: 112). From this perspective, this creates a node that is contested when used in political and societal contexts. This section examines the definitional functions of reconciliation, unpacking a primary duality of secular and religious, while establishing the foundation for understanding how the intersecting of these two definitions unconsciously informs outcomes that can contribute to harm, ineffectiveness, and challenges in practice (Phillips 2005).

This duality is demonstrated in the Oxford English Dictionary’s definition of the reconciliation. It offers two usages: one to “restore peace and unity (OED 2019),” and the second to “make

compatible or consistent” (OED 2019). The historical roots of the first definition are Biblical (OED 2019) whereas the second definition was best codified by Hegel (Hegel in Hardimon 1994). Hegel is using reconciliation as a means of coming to terms with modern society (Hardimon 1994: 168-169). This reconciliation, in Hegel’s frame is prompted on an existential examination of self within a social world (Hardimon 1994: 2). Hegel is concerned with how one accounts for this social world, namely the relationship self and a social membership as a means of overcoming alienation. Farneth’s analysis of Hegel and reconciliation sees it as a function of religion through practice and rite (2017: 74). Reconciliation occurs through the rituals and practices of forgiveness, grace, faith (2017: 74). This, according to Hegel, normalizes the ritual of reconciliation and transfers it from the religious into the social domain. Reconciliation is about reciprocal recognition (Farneth 2017: 54).

Hardimon further draws out a contrast in between Marx and Hegel that has implications for the definitions of reconciliation considered in this chapter. First, that Marx, according to Hardimon, is a proponent of political reconciliation, where the social order must change to encompass a conciliatory state (Hardimon 1992: 191). This fits with the second definition outlined in the OED. In practice, Marx’s political reconciliation aligns with the desired outcomes of many reconciliation programs, such as the TRC in Canada. Its focus on structural change that transforms institutions and society embraces many of the concepts that can be identified in transitional justice literature such as the 2004 UN Security Council Report of the Secretary General (S/2004/616) and the 2010 Guidance Note of the Secretary General. In practice, some scholars feel that this definition of transitional justice is challenged by attitudes stemming from Hegel’s contrasting perception of reconciliation.

Hegel sees a philosophical perspective on reconciliation. One that, “it attempts to reconcile people by providing them with a philosophical account of their central social institutions that will allow them to see despite appearances” (Hardimon 1992: 171-172). This philosophical conceptualization of reconciliation is in line with the first definition drawn from the OED, one

that restores peace and unity. This definition is derived from theological roots. This is validated by South African theological scholar John W de Gruchy who, writing after the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, defined reconciliation as “the restoration of justice, whether it has to do without justification by God, the renewal of interpersonal relations or the transformation of society” (2002: 1-2). The utility of this categorization is that reconciliation, in practice, is both definitions simultaneously, even if it does not endeavor to be so. There is an inexorable link between the historical roots of reconciliation, tracing itself to doctrine in Abrahamic religion (Christianity, Judaism, and Islam), through the concept of reconciliation theology, to secular political realizations of reconciliation.

It is important to note the religious connotations of reconciliation. This is because much of the operationalization of reconciliation is informed by its religious roots. This section noted one duality: interpersonal and political. It is in religion where these two nodes intersect. Phillips suggested that despite best efforts to separate political reconciliation as a practice from the religious genealogy of the term, it is impossible (2005). De Gruchy looks at the Pauline origins of the term (2002: 24). As its use in Christian dogma evolved it took on many of the paradoxes seen in its application today.

De Gruchy agrees with Phillips that reconciliation “had retained its core religious sense (2002: 24),” despite gaining additional applications. These additional applications, such as consensus, resolve, or make whole, threaten, as de Gruchy suggests, to diminish its meaning altogether (2002: 25).

De Gruchy suggests that reconciliation can embrace its ambiguity and progeny of applications. He notes a commonality in four nodes for the word. First, its theological aspect which “refers to reconciliation between God and humanity, and what this means in terms of social relations” (2002: 27). Second, interpersonal reconciliation, which is acted upon a person to person level. Third is social reconciliation, which is broader than interpersonal,

looking at communities, nations, Peoples, or other larger units. Fourth, political reconciliation, which de Gruchy says are actions taken at the state level, sometimes horizontally between states, or vertically between the state and its inhabitants.

These distinctions feature in other scholars' definitions and operationalizations of the word reconciliation. Priscilla Hayner notes that in practice reconciliation operates in a political and interpersonal space (2011: 155). There is a need to recognize this distinction when understanding reconciliation as definitional differences are further expounded by differing agendas (2011: 155). Brouneus summarizes by suggesting that national or political reconciliation through a mechanism such as truth commission can unmask past actions and behaviors as a means of reducing tension in society (2003: 14). It does not attempt to promote healing and reconciliation on the personal level for that is a different process (2003: 14).

The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (SA TRC) is seen as a moment where reconciliation was articulated and operationalized. The SA TRC used reconciliation as a vehicle to transition post-apartheid society beyond past harm and conflict to one characterized by *ubuntu* and co-existence. Bloomfield suggests that the paradox of 'truth' and 'forgiveness' were widely married to the realization of reconciliation (2006: 5). He singles out many academics who subsequently tried to interpret reconciliation through these frames (Lederach 1997; Rigby 2001; Bar-Simon-Tov 2004). Lederach addressed this by building a framework of four tensions that informed reconciliation. Drawing inspiration from Psalms 85, verse 10 D-R: 'Truth and Mercy have met together. Justice and Peace have kissed.' Lederach suggests that,

truth is the longing for acknowledgement of wrong and the validation of painful loss and experience, but it is coupled with Mercy, which articulates the need for acceptance, letting go, and a new beginning. Justice represents the search for individual and groups rights, for social restructuring, and for restitution, but is linked with Peace, which

underscores the need for interdependence, well-being and security. (1997: 29).

Rigby suggests that these four tensions: truth, mercy, justice, and peace, provide the interpretive framework for judging reconciliation (2001: 13).

Hegel focused on the concept of mercy when building his theory on reconciliation. His definition of reconciliation was based upon Christian traditions. Reconciliation, in on religious sense, is about the restoration of one relationship with God. Hardimon suggests Hegel's interpretation is based on the idea that "man had, through sinfulness, become estranged from God. But then Christ overcame God's enmity by sacrificing his life on the cross and thereby restoring the state of harmony between God and man (1992: 85). This theme is supported by Lederach's framework informed by his reading Psalms and satisfies the idiom of mercy in the reconciliation discourse.

Truth is also a key element in reconciliation discourse (Bloomfield, Barnes, and Huyse 2003: 14). Truth acts as a means of healing psychological trauma, both through the act of retelling and the process of validating that truth (Hayner 2011; Hamber 2007). Many of the survivors of the TRC in Canada expressed that they were telling their story so that the truth might be told.

5.2.1 Process or Outcome

One of the tensions in reconciliation discourse is to whether it is a process, an outcome, or both. This has been seen in theory and practice and this tension is represented in literature listed below. De Gruchy calls reconciliation "an action, praxis and movement before it becomes a theory or dogma, something celebrated before it is explained" (2002: 21). But, he concedes, it is both a process and a goal (2002: 147-209).

Bar-Tal defines reconciliation as a "psychological process" (Bar-Tal 2000). Bar-Tal notes that there are socio-psychological barriers that prevent reconciliation and peacemaking, and that these barriers need to be unfrozen from prevailing attitudes to allow for new ideas such

as a post-reconciliation society to prevail (Bar-Tal and Halperin 2013: 33-34). This is ambiguous as to whether Bar-Tal's conceptual framework for unfreezing the psychological aspects that make of his definition of reconciliation amount to a process or an outcome classification.

Chapman adds to this, suggesting that reconciliation is a long-term process that has many aspects (2002). This process is both forward looking and backward looking. Hayner sees it as a long-term process of restoring, repairing, or creating relationships with an understanding of the past (2011: 161). Hayner states that one can test the progress of reconciliation by examining how the past is incorporated into post-harm societies. Brouneus summarizes Hayner by stating that this test involves observing: how the past is integrated and spoken about between former enemies; if relationships are based on the present or past; and if contradictory versions of the past have been reconciled – not into one truth of the past but to versions not based on lies and denial” (2003: 15). De Gruchy says that gauging the success of reconciliation relies on listening to the stories of reconciliation in communities and cultures affected by past harm (2002: 22). In this manner the process of reconciliation can be interpreted through the outcome of reconciliation.

Lederach suggests initially that reconciliation is a process of healing and building peace (1997: 842) but adds that reconciliation is both “a focus and a locus” (1997: 30). The process/focus of reconciliation centers on rebuilding and mending relationships. Lederach argues that the breakdown in relationships is both the source of conflict, and the opportunity for reconciliation. This focus on reconciliation converges on a spatial and temporal conceptualization. Reconciliation's locus is the “space, place or location of encounter, where parties to a conflict meet” (1997: 30). Doxtader defines reconciliation as a “question of how to recollect the past in the name of making the future (2003: 267). Doxtader posits that rather than seeing reconciliation as either/or, it could be construed as a transformative/transitional concept that is fluid rather than static, taking on the form required based on the societal, social, cultural, political, and personal exigencies. Reconciliation,

according to Doxtader, is a rhetorical concept. In the Canadian context this is important. Fluid definitions mean that certain actors make claims in defining and controlling the rhetorical agency. This thesis makes the charge that the political reality within the current reconciliation climate in Canada claims agency for the settler state. But it suggests that this should shift to incorporate an Indigenous rhetorical concept of reconciliation due to the nature of the harm and the agency of the actors.

This is indeed the case in practice - how one chooses to emphasize one aspect of a definition determines the frame with which reconciliation is construed. Bloomfield, Barnes, and Huyse, firmly assert that it is a process (2003: 12). This process moves society from “a divided past to a shared future” (2003: 12). But from a rhetorical perspective one can ask if the shared future is not a reconciled future then what does one label the process by which reconciliation is achieved?

Galtung suggests that reconciliation occurs through healing bad relations (2001). It is here where Doxtader’s rhetorical turn allows for a thematic analysis of reconciliation theory and practice to emerge. Reconciliation, as we will demonstrate, is the often the process of one element at a time, such as healing to revisit the Galtung quote, or the outcome of another, such as the search for justice or truth. Philpott asks what the core proposition of reconciliation is, for him it was justice (2009: 390). But the analysis of the core propositions of one’s definition of reconciliation provides a more reasonable mode of analysis for this thesis.

5.2.2 Working definition of reconciliation

Brouneus suggests that the establishment of an agreed definition of reconciliation serves to establish the boundaries within which it can be discussed (2003: 20). It is difficult, as others have noted, to provide a definition of reconciliation that satisfies the context of the phenomena as well as the social, political, and cultural requirements to undertake reconciliation. The process of reconciliation affects its definition so too does the desired

outcomes. Rather than propose a definition within this space, the chapter will examine some of the additional factors that impact upon the reconciliation discourse, then examine the Canadian context, closely examining how the TRC sought to define reconciliation, how Indigenous scholars like Corntassel and Chrisjohn critiqued those definitions, and look at how the Final Reports of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada provided a conceptual framework, though not the one they identified, for defining a context specific realization of reconciliation.

But while the next section will broaden debates on what reconciliation is, and the tensions that reconciliation must contend with, there is a sense, when taking a realist view considering the context of this thesis

5.3 Tensions and Paradoxes

This section examines some of the tensions and paradoxes within reconciliation.

5.3.1 Forgiveness

An essential component of reconciliation is forgiveness (Brouneus 2003: 17). It is seen as an essential element in restoring a relationship. Rigby (2001) and Staub (2005) suggest that the act of forgiveness is liberating, although it could be argued that this perspective can reduce the quality of reconciliation, diminish the claims of justice from the victim, and allow the perpetrators to escape justice. Some scholars have suggested that forgiveness, alongside other acts of reconciliation that do not focus on justice are 'cheap' and part of the 'politics of distraction' (Corntassel and Holder 2008). The idea of 'cheap reconciliation' or 'cheap justice' will be discussed below, but the 'politics of distraction' is a process whereby reconciliation is diverted away from restitution based programs, structural reforms, and assessing liability towards "affirmative repair policies of states and ultimately reward colonial injustices" (Corntassel and Holder 2008: 472).

Priscilla Hayner opened her examination of truth commissions by recalling a discussion she had with a government official in Rwanda. She asked whether they wanted to remember or forget. The official replied, “we must remember what happened in order to keep it from happening again. But we must forget the feelings, the emotions, that go with it. It is only by forgetting that we are able to go on” (2011: 1). This notion of forgetting was also evident in Cambodia where the Prime Minister encouraged those affected by the Khmer Rouge and past harm to “dig a hole and bury the past” (Chandler 2008: 310). In these cases, the act of forgetting serves as an extreme form of forgiveness, an essential element of reconciliation, especially within religious frameworks (Lederach 1999; Tutu 1999; Helmick and Peterson 2002; Brouneus 2003: 17). Philpott asks if forgiveness may simply be a relinquishment (Philpott 2012: 259).

Dwyer suggests that reconciliation is not bound to forgiveness but is “independent (2003:95). But critiques of forgiveness, attitudes towards the culture of reconciliation that the SA TRC provided are numerous (Verdoolaege 2008) One of these critiques that slips into the Canadian reconciliation discourse is the concept of reconciliation without restitution (Corntassel 2011: 93-94), this was noted in the epigraph (and will be mentioned again in the following section) but despite the claim of the necessity by the RCAP justice was not achieved in the perceptions of some scholars (Rymhs 2006: 105). There is a suggestion that the aspect of forgiveness in reconciliation weakens political claims and ideas of justice in reconciliation. This is contrasted with Tutu’s claim that “there is no future without forgiveness (1999).

5.3.2 Justice

The concept of justice and reconciliation emerges within the contemporary field after the end of World War One and World War Two. The latter was tied to the idea of a victor’s justice though this is framed as retributive justice (Rigby 2001: 184) Negotiated transitions often require amnesty (Rigby 2001: 184). This is due to the need to produce a transition,

according to Rigby, but other scholars have suggested that it is due to encroaching norms in society (Sikkink 2011). The epigraph of this chapter stated that “there can be no peace or harmony unless there is justice” (Canada 1996a: 2). But the concept of justice is problematic in some definitional frame so reconciliation. Philpott says there is a challenge between justice and liberal peace on the one hand and reconciliation on the other (2012: 1).

Restorative justice, according to de Gruchy, is about rehabilitation, compensation, recovering dignity, and healing social wounds (2002: 202). Restorative justice can be a necessary part of reconciliation, according to Philpott, but it has to occur within a specific framework (2012). Philpott argues that justice necessitates political reconciliation and restoring relationships. Justice serves to establish right order and therefor is best suited to facilitate reconciliation but there is a tension between ‘who’s’ order that needs to be suggested within the context of Canada. Rymhs challenges the regime of reconciliation in Canada based on its “ideological underpinnings and the interests they serve” (2006: 105). This thesis has built an argument that reconciliation, its institutions and its values, is a function of the state. Recognition of Indigenous values serve to resist the overarching narrative of a benevolent reconciliation in Canada. Coulthard argues that recognition is a political battle (2014).

5.3.3 Political

Reconciliation could be described as a pendulum swinging between pairs of paradigms: justice and forgiveness, retributive and restorative, forgetting and memory, religious and secular. In this pendulum, which has informed practices of reconciliation such as the South African TRC (spiritual), Australian apology (reparative), ICTY (retributive), Gacaca in Rwanda (restorative). Opinions vary about the comparative effectiveness of these spheres in fulfilling the contrasting definitions of the reconciliation.

Some definitions of reconciliation have been reduced to its base, rudimentary aspects. Darwesh and Rank, within the field of peacebuilding, look at relationships and trust as the

nexus of understanding reconciliation (Darweish and Rank 2012). This process based on co-existence, symmetry, trust, and respect, allows for reconciliation within societies accounting for past harm and ongoing trauma (2012: 6). As many have pointed out, the definition seeps into the abstract rather than the concrete. Bloomfield states that it is partially a political process that requires two (or more) antagonists to work together (2003: 10-11). This definition sees less utility in the practice purported in South Africa where Tutu advocated a process of *ubuntu* fostered by forgiveness.

In these contexts, reconciliation is about restoring the relationship rather than remedying the past (2012: 5). Kriesberg looked at defining this minimalist reconciliation as “mov[ing] to attain or to restore a relationship that... [is] minimally acceptable” (2001: 48). Where one draws the line impacts on which perspective is foregrounded. Within the political sphere it would be codifying and enforcing a coexistence relationship. Through laws equality and guarantees of non-repetition are enshrined. In the religious frame, forgiveness for past actions and the promise of moving forward towards a reconciled future characterised by justice may be emphasized. In the retributive sphere it would entail the use of legal remedy to punish the perpetrators, just as the reparative sphere would use mechanisms to provide healing for past harm such as apologies and memorials.

Longitudinal studies on the outcomes of reconciliation in South Africa have challenged some of the original attitudes projected by the architects (Becker 2011). Going beyond the criticisms of the theoretical impacts of amnesty (Lyons 1997), the implementation of *ubuntu* (defined well in Daye 2004: 161; discussed in Verdoolaege 2008: 158-161; 164-165; Stuit 2010: 98) Becker found that attitudes towards the South African TRC have declined on many of the key concepts identified as essential by the original authors and implementors. This challenges some of the criticisms on two sides of the reconciliation discourse: those that see it as a political institution and those who see it as a function of a deep-rooted religious practice. That the SA TRC process did not deliver on reconciliation and justice, is

more of a critique of the link them simultaneously and in 'lock-step' rather than that either perspective is flawed.

What is more, it bears to ask how the role of externally placed institutions, such as the use of reconciliation and transitional justice under the regimes of liberal peace, can express agency over harmed populations. These external institutions operating in their 'foreign' frames are often more closely aligned, epistemologically, with colonial governments. The use of these external institutions and mechanisms rather than the development of an Indigenous solution for Indigenous challenges which might have affected the outcomes and attitudes that have emerged in places like South Africa.

5.3.4 Religious

Reconciliation has deep roots within Abrahamic religions (Philpott 2007; de Gruchy 2002; Volf 1996). In contemporary transitional justice practice other religious leaders have ascribed the values of their religion and the capacity for reconciliation to accounting for past harm (Bach and Deane 2009). In Cambodia, Buddhist traditions have been used to assist public and practitioners alike in promoting reconciliation (Linton 2004).

Looking at Tutu's motivations in South Africa Daye notes that, "his leadership was not guided by a political philosophy; it was driven by theology" (2004: 160). Several 20th century peacebuilding projects had religion as a central theme. Indian Independence, the Civil Rights Movement in the United States of America, the South African TRC, and the peace process in Northern Ireland all had religion at their core values (Appleby 2000)

De Gruchy defines the theological aspect of reconciliation as that between God and humanity (2002: 26). This relationship has a vital role to play in understanding and motivating social relations (de Gruchy 2002: 26; Phillips 2005). There is an aspect of religion and its tie to reconciliation that is naturally performative (de Gruchy 2002; Rigby 2001; Philpott 2007). In Roman Catholic dogma the Rite of Penance is an example of performative ritual serving to provide a framework for reconciliation, on a personal level.

Reconciliation without justice is seen as 'cheap'. The concept of "cheap reconciliation" was initially suggested in the Kairos Document, a published statement of South African theologians (Kim in Kollantai, Yore, and Kim 2018: 161). Cheap reconciliation built upon an earlier idea of 'cheap grace'

Theological scholars have identified this criticism and tried to account for it. Volf notes that this dilemma balances the poles of justice and unity (Volf 2000: 35-36). The challenges within the theological frame is accounting for forgiveness and justice. While contemporary Anglican church literature on reconciliation makes a clear distinction between legal remedy, absolution, and reconciliation (Faith and Order Commission 2017), escaping the history of reconciliation as a concept in the public sphere, informed by its theological roots. Phillips redoubles this charge by noting that, "Christian reconciliation does not rely on the satisfaction of all outstanding debts. Reconciliation is a process in which injustice is both affirmed and transcended" (2005: 121). Philpott answers this critique by noting that while mechanisms like forgiveness are indeed in the toolkit of transitional justice practitioners and, as in the case of South Africa, have been used as a means of setting the tone of reconciliation, practitioners should see that as a challenge to be overcome rather than a need to discard the practice (Philpott 2007: 45).

Jones suggests that forgiveness is an essential part of religious inspired forms of reconciliation (1995). This analysis comes from the reflection about forgiveness emphasizing the restoration of communion and reconciliation of brokenness [in the relationship] rather than absolving guilt (1995: 5). This rhetoric fit religious narratives of rebirth (1995: 5).

Given that reconciliation is faced with these tensions and paradoxes it might be useful to map out reconciliation frameworks. The utility of this is to identify pathways for implementing reconciliation but also recognize the genealogy of the discourse.

5.4 Mapping Reconciliation

As we have seen, reconciliation is a contested term. It has tensions and paradoxes that, based on one's definitional frame, serve to challenge practice and understanding. Mapping reconciliation, to understand these tensions would be beneficial because it would, as to navigate these obstacles. In the frame of reconciliation in Canada this map is also important. It will serve to place previous reconciliation efforts into their historical or theoretical sphere. Phillips suggested that reconciliation is a political act and that in settler societies there must be careful negotiation on behalf of Indigenous Peoples within the reconciliation sphere (2005). This is a negotiation because, as we will see in Chapter 8, Indigenous peoples are often asked to legitimize state actions through what Phillips suggests is 'policy penance' (2005: 120)

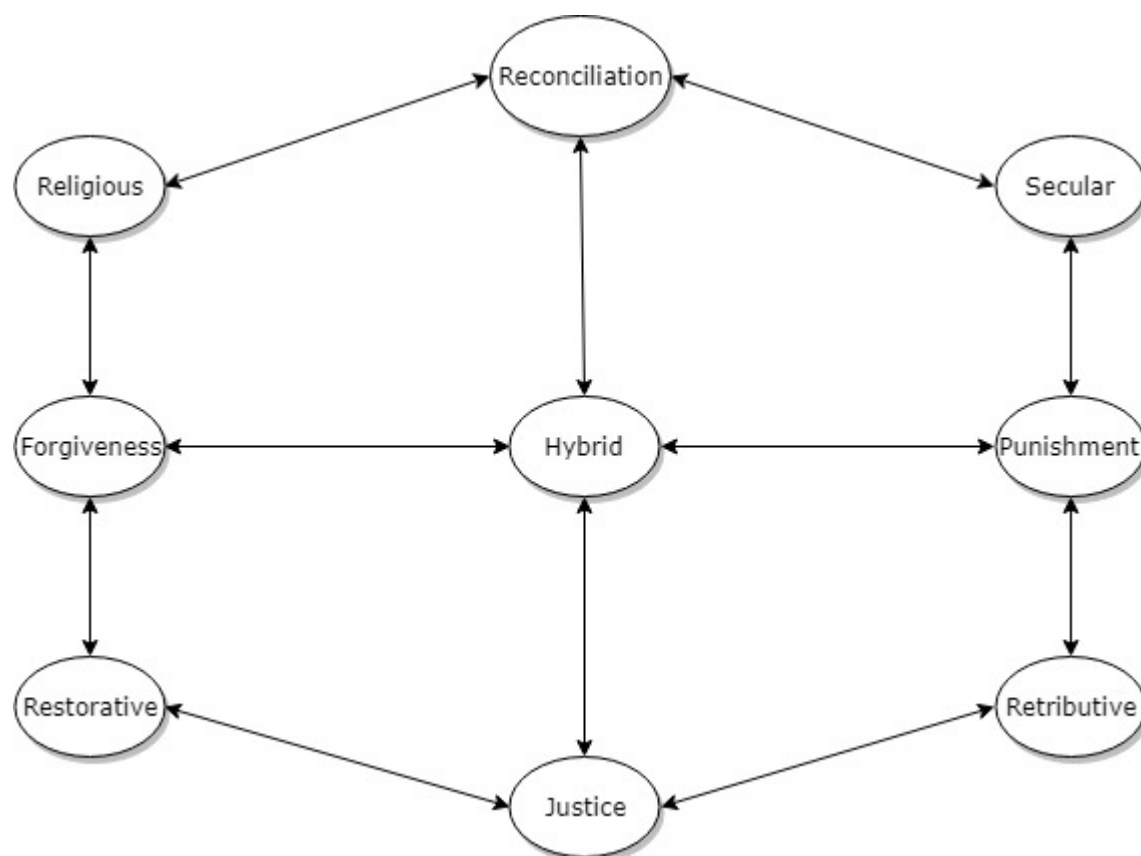


Figure 2 - Reconciliation Map

In this figure above we can see reconciliation mapped as defined by the literature.

Navigating from reconciliation to justice is based on the framing of either term. Justice

definitions tend to split between restorative and retributive. This parallels the reconciliation split at the top. Reconciliation is either perceived secularly (politically) or religiously. There is overlap in both sections which is why this map is not a listing of the only road but rather the general paths. Hybrid forms of reconciliation are in the middle and offer a route directly between reconciliation, this can be problematic. Hybrid forms of reconciliation and justice can face critiques from those who want one form of justice or another. This tension was demonstrated in South Africa where amnesty was undermining retributive justice. At the same time Sikkink's assessment of a transitional justice cascade where states willingly prosecute or dissolve harmful regimes does not fit within the political realities expressed by those like Coulthard.

In Canada, like many settler states, this process has focused on the left side of Figure 2. This has caused resentment in the Indigenous community over a perceived double standard (Coulthard 2014). After World War 2 the Nuremberg Trials served a form of reconciliation that actively challenged even the banal actions contributing to genocide. Hannah Arendt's assessment of Eichmann defined how even everyday actions done out of normative compliance deserve the consideration of punishment. The RCAP and the TRC mandates were actively prevented from suggesting prosecution for the cultural genocide. Given that one side of the reconciliation is largely unnavigable in settler contexts, the other process is under increased stress to provide remedy to disparate views of reconciliation and justice. We will examine how Canada frames its reconciliation and examine how they navigate the tensions that exist within the discourse.

5.5 Canadian TRC Definition of Reconciliation

Critiques of the process of the TRC and the RCAP are present in literature of several Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics (Chrisjohn and Young 1997; Corntassel 2012; Stanton 2011). Chrisjohn and Young offer a critique of the colonial nature of the RCAP (1997). Corntassel suggests that recognition of Indigenous values has been tied to

reconciliation for Indigenous Peoples but agrees with Chrisjohn's earlier assessment about the entire reconciliation discussion operating within a colonized frame (2012). While analysis of the outputs of both the Royal Commission and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is essential, this section is concerned with how they defined and operationalized reconciliation. The first two paragraphs of the sixth volume of the TRC discussed reconciliation in the following way:

To some people, "reconciliation" is the re-establishment of a conciliatory state.

However, this is a state that many Aboriginal people assert has never existed between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. To others, "reconciliation," in the context of Indian residential schools, is similar to dealing with a situation of family violence. It is about coming to terms with events of the past in a manner that overcomes conflict and establishes a respectful and healthy relationship among people going forward. It is in the latter context that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) has approached the question of reconciliation.

To the Commission, "reconciliation" is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Peoples in this country. For that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour. (Canada 2015e: 3)

These definitions, the discarded and applied, are part of the TRCs analysis of reconciliation. The TRC contends that it uses a framework that consists of "Canada's political and legal systems, educational and religious institutions, corporate sector, and civil society" (Canada 2015e: 16).

The TRC established 10 protocols that guide reconciliation in Canada. These are based on the framework outlined above with the addition of noting Canada's adherence (albeit belated and after filing objections) to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous

Peoples (UNDRIP). The UNDRIP is a non-binding mechanism that affirms Indigenous rights within existing protocols, declarations, and statutes of the United Nations. Some of these in turn are binding mechanisms with repercussions for failure to comply. The UNDRIP affirms Indigenous Peoples have: protection under all human rights in international law; equality affirmed; the right to self-determination and self-government; recognition and enforcement of treaties; control over membership and identity; protection of their distinct institutions; the right to freedom, peace, and security; protections for their culture, history, practices, intellectual property; traditional medicines and medical practices; development; land and resources; education; environmental protection; labour; and free movement and association (Carmen in Joffe et al. 2010: 123).

Many of these were protected under existing norms of international law. Some of these protections and concessions existed already in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. These are also part of a trend of international law called a rights-based approach. Joffe's legal analysis of Canada's adoption of the UNDRIP summarizes that Canada has consistently misinterpreted the legality, validity, or obligation to uphold it (2010). Though Joffe believes many of Canada's objections are illegal the TRC included the UNDRIP as a framework for reconciliation (Canada 2015e: 16-17).

Based on the mapping exercise outlined in the previous section we see that, rhetorically, Canada endeavours to enact a hybrid form of reconciliation that is more biased towards forgiveness than punishment. Below another framework adopted from an Indigenous research paradigm which can serve as a model for reconciliation and its interaction with memory is outlined and the response of scholars to Canada's reconciliation practice summarized.

5.6 Theoretical Framework not suggested by the TRC Final Report

I hope to find a definition for understanding reconciliation that can work contextually, noting how previous scholars have defined their own frameworks. This thesis offers an alternative paradigm shaped by Indigenous experience and worldviews. This chapter has analyzed the breadth of academic literature on reconciliation and has demonstrated how reconciliation is defined and utilized within the societal, political, and personal sphere. An Indigenous perspective on reconciliation does not add to the haze but offer a contextualized beacon of light and hope. It acts as a specific destination for a group of travelers. Maya Angelou's reflection on the journey is an important aspect on this process: "I looked up the road I was going and back the way I come, and since I wasn't satisfied, I decided to step off the road and cut me a new path" (1993: 22-23).

I suggest that so long as reconciliation sees its progeny in the established institutions the ethic of those institutions shall bind it. Indigenous forms of reconciliation need to be formed outside of these non-Indigenous institutions, as much as it can be, so to be informed by the ethic of Indigenous institutions that it wishes to emulate. I have outlined in the Chapter 2 (Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing) and Chapter 3 (Methodology) how an Indigenous research paradigm is central to this thesis as a means of examining reconciliation within a contextualized frame.

I have shown that reconciliation is less a result than a process. Indeed, within many discourses' reconciliation is both a broader goal as much as it is a smaller part of another agenda. But as Hayner's introductory reflection with a Rwandan official reminds, ideas of reconciliation, forgiveness, and truth are intrinsically tied (2011:1). In this capacity, reconciliation is about contending with memory: its interpretation, codification or legitimization, and utility. The Final Report for the Canadian TRC suggests that reconciliation is about knowledge, memory and the continuation of practices surrounding them as much as it is about reaching a level of reciprocal co-existence, peace, understanding, forgiveness,

repentance, or justice (Williams in Canada 2015a: 18). This is expounded by the suggestion that many Indigenous Peoples in Canada have no direct word for reconciliation (Canada 2015a: 18). Repairing relationships was closely associated with ceremonies, music, and traditions that coexist with operationalizations of memory (Canada 2015a).

There are two literature-based frameworks that one draw upon when framing of reconciliation in an Indigenous Canadian context. First, as Cornthassel notes, the politics of distraction have served to re-colonize the reconciliation discourse in Canada (2008).

Indigenous people in Canada still face a colonial regime, there has not been a transition, either negotiated or forced, to a society that protects the historical, economic, social, cultural, and political rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Context Chapter and subsequent Data Chapters will discuss the state of Indigenous Peoples in Canada within these regards.

Second, returning to the concept of memory, the following framework intersects with an Indigenous conceptualization of memory, discussed below. It is derived from Absolon and Willett's work on location in Indigenous research (2005). They suggest that locating oneself is the most important aspect of an Indigenous research paradigm (2005: 97). In the research practice they suggest that, " Identifying, at the outset, the location from which the voice of the researcher emanates is an Aboriginal way of ensuring that those who study, write, and participate in knowledge creation are accountable for their own positionality 2005: 97)." This process of locating is essential because all an Indigenous researcher can say with certainty is who they are. I felt that this process was an important and relevant practice for transposing to framing reconciliation. The locating of self is an important aspect in knowing and operating within the limits of a relationship. Rather than overstating ones agency, it articulates the borders and allows for the other side to see the clear areas of ownership or agency. In Chapter Seven and Eight we will see how reconciliation can be harmful and as colonial as any act from the previous centuries. The framework of the colonality of power transposed into both a research and reconciliation space see, as Fanon might suggest, how entangled colonial legacies and relationships are. Examining Indigenous research, noting

the colonized nature of western practice, the authors suggest a framework to reset and restate Indigenous worldviews in the research field. This practice can be used in reconciliation. Chapter Two and Three discussed the importance and utility of honouring Indigenous worldviews and knowledge practice. Those lessons applied to reconciliation for reconciliation too is a colonized space. Under the practice of 'locating,' a process whereby the researcher centers themselves "in an Aboriginal way... ensuring that those who study, write, and participate in knowledge creation are accountable for their own positionality" (2005: 97). The importance of context in re-using reconciliation practice effectively was discussed earlier. Verdoolaege suggests that everyone depends on the local context when it comes to reconciliation (2008: 192).

Absolon and Willett posit seven practices for locating that have application in reconciliation, I will use their vernacular to identify them: re-presentation, re-vising, re-claiming, re-naming, re-membering, re-connecting, and re-covering (2008). Re-presentation, according to Absolon and Willett, is the process of respect and mutuality in presenting and understanding one another's identity (2008: 108). We saw in the Context Chapter how Indigenous Peoples are represented through colonial history. Smith noted the colonial process started with those first representations. She suggests that representations are a form of 'truth' (Smith 1999: 35). This truth was subjectively framed by another when it came to representations of Indigenous Peoples. As such, a truth was derived from these representations that was not generated from the subject of that representation nor presented by them. Indigenous people's representation was contrived from external influences with no bearing on their reality, worldviews, cultural identities, and context.

Absolon and Willett suggest the need to self-locate as a means of representing their own truths (2008: 109-110). Reconciliation, as many have suggested above, relies on truthfulness. By allowing Indigenous Peoples to represent their own truth and re-present themselves through their use of memory there is an opportunity to remove the structures of power that have existed since contact.

Re-vision is defined as the practice of deconstructing, analyzing, and rebuilding. It must occur, according to Absolon and Willett, as I suggested in Chapter Two and Three, from an Indigenous perspective. The consequence of colonization for an analysis of past, present and future conditions from an Indigenous lens (Smith 1999; Absolon and Willett 2008: 111-112). Ousmane Sembène argues that identity, history, and relationships are so affected by the colonial process that everything must be re-vised (in hooks 1992: 2). He states that, “colonialism means that we must always rethink everything” (1992: 2). bell hooks agrees, noting that re-visioning the narrative allows for liberation and equality (1992: 2). Reconciliation is about re-visioning a relationship, looking at the past and present to change the future.

Re-claiming is defined as the process of locating within a spatial, temporal, and theoretical frame. It is the practice of asserting the re-vised re-presentations of self. LaRocque calls this a balancing that erodes the legacy of dehumanization and bias (1996: 13). It is about putting oneself within a space as an equal, rather than what is assigned to it. This is an important aspect of the historical struggle of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. For reconciliation practice intersects with many nodes. The physical re-claiming of space seeks to address and redress the dispossession of land and resources from Indigenous Peoples. We will see in the Findings Chapters that many of the participants identify these two elements as essential for reconciliation. In the Australian context, calls for reconciliation, often in the mode of what Corntassel called ‘politics of distraction,’ were met with the insistence on behalf of the Aboriginal Peoples to restore land. For them, this restoration would allow for a re-claiming of a physical space that had a cultural, economic, social, and societal tie, gave agency, and demanded a new relationship of equals rather than the old colonial one.

Re-connecting is about righting the wrong of “disconnect[ing] Aboriginal Peoples from our national contexts (2008: 117). This contextual connection is essential for validating the lived, perceived, and theoretical existence. Without this connection there is a contextual artificiality (Battiste and Henderson 2000). Absolon and Willett suggest that, “contextual validation makes our reality, experiences, and existence,” visible (2008: 117). This is important

because colonization has been an act of de-validation, and erasure. Without context Indigenous Peoples are subject to a schism of identity. This means that their worldview, knowledge practices, culture, society, and agency lack a connection to the notion of self. It becomes easier, as it had been done in practice, to dismiss and rewrite Indigenous identity. In reconciliation re-connecting is about affirming their existential self and marrying that self to an actualized and legitimized form. One way this is seen in practice is through the resistance of Indigenous Peoples to accept forms of reconciliation that do not account for the land, as a metaphysical construct.

Re-covering is about using the previous steps to restore identity, agency, and self. It is a culmination of challenging externalized conceptualizations of Indigenous Peoples (re-presentation), deconstructing those conceptualization (re-visioning), asserting ones self with agency and equality into a physical and metaphysical space (re-claiming), and articulating that identity through a culturally relevant frame and context within a relationship that is of equals rather than of colonial power (re-connecting). Absolon and Willett see recovery as the culmination of a process that takes something that is broken and makes it whole.

Reconciliation, as we have seen, is about restoring, rebuilding, or even re-introducing two sides with an emphasis on the future while learning lessons from the past. Indigenous Peoples seek to articulate themselves in a located contextual space. The process to that locating and articulation is the previously mentioned steps brought about operating in a decolonized, externally validated space. This process starts with understanding Indigenous conceptualizations of memory as it intersects with Indigenous identity and truth.

5.6.1 Memory

“By listening to your story, my story can change. By listening to your story, I can change” (Canada 2015h: 125).

Memory intersects with many facets of this project. At a basic level, the role of memory in reconciliation and transitional justice is well studied (Elster 2003; Auchter 2013; Lessa 2013;

Brants and Klep 2013). Most of this work, however, has centered around memory as a function of the search for truth and justice (Elster 2003; Auchter 2013; Lessa 2013) or as a function of collective history (Torpey 2001; Soyinka 1998). Varieties of these two functions look at combining them, as the legal apparatus of memory coincides with the societal apparatus. Carol Gluck sees this intersection through 'commemorative justice' (Gluck in Henkin AH 2002: 10). This process is part of an expansion of transitional justice called 'intergenerational justice' (Steinberg in Henkin, AH 2002: 9). While this offers some diversity to the application of memory, these are essential normative realizations.

It could be argued, however, that most scholarship has lacked an understanding of is non-normative memory, such as an Indigenous cultural context (See Smith; Corntassel, Chaw-win-is, and T'lakwadzi 2009). Within many Canadian Indigenous cultures, memory is an essential part of identity (Qwul'sih'yah'maht: 237; Wilson 1998: 24). This is evident in the reliance of an oral tradition to articulate history and identity (Wilson 1998: 24). In addition, oral traditions also inform legal practice, and are living documents, albeit delivered aurally, that form the basis for governance and education (Corntassel, Chaw-win-is, and T'lakwadzi 2009; Qwul'sih'yah'maht 237-238). It is important to understand how memory is reflected in these societies, and how previous and current policies can harm transitional justice practice. In deconstructing a western-centric version of memory, and understanding and Indigenous perspective, a realization transitional justice that is more effective can occur (Smith 1999).

5.6.1.1 Remembering

The practice of remembering is an important part of memory. For Indigenous Peoples the practice of remembering is problematic (Qwul'sih'yah'maht 2015: 245). Long periods of colonization included practices that forbid the transmission of cultural knowledge from generation to generation (Qwul'sih'yah'maht 2015; Regan 2010; Younging, Dewar, and DeGange 2009). Programs like residential schools attempted to replace traditional values, such as an appreciation of oral and living history practices, with more western centric approaches (Stanton 2011). This has been problematic because as these traditions have

been rebuilt, they have faced scrutiny, indeed in the face of 'refined' western practices, and many cultures have not fully regained the capacity to both transmit and recall their past (Stanton 2011: 1).

The contribution of remembering through alternative mediums is that they "uncover new ways of knowing" (Qwul'sih'yah'maht 2015: 245; see also Cruikshank et al. 2008: 72). These new ways contribute to a shared understanding of a common past with non-Indigenous Canadians. As oral traditions of Indigenous Canadians increase in their legitimacy and capacity to recall they serve to coexist alongside 'accepted' forms of data transmission. This serves to foster a mutual understanding of the past, thus reforming the 'official' narrative.

5.6.1.2 Collective Memory

In transitional justice, a collective memory, as a healing mechanism is often associated with an official history. Transitional justice practitioners see the use of mechanisms such as truth commissions and apologies as a means of validating an official history. (Torpey 2001) While this attempt to remedy the past is important, it is also challenging for Indigenous cultures as history is a living entity, and its interpretations evolve much like academic discourses, as cultural practice and values change. But these nuances of Indigenous practice can serve as powerful forces for change. Just as they uncover those new ways of knowing, they can revisit the prevailing narratives. Counter narratives of diplomacy, law, and peacemaking practices, for instance, should be allowed to occur in a decolonized space through the voices of Indigenous Peoples (Smith 1999; Qwul'sih'yah'maht; Corntassel, Chaw-win-is, and T'lakwadzi)

The emergence of an alternative form of history is helpful in generating "audiences for local stories muted within the dominant cultures" (Schaffer and Smith 2004: 4). This, in turn, can further increase recognition for underserved minorities (or majorities) and is useful in identifying previously unreported harm. As recognition begins to modify the collective memory there is also a climate that encourages a "discursive threshold (Whitlock 2000:

144). This threshold further empowers those who may have previously been silenced, or unheard, to contribute to a new collective history (Schaffer and Smith: 4).

For Indigenous Canadians, oral history is their way of “recovering the voices of suppressed groups” (Berger Gluck and Patai 1991: 9). This empowerment allows for reconciliation to occur because it can force non-Indigenous Canadian society to confront its actions. This is seen in the various forms of remembering that occur in Indigenous society.

5.6.1.3 *Forms of remembering (culturally)*

For Indigenous Peoples, an important element of remembering for reconciliation is the emergence of narratives of survival that serve as a reminder of past harm. In *Nuu-chah-nulth* practice, these stories are called *haa-huu-pah*, and serve as “lived values that form the basis for governance and regeneration” (Corntassel, Chaw-win-is, and T’lakwadzi 2009: 138).

These act in discord with traditional transitional justice practice, and have been useful in delegitimizing the status quo, and rectifying injustice (Corntassel, Chaw-win-is, and T’lakwadzi 2009: 139). Historian Keith Jenkins (2003) suggests that history is the practice of exclusion, the use of non-traditional practice, such as storytelling, as a means of remembering contests “the legitimacy of the dominant discourse” (Cruikshank 1998: 116).

One of the ways *Haa-huu-pah* does this is to reduce the colonial narrative to a function of settler power (Qwul’sih’yah’maht 241; Corntassel, Chaw-win-is, and T’lakwadzi 2009). This prevailing narrative has disempowered Indigenous Peoples further, it has imposed one conceptual framework upon history and limited the capacity of Indigenous people to identify an alternative history wherein their legitimacy is identified. (Smith 1999: 1)

For instance, deconstructing the definition of Canada itself has been identified as a mode of reconciliation. The word Canada is actually a Mohawk word, *Kanatiens* which means they sit in our village. In contemporary terms this would be defined as a squatter (Corntassel, Chaw-win-is, and T’lakwadzi 2009: 139). By reinterpreting the meaning of Canada by way of an Indigenous lens it then allows for reconciliation to be re-approached from the basis of

understanding an alternative discourse (Regan 2010). It is not so much an act of retaliation, but rather, an act of defiance. Qwul'sih'yah'maht says that it is not a story of survival, which disempowers one to the role of victim, but “an act of resistance (242).

5.6.1.4 Importance of memory

The notion of Canada as a settler state is one of the narratives that comes out of this revisiting of collective history (Regan 2011). The aim of re-visiting is to aid reconciliation by addressing past harm. Memory as a discourse within transitional justice has already been attributed to truth commissions, memorials and commemorations, trials, and other backward-looking mechanisms. What is less examined is how traditional (Indigenous) forms of memory serve to look at the present, and look forward, by creating a new means for understanding past harm and its contemporary outcomes. The uses of memory to form an alternative framework are important because they remove the power imbalance that is prevalent in many transitional justice programs. By refusing the ‘disempowered’ narrative and replacing it with a resistance narrative, societies can look at harm from a different perspective.

This is seen as a challenge rather than a reality at this time. There has been no shift to recognize past harm at a fundamental level, the harm has been recognized, indeed, but this has been at the behest of the legal apparatus (Stanton 2011: 1). The legacy of the colonial abuses by a settler state still evident in contemporary Canadian society, even as alternative narratives have gained traction (Regan 2010).

After apologizing for the treatment of Indigenous Peoples in 2008, then Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper went before the G20 summit a year later and proclaimed that all nations should be envious of Canada, for it had no history of colonialism. It is possible that Harper was influenced to omit out of the guilt of “Canada’s greatest national shame” (Clarkson 2004). What is more likely is that Harper was a victim of Canada’s cultural history, one that excludes the knowledge transmitted by alternative mediums.

Harper used the “self-congratulatory version of Canad[a’s] history” (Alfred in Regan 2010: ix). The refusal, on an international level, to acknowledge publicly what was declared domestically a year prior, demonstrates the gulf between the realization of transitional justice in Canada, and the stated outcomes. In that 2008 apology Harper spoke about the “extraordinary courage for the thousands of survivors to have come forward to speak publicly about the abuse they suffered” (Harper 2008). He continued by stating, “there is no place in Canada for the attitudes [of] that... system to ever prevail again” (Harper 2008). But those attitudes do persist, the courage of the survivors to ‘remember’ was disempowered by a western-centric system that places more value on its official narrative than one informed by alternative forms of knowledge production.

5.7 Conclusion

The process of memory and its relationship with reconciliation is essential. The act of decolonizing is an essential part of reconciliation. The process for decolonization, for some, is remarkably like reconciliation. This was identified earlier in this section when building a theoretical framework, Absolon and Willett were talking about decolonizing Indigenous knowledge, the framework was coopted to understand reconciliation. Corntassel and Alfred agree with this framework, as it applies to decolonization, noting, “it is remembering ceremony, returning to homelands and liberation from the myths of colonialism that are the decolonizing imperatives” (Corntassel and Alfred 2012: 97). As we progress to the findings and analysis, we will see how the observations of the participants reflects these attitudes.

In Canada, effective reconciliation is a decolonizing project at its heart. The sleight of hand using the politics of distraction serve to further a reconciliation agenda that does not allow for change in the relationship between Indigenous people and Canada to occur. Corntassel and Holder “contend that decolonization and restitution are necessary elements of reconciliation because these are necessary to transform relations with Indigenous communities in the way justice requires” (2008: 472). This type of reconciliation runs the risk of being labelled as

'cheap reconciliation,' a term we investigated in this chapter. Alfred agrees with this assessment and Corntassel, stating, "The logic of reconciliation as justice is clear: without massive restitution, including land, financial transfers and other forms of assistance to compensate for past harms and continuing injustices committed against our Peoples, reconciliation would permanently enshrine colonial injustices and is itself a further injustice" (2005: 152).

This chapter sought to round a discussion on reconciliation with a discussion on memory as it pertains to Indigenous identity, worldview, and reality. Given the framework suggested memory is important because it becomes a way to know oneself, as suggested earlier in this chapter, and define the territory with which one is going to navigate or re-navigate to come to reconciliation. In many ways this discussion on memory is a sort of keystone of this thesis. The structure of reconciliation, the harm and trauma on one side, and the respect and recognition on the other side is about establishing truth and trust within an overarching narrative. At the centre of that arch is memory, the keystone.

In the next chapter I will begin to construct an Indigenous perspective of reconciliation based upon my reflections from the field. This process will start with an examination of myself in the research process, how my own understanding formed in this process, and how that understanding reflected back upon the research design. This personal journey will inform how my understanding and knowledge grew as I engaged with the research ceremony.

Chapter 6. Fieldwork Reflections

“I tell you this so that you may know a little bit (Dene Tha’ speaker in Goulet 1998: 246)”

6.1 Introduction

This chapter acts as a sort of catharsis, locating myself in this research, how the research changed and how it changed me. It was written as an attempt to locate myself when I was lost in the research process, and it reflects the nature of my own struggle to navigate my emerging understanding as an Indigenous researcher, the challenges I faced in overcoming the systems of knowledge that kept my identity from being able to articulate itself, and how those struggles gave me the ability to recognize that being lost is an essential part of the journey.

It will place me within the research story that unfolds as inquiry begets knowledge, which in turn assists in understanding. The idea of research telling a story allows for broader audiences to contextualize and understand the participants’ realities (Wang and Geale 2015: 195; Reissman 2008). This narrative style allows for both the researcher and participant to be part of the research process (Preissle 2001: 412). White and Dotson also suggested that a narrative style, where the researcher is part of the research story, puts the false starts and mistakes of the researcher in the open and creates dialogue that can be used to overcome research and cultural assumptions by confronting them (2010: 76). This chapter will emphasize my place in the study, how I constructed the narrative based on my own and my participants’ accounts (White and Dotson 2010: 412; Clandinin and Connelly 2000).

The introduction of the thesis discussed my personal history, my journey to understanding a part of my father’s history as a residential school survivor and the affects upon Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Policy and practice in Canada have attempted to assimilate its Indigenous Peoples, an act that many have suggested is a cultural genocide. I have had to

reflect on my personal history, my closeness to the subject and the needs of the research.

The methodology chapter built a rationale for Indigenous-led research (Wilson 2008; Rigney 1999; Smith 1999; Denzin, Lincoln, and Smith 2008; Moyle 2014). It also discussed the role of reflective and reflexive practice.

I have been open at the beginning of every chapter about who I am and how this research privileges Indigenous accountability. This level of openness is a necessity given that Indigenous people are studied by non-Indigenous researchers more often than they are studied by or studied with Indigenous researchers (Rigney 1999; Smith 1999). The central research question to which this thesis responds informed a methodology that sought to understand how reconciliation has occurred in Canada. The Canadian case study used here to foster a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of reconciliation, to build data to generate theory, and to focus on analytic, rather than statistical generalization (Yin 2014). I focus on the outcomes, use Indigenous-led research paradigms as a methodology, and stress the importance of critical researcher reflexivity.

Reflexivity was not identified as the panacea because it was born out of dominant practice developed by within the Western academy (Denzin, Lincoln, and Smith 2008: 5). I demonstrated in Chapter Two that critical dominant research practices are still colonial, as noted by numerous other researchers (Smith 1999; Bishop 1998; Denzin, Lincoln, and Smith 2008). The use of reflexivity has been openly challenged by some Indigenous researchers because they argue that it attempts to reconcile the agenda and values of its past (and present) rather than discard and reform (Martin and Miraboopa 2009). It is research that is grounded in local knowledge; to treat Indigenous knowledge not as the object for study, a fetishized frame, but as legitimate modes of understanding (Denzin, Lincoln, and Smith 2008: 6)

The chapter begins with a discussion of agency and examines how it is possible to create and claim a space for Indigenous values in this research. It will examine how I entered into

this part of the study, and how I, like many Indigenous researchers, answered questions on agency, ownership, and my role as a social scientist and an Indigenous person. It will analyse the multiple identities that I navigated and note that this is a common theme for Indigenous researchers. In many ways, the idea of identity is closely tied to a sense of belonging (Fortier 1999)¹⁵. But claiming, belonging, and being claimed are all contested notions (Fortier 1999). I may claim to be an Indigenous researcher, I introduced myself as one when I did my fieldwork. This does not mean that I am accepted as an Indigenous researcher. While I never 'felt' excluded there was not guarantee that just by doing this research I was included.

The second part of the chapter situates my research findings within the idea of 'self'. Using the discussion on agency as a means of informing, this section will look at two elements. First, where I fit within the data collection process, what I was 'armed' with going into the field and how that informed the interviews. This was identified in the interview guide (Appendix 3) and was built on my experience, understanding and reflection of reconciliation/transitional justice in the Canadian context. Second, this portion of the chapter will contextualize within the lived experience described by my participants and the literature. It will debate who can claim agency on behalf of Indigenous Peoples, and define how I identify within identity, knowing that the act of 'claiming' can be perceived as colonial in intent.

Third, I will present the themes that I used in my interview guide and throughout my fieldwork. I will explain how the literature and my experiences informed this process.

Finally, a data findings section will reflect on the themes and look at how my understanding was informed by my participants. The themes will then be presented, and initial observations will be reported within the views of the participants. These themes are creating/claiming the

¹⁵ For a good survey on belonging in its multiple iterations see: Antonsich 2010

space, state of the Indigenous experience in Canada, reconciliation efforts, looking forward and thinking back, and making sense. This will allow for deeper reflection in subsequent data chapters by allowing the reader a reference of where the research started, in the field.

6.2 Claiming the space

Colonial discourse and their narratives are now so dense that it is very hard to make out whether one speaks from within them, or whether one can speak outside of them, or whether one can speak at all without them (Nakata 1997: 32)

The research story begins with an object of inquiry, a research question to which we seek to respond. The researcher enters a relationship with the research and becomes part of the process. They bring their history and their beliefs, their expectations and their limitations, and their knowledge and their inquisitiveness. The journey along the narrative of the research story results in a richer understanding of a phenomena as the data fills gaps in knowledge and understanding, and as erudition leads to analysis, and new ways of understanding (Alasuutari 1995: 181; Silverman 2014: 364-365). But at the very beginning, the research story begins with a question, and a self.

Prior to fieldwork I had little functional¹⁶ understanding of what it meant to be an Indigenous doing research. It is not to say that I was not equipped to do research but, rather, I was not aware of the implications of navigating my Indigeneity within the research discourse. There is a challenge, when doing research on or with Indigenous Peoples, globally, because they are over-represented in work done by non-Indigenous researchers (Rigney 1999; 2006: 32; Smith 1999). This has meant that Indigenous people have been subject to many of the narratives, frameworks, and misconceptions that have existed since first contact. (Smith 1999)

¹⁶ Or perhaps: Practical, normative, applied

The largest omission has been the inclusion of Indigenous “beliefs, values, and customs into the research process” (Wilson 2008: 15). The lack of representation has meant there is lack of agency for Indigenous Peoples, inhibiting their representation in an accurate and culturally relevant way. As Indigenous scholars have grown in number, so too has the agency of Indigenous research paradigms (Wilson 2008: 15) and culturally relevant research frames and understandings (Martin 2003; Rigney 1999; Steinhauer 2002; Wilson and Pence 2006). But creating a space for Indigenous values in research has been difficult for some Indigenous researchers.

But Indigenous researchers are not alone in this regard, the ‘interrogation’ of dominant practices to elicit understanding or agency for populations outside of the normative male-dominated, Euro-centric, heteronormative, Christian sphere has been ongoing, especially in the last several decades of the 20th to present (Denzin and Lincoln 1994: 2; Rigney 2006: 38).¹⁷ While these frameworks served as a starting point of Indigenous research, they still operated within the dominant discourse, or as a function of it (Nakata 1998; 1999; Rigney 2006: 39). Based on Nakata’s analysis, Rigney asks the vital question: “how does the Indigenous scholar speak back knowledges that have been formed around what is perceived to be the Indigenous position in the western order of things” (Nakata 1998: 4; Rigney 2006: 39). It is not that Indigenous people see the need for a specific paradigm in a manner that is different from other disempowered groups, but that they see themselves as needing one that is relevant to them.

As mentioned above, critical, feminist, postcolonial, or postmodern paradigms allowed for a new space to be created in the dominant discourse (Rigney 2006: 38). But as those spaces opened, many were filled, even colonized, by well-intentioned but externally situated academics. An example of this is how feminist scholars problematized the Indigenous

¹⁷ Other discussions would include: Said 1995; Foucault 2008; hooks 1982; Thiongo 1986; Fanon 2008

communities, rather than seeing them as a function of non-Indigenous social and institutional operationalizations (Moreton-Robinson 2000). This claiming of the Indigenous space is problematic because while an emancipation from earlier research regimes designed to disempower and dismiss Indigenous knowledge practice, it did value those practices.

Discussions about who can claim and who can act on behalf of Indigenous Peoples, globally and nationally, are complicated. For some, there are elements that are universal (Rigney 2001 1-13; 2006: 37; Wilson 2008: 7-8). But this is only to say that this process needs to be relationally accountable. The contextualization of the research allows for understanding of phenomena as it interacts with that specific culture. This relationally accountable framework, one that privileges Indigenous values, knowledge, culture, and society, is what allows Indigenous researchers to make claims of agency.

My research aims to be relationally accountable and I represent my own personal Indigeneity and non-Indigeneity. I operate within two identities, Fitznor suggested the 'two-world' paradox for researchers doing work within one cultural frame juxtaposed with another, usually the dominant (2006: 51). Fitznor used her privilege of being a researcher who was Indigenous¹⁸ to "find a space to assert Indigenous perspectives" (2006: 76). I feel that I am allowed into a research space because of my capacity, I choose to use that space to articulate Indigenous values in research as a means of 'finding a space to assert.' Rigney called this privileging diversity within Indigenous values (2006: 41). Three obligations would define this: resistance as the emancipatory imperative in Indigenist¹⁹ research, political integrity of Indigenist research, and privileging Indigenous voices (Rigney 2006: 42-44). But

¹⁸ As opposed to an Indigenous researcher.

¹⁹ Rigney's use of Indigenist (not Indigenous) refers to an attempt to break from the colonial 'Aboriginalism' that sought to reduce culture, homogenize, and separate Indigenous Peoples from the non-Indigenous (othering).

problems occur when interfacing these obligations within the dominant academy that presents itself as objective whereas Indigenous research is subjective.

In many ways, Indigenous scholars are challenged to operate in two worlds (Fitznor 2006: 51-52). First, they are challenged to maintain a 'critical distance' from their research, an objective space to avoid assumptions preconceived about what they ought to say, and what they are presupposed to say (Fitznor 2006: 52). Second, they are challenged to close that distance, to operate with a relationally accountable framework, one that looks at Indigenous knowledge practice as a means of informing Indigenous knowledge outcomes for Indigenous societal questions (Wilson 2008). Smith accedes that Indigenous researchers face expectations from their own communities (1999: 5).

Indigenous researchers never asked for this polarity. In some ways they do not treat this challenge as antagonistic, but, rather, as an opportunity to espouse new ways of knowing, new frameworks of understanding, new methods and methodologies, and empower voices either silenced or dismissed (Wilson 2008: 14; Rigney 1999: 109). It is important to remind ourselves that the object of inquiry is to understand, within ethical frameworks; not to limit one's understanding by subjectively choosing an 'objective' framework to distill knowledge into one specific 'essence' of understanding.

I have reflected on what I brought in with my understanding of transitional justice, externally, as a program that had been applied to Indigenous Peoples. I wanted to contextualize the understanding of transitional justice, through the framework of reconciliation in Canada (as we have seen in the introduction). I wanted to take these externally derived interview themes and allow for Indigenous values to inform me as to what reconciliation meant to them, and what they perceive that non-Indigenous Canadians think they are hoping to achieve with it. I wanted the ceremony of Indigenous research to privilege Indigenous knowledge practices and build a relationally accountable dataset to understand what reconciliation is in Canada, to the people it was designed to reconcile with.

6.3 Situating the Findings

This thesis is a case study and looks to create a new body of knowledge to understand reconciliation in Canada from an Indigenous perspective using an Indigenous research paradigm. This chapter uses the themes of the guide to help situate the reader's understanding through the lens of the participants, engaging with their lived and perceived experience. In creating these themes, I anticipated some of the responses of the participants deductively. I have noted my personal connection to the themes investigated by this thesis, but I did not have a hypothesis about what I would find. I anticipated that harm would be widespread and systemic; not temporally fixed. These harms would not be satisfied by reconciliation in Canada. But I did not seek to test how effective reconciliation was, as my original research question had intended, but to see what reconciliation was to Indigenous people. I wanted to place my understanding of reconciliation from their perspective, to see how their cultural values might inform better practice and see what realizations of reconciliation have occurred outside of the purview of the state, top-down agenda.

These participants are a broad group; they act as gatekeepers, in a way, to a deeper understanding because they operate as agents between their Indigenous heritage or connection, and broader Canadian society. In a talk that took place in mid-2017, near Canada's 150th birthday, Roberta Jamieson reflected that many Indigenous Canadians are still not able to engage with non-Indigenous Canada due to the harm and trauma they have suffered (2017). What she was referring to is a chasm of trust that exists between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples (2017). This is because of the historical harm, such as the Sixties Scoop, the Indian Residential School program, the Pass System, social and institutional racism, and structural violence that has occurred in the past. It is also because reconciliation has not yet made a difference in the lives of many Indigenous people in Canada (2017). Many of the participants I spoke to agree with this assessment and added that contemporary harm from many of the same systems: structural, social, economic, and institutional, still exist today. The overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the justice

system, child welfare system and the chronic underfunding of education and development are just a few of the processes that inhibit trust between Canada and its Indigenous Peoples.

Many of these participants are survivors or intergenerational survivors. Although that does not give them agency alone to speak on behalf of all Indigenous Peoples, combined with their roles as the heads of organization, political leaders, academics, Elders, artists, activists, and healers, it adds additional capacity for them to do so along with their willingness to share their knowledge. They understand the outcomes of previous reconciliation efforts and some of the challenges still facing Indigenous Peoples regarding structural, social, and cultural harm. When engaging with participants I tried to seek a broad range. As mentioned above, these participants offer a wide range of knowledge in diverse fields. There is not a perfect sample, but given how widespread the harm is (Canada 2016a: 135), and that it affected almost all Indigenous Peoples in Canada, I am satisfied that the knowledge shared is representative of some of the experiences and understandings on behalf of Indigenous Peoples.

These participants offer a view of reconciliation, informed from their varied roles in society. They also have diverse experiences, histories, and backgrounds; this allows for multiple perspectives on reconciliation and the opportunity to correlate knowledge and understanding of many narratives. This process will evolve from this broad thematic discussion to introduce a research story, a thread that evolves from one interview to the next. This will be further demonstrated in the second data chapter. I will use the circular relationship process in presenting whole narratives of the participants. What I mean by this is that each interview was built on the previous. As my understanding deepened, I was able to draw upon the knowledge shared with me from the previous interview, and, guided by the themes, offer that knowledge up for reflection. It allowed for the participants to engage with a living narrative and inform my understanding.

The framing of research as a story is particularly important for Indigenous culture; storytelling tradition intersects many Indigenous values and frames (Wilson 2008; Tafoya 1995). As noted in the introduction, Indigenous researchers, indeed like the participants of this thesis, negotiate two worlds. Navigating multiple identities is common for researchers (Ballinger in Finlay and Gough 2003). Indigenous researchers face this challenge because they operate at a local (Evans et al, 2009), accountable (Wilson 2008), privileging (Rigney 2006) mode in their Indigenous frame, but these values are noted as highly subjective and thus contested in the dominant research discourse (Moosa-Mitha: 45).

I was able to use work of other Indigenous scholars to provide a framework for constructing this thesis. One of the modes was the use of storytelling. This allows for the researcher to account for these two worlds by contextualizing the data and providing an understanding that is removed from the purely definitional frame. This does not mean that there is not a definition but, in revisiting Tafoya's Principle of Uncertainty, by contextually embedding the reader in the discourse, the author can provide an understanding that is more accurate, because it allows the reader to move closer to the operationalization of the concept (1995).

This idea of contextualized understanding allows the reader to co-opt some of the parameters to understanding another's conceptual framework. Conceptual frameworks, discussed in the methodology chapter, are the idea that there are many versions of comprehension around a paradigm, and that through the lens of each of the holders of these versions, theirs is right. (Allison 1969: 689). Because definitions operate without context, they are burdened by the reader's understanding based on their own conceptual framework. Indigenous research paradigms emphasize relational accountability in practice, and the idea of contextualizing methods and practices as a means of moving the reader's understanding towards the capacity to embrace another conceptual framework. A research story, and the use of storytelling practice, allows for this to occur.

As the research story evolves from the definitional account provided in this chapter it allows for the reader to evolve as well. The second data chapter will build the narrative by chronologically accounting the research path, and each subsequent interview will build off the understanding of the previous. The circular function is important because it allows for knowledge to move forward and back, spatially, temporally, and conceptually. Tafoya notes that:

Stories go in circles. They don't go in straight lines. It helps if you listen in circles because there are stories inside and between stories and finding your way through them is as easy and as hard as finding your way home. Part of finding is getting lost, and when you are lost you start to open up and listen. (1995: 12)

Each participant has a research story; the data they present is in that story. It is the connections between their stories and each other that provides this circular framework. The researcher's role is in sharing their knowledge to present a contextualized understanding. By opening up the space and listening to the story, to the silence – what their thoughts are, and the wisdom they share – we can build our understanding of Indigeneity, how they perceive reconciliation from that frame, and what their practices and values are for knowledge and understanding (Jamieson 2017).

In his Thanksgiving address at the beginning of the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Elder Kanatiio from the *Kanesatake Mohawk* noted our propensity to ignore stories we have been told. We forget the teachings we see every day. We try to interpret meanings as we want them to be, not as they are. He noted:

[W]e come to you, Sonkwaiatison. You have created all this, and you have given us certain instructions. We see that all the different nations of your Creation struggle to carry out the instructions you gave them in the beginning of time. They continue to strive in fulfilling their responsibilities and carrying out their duties as you have asked them to. It seems that only

we, the two-legged, have difficulty in remembering your instructions. We seem to be blind to the lessons you have placed all around us. We are deaf to your teachings. (RCAP: 4)

Part of the problem with previous research, just as with previous relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous, is that it has emphasized a 'measurable' definitional understanding of phenomena and has not sought to contextualize within another conceptual framework.

6.4 Themes Identified

These themes came out of my understanding of transitional justice, an examination of public discourse that I was aware of as an Indigenous Canadian, and the discussions that I sought out in the news, social media, and in academic literature. I used these frames to inform an intuitive and deductive reflection of the research question and topic. These themes were: claiming a space, state of Indigenous experience in Canada, reconciliation efforts, looking forward/ thinking back, and making sense.

The first theme was an opportunity to understand who my participants were. As we will see, they all identify how they are placed within the discussion, this was obviously informed by the mundane note that I was interviewing them about reconciliation, so their answers would be focused on that. But it was an opportunity for them to claim the space, their identity, or question me and what I may claim. Certainly, in the pre-interview period there was a robust discussion with some of the participants about certain words or phrases I used. I thought it was important to understand how the participants contextualized themselves within the reconciliation, Indigenous, and Canadian discourse.

The second theme, state of the Indigenous experience in Canada, came from the idea in transitional justice literature that victims are underrepresented in driving the process and informing the realizations (Robbins 2011). A conference on reconciliation I attended just after the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was released,

highlighted for me the lack of understanding that still occurred within Canada, and internationally, on how contemporary Indigenous Peoples in Canada are coping with the previous harm and the continued structural and social violence perpetrated against them. As I intended the first theme to open and claim a space, I saw this theme as filling that space.

The third theme, reconciliation efforts, was not intended to criticize the previous and current efforts but engage in dialogue and see what work that has been underreported might be occurring. My understanding of grass-roots transitional justice (McEvoy and McGregor 2008) led me to hypothesize that some occurrences would be un- or under-reported in academic and mainstream media. As I noted in the introduction and elaborated on in the literature review, Canada has a unique relationship with transitional justice. Because transitional justice is framed through reconciliation, I thought it was possible to see new manifestations of mechanisms that operated under different parameters or with different intentions. An example of this that was noted in the fieldwork was an emphasis on grass-roots development that centered around environmental concerns.

The fourth theme, looking back and thinking forward, was designed to give the participants a chance to reflect on the needs of Indigenous people in reconciliation. This discussion was designed to evolved to reflect on these needs and offer suggestions for the future of the field. Previous realizations of reconciliation/transitional justice in Canada was not designed by Indigenous people, even if participation occurred. It was conceived, as Robins had pointed out, top-down with an agenda set not by the victims (2011: 2; McEvoy and McGregor 2008), but, in the case of Canada, by the perpetrator. I had hoped that the participants would use this space to claim new ideas for a re-agendafication of reconciliation in Canada.

The last theme, making sense, was designed as an opportunity for both the participant and I to reflect on what had been said in the interview and look at the Indigenous cultural

framework as a means of understanding reconciliation. I wanted a space that would allow for the idea of Indigeneity to percolate within the themes discussed in the interview.

6.5 Data Findings

This section places the research findings within the context of the themes discussed in each interview. I went into the field armed with my understanding of the literature surrounding transitional justice, its operationalization in Canada, and my personal experience as someone who was affected by residential schools and has tried to understand their Indigenous identity. In the introduction I noted how my research question changed when I entered the field. This was after I did my first interview with Dr. Frank Deer, the Canada Research Chair on Indigenous Languages and a Mohawk from *Kahnawá:ke*. He understood, conceptually, what transitional justice was, but the discourse in Canada was centered around the notion of reconciliation. As we discussed this more, it became apparent that the original research question would not work in broadening an understanding of the concept through an Indigenous research paradigm. This is because it would be difficult to maintain relational accountability with a community who did not fully engage with the concept. Moreover, it was useful to use this as a point of analysis. Why had Canada used reconciliation instead of transitional justice, especially when it seemed like many of the mechanisms, intent, and applications were similar.²⁰

As stated previously, this chapter is designed to contextualize the reader and provide an overview of my process in the field. I used semi-structured interviews for this thesis. In the field I followed the chronology set out in the interview guide. That chronology will be reflected here in my presentation. It is the first part of the developing a 'story-line' that runs throughout the thesis (Alasuutari 1995: 180).

²⁰ See the Introduction Chapter, and the Literature Review for a comparative study of these two concepts in Canada.

6.5.1 Creating/Claiming a Space

The first portion of the interviews was an attempt to get the participants to locate themselves within the discourse, as presented by the researcher during the pre-interview process. This process was also pseudo-biographical at times, allowing for the participants to build a deeper narrative/story as to their engagement with themes such as reconciliation or their Indigeneity and locate themselves professionally and personally.

The purpose was to establish the identity of the participant beyond how the researcher observed and reported them; through their own words. It also allowed the participants to situate their organization, profession, or affiliation. These were all important considerations in designing the interview guide because it allowed the participants to claim a space (Ashby 2011) and engage with the subject from that space (Ross 2017: 30-31). This was designed to empower the participant. The hope was to foster empowerment by creating an opportunity to “disrupt the economic, political, and/or socio-cultural marginalization of non-dominant groups” (Ross 2017: 4), through the research process.

In the pre-interview stage, we spoke about the themes and I was often asked to explain or defend a decision. This became part of the negotiation to allow me to enter a relationship with those who would share their knowledge with me. When I met with the participants, the interview would start with a greeting, many times with the traditional giving of the sacred medicines to honor the sharing of knowledge. This practice is quite common in Indigenous communities.²¹ Often the participant would then begin to lead the discussion, choosing what to talk about on their own agenda while engaging with the broad themes presented in pre-interview stage. I saw this as an opportunity to allow them to claim the space. As such, I

²¹ Such as the Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremonies in Australia (JCU 2017); the exchanging of the sacred medicines in Canada (Carleton University); Manaaki ki te tangata and other practices in Maori cultures (Moyle 2014).

found that the data from this section was unprompted and unscripted, not overly influenced by my expectations as a researcher, and I was able to take the role of the listener.²²

In this space, some chose to highlight their roles within a larger organization (Deer 2017), while others reflected on their individual identity and personal history as a means of entering a broader discussion on the themes (Favel 2017). Some chose to reflect on their work within a spatial sense, noting the identification of a need within the community as an impetus of their efforts (Spillett; Loney 2017; Currie 2017; Redhead-Champaign). Leslie Spillett noted that she “really feels change comes from the bottom up (2017)” and used this as a means of positioning herself and her work outside the western frameworks of values.

Jason Bone, an academic who studies Indigenous stories and storytelling traditions, chose to introduce himself entirely in his home tongue of Ojibway, a language I do not speak, and identify himself and his community, *Keeseekoowenin*, in a manner that was reflective of the identity he chose to present, rather than immediately changing to conform to dominant practice (2017). This was a frequent practice, in some form, among many of the participants. They would note their identity as a means of informing me where they were from and reasserting the identity of the language, people, history, culture, or clan. Many would reflect on this within the context of the *Indian Act* of Canada and other historical and social wrongs that sought to disempower, homogenize, diminish, or silence themselves or their ancestors. This process of introducing themselves and claiming a space was a means of righting a narrative that was imposed externally, correcting wrongs that persisted to present day (Johnston 2017; McMahon 2017; Redhead-Champaign 2017).

Smith has noted this is a common occurrence within Indigenous cultures, often under the auspices of science or progress (1999: 80). Early and persistent narratives came from non-Indigenous who: came, saw, named, and claimed (Smith 1999: 80). By allowing Indigenous

²² In Maori research this is called: Titiro whakarongo korero (look and listen first, speak later (Moyle 2014: 32

narratives to reassert their collective ownership over themselves, there could be new understandings and interpretations on data within a relevant lens. I wanted to be sure to not replicate previous dominant practice that “discovered, extracted, appropriated, commodified, and distributed [Indigenous] knowledge” (Denzin and Lincoln 2008: 5). But I was also aware of the conversation about insiders, objectivity, and advocacy from my methodology chapter, Indigenous academics have grappled with the insider/outsider duality as noted earlier in this chapter. The dominant practice was criticized by participants for excluding Indigenous researchers and their methodologies. Their closeness fit within critiques of ‘insider’ status in research; that Indigenous insiders have “the potential for bias, lack of distance, and lack of objectivity and... to mistake the research role with an advocacy role” (Smith 2006: 7). But Indigenous scholars have argued that the closeness, the relational accountability, the privileging of Indigenous knowledge and concerns is the methodology (Kiro 2000; Wilson 2008; Rigney 2006). It has also been pointed out that this critique is the exact sort of criticism that many Indigenous scholars caution against, an exclusionary approach that maintains the status quo and supports a disempowering and controlling agenda (Tauri 2010; Moyle: 33). Memmi suggested that this process of isolating knowledges and knowledge practices is a form of academic apartheid, something discussed in Chapter Two (1957: 54-55).

6.5.2 State of the Indigenous experience in Canada

“The destruction was universally successful: of the hundreds of robust civilizations that existed in the Americas in 1492, not one survives intact today”. Daniel Paul, Mi’kmaq Elder cited in Eshet 2015

The 1969 Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy by then Minister of Indian Affairs Jean Chretien, under Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau, stated that being ‘Indian’ was to lack power (1969: 1). It acknowledged that its own policies served as ‘legal and constitutional discrimination (1969: 7) but would only make efforts to repeal them if

Indigenous Peoples gave up the specific rights afforded to them under treaties (1969). We saw in the context chapter how since confederation, the Canadian government has supported an agenda that sought to eliminate the idea and history of an Indigenous People in Canada. In many ways, the structures and attitudes that have existed since colonization are still in place. The *Indian Act*, something that many participants noted as racist and misogynist, is still in force, both in name and in wording that reaches back to *the Act for the Gradual Civilization of the Indian* (1869).

As I worked through developing themes for the interview guide, I was informed by my understanding of the White Paper and the Indigenous People's response to this, the Red Paper. Indigenous Peoples view this moment in history as an act of resistance and the birth of the modern Indigenous recognition movement (*Ideas* 2010; *Ideas* 2016). Building upon the sentiment expressed in Hawthorne report, Indigenous Peoples of Canada asserted that they were in fact, 'citizens plus', not having less rights, but more rights than non-Indigenous Canadians (1967; Cardinal 1970). This claim had historical support in one of the earliest governing documents still in place the *Royal Proclamation of 1763*. Despite assurances from the legally binding treaties, statutes, and laws enshrining their rights and ability to flourish culturally, socially, and economically, Indigenous Peoples do not have an equal level of economic, social, educational, and cultural wellbeing as non-Indigenous Canadians.

Primary indicators for 'success' in society come from organizations such as Statistics Canada, the government agency that organizes the census. These organizations are not Indigenous (Walter and Anderson 2013). They use mode of analysis that is "neither natural or normal" at depicting the complexities of Indigenous populations (Walter and Anderson: 9). As the understanding of Indigenous Peoples are skewed by dominant research paradigms, I felt that the same methods could be used, but from an Indigenous perspective. This interview theme was an attempt to understand how some Indigenous Peoples navigate the current, social, economic, political, and educational sphere in Canada. It was a look beyond the statistical work done by organizations like Statistics Canada that identified gaps or

challenges facing the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. It looked beyond the rhetorical frameworks that have emerged from government, policy think-tanks, academic, and social discourse (news, social media and political expression). It is meant to identify lived experiences, unspoken challenges, and give a voice to subaltern or non-traditional forms of narrative.

There was some consensus among participants that there were improvements in areas such as healthcare, education, economic, cultural and social wellbeing for Indigenous Peoples over the ensuing twenty-five years since the first reconciliation efforts began (Spillett 2017; Fontaine 2017; Johnston 2017). The opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to participate in government, representing broader demographics than their own was evident (Fontaine 2017). This is not without challenges, and progress, while evident, is minimal in comparison to non-Indigenous. Member of the Legislative Assembly Nahanni Fontaine is only one of four Indigenous women sitting in office in Manitoba.

Fontaine points to evidence that Indigenous people are beginning to access and challenge the status quo established by non-Indigenous society (2017). Jobs, education, and social standing is better for Indigenous Peoples than it has been in the past according to analysis of census data, though problematic (Calliou 2014). But it would be naïve to think that change has closed the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous in Canada (Calliou 2014).

Indigenous services are significantly underfunded compared to their counterparts (Spillett 2017; Johnston 2017; McMahon 2017; Logan 2017; Fontaine 2017; Favel 2017; Redhead 2017; Mashkode Bizhiki 2017; Loney 2017; Currie 2017). In education, Indigenous children have faced chronic underfunding that goes back beyond the last hundred years (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2012: 19-20). There was a degree of self-fulfillment with the federal model for funding. During the era of the Sixties Scoop, a federal report deemed 75 per cent of all residential school students were from 'unfit homes' (Meltenberger

2004: 27) due to economic disregard, while funding levels at residential and day schools did not reflect the needs of the children (Schroeder 2006: 37).

Two areas highlighted by almost all the participants were the child welfare system and the education system. This system is akin to some of the same colonial projects that spawned the residential school program and the Sixties Scoop (Mashkode Bizhiki 2017; Spillett 2017; Spence 2017; McMahon 2017). Participants suggested that the state used its own normative framework to decide what would be best for Indigenous children. The historical frame for this decision in relation to the residential schools was based, as we saw in the context chapter, on the idea that a child who lived on the reserve and was taught on the reserve was “just a savage that can read and write” (Canada 1879).

The child welfare system derives its budget from how many children are removed from the home, not the number of interventions intended to build capacity or keep the child in the community (Spillett 2017). In the early 1980s, the extent of the Sixties Scoop was beginning to emerge. The removal of Indigenous children from their parental or familial homes had been in force for many of the same reasons as the residential school program. Rather than invest in the structures to encourage children to stay within their home community the provincial government was actively seeking additional funding to support adoptive parents (Kimelman 1985: 10-11). This practice is still in place, albeit in another form. In one instance an Indigenous family requested funds from social services for a damage deposit on an apartment, costing \$425 (MacLean 2018). The funds were denied though the family was on funding assistance for the cost of the rent of the property. The children were subsequently removed from the care of the family due to providing an inadequate living area. This removal and subsequent care would go on to cost around \$7000 a month (MacLean 2018). The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal found that Indigenous Canadians faced racial discrimination regarding funding (FNCFCSC 2016). The Tribunal found that underfunding and discriminatory attitudes created a system that “incentive[ized agencies] to bring children into care (2016:55-56). Given that the intergenerational harm and structural harm that still

exist today, combined with stigma against Indigenous Peoples in society, the capacity to parent has been undermined, and the system is set up to reinforce that trauma and revisit old forms of harm (Spillett 2017; Mashkode Bizhiki 2017; McMahon 2017; Favel 2017; Spence 2017).

Traditional practice has been an uphill battle against a system that has been typified as an economy of harm and hate (Spillett 2017). Spillett refers here to the previous comment wherein budgets are determined by how many children are removed from the home, thus creating an agenda to diminish the perceived capacity of Indigenous parents. Indigenous People are constantly on their 'back foot' when it comes to asserting themselves as capable parents, nurturing communities, and that they should be empowered to build on these values within their community with their own people, rather than have a system that generates income from extraction and exploitive practices (Spillett 2017). Many of these systems and structures are tied to legislation that has been identified as both racist and outdated (Johnston 2017). The *Indian Act* is one such piece of legislation.

The *Indian Act*, noted in the context chapter, is seen as an instrument of continued colonization and assimilation by many of the participants. Getting rid of the *Indian Act* was essential to empower Indigenous Peoples (Spillett; Johnston; McMahon). It created a system that was used to diminish the capacity of Indigenous people to determine their own fate and put them as wards of the state, a state that had no interest in fulfilling its legal and contractual obligations. This is seen in the chronic underfunding of social services such as the child welfare system, noted above, and the education system, noted later in this chapter. Furthermore, legal obligations such as annuity, the annual payment that some treaty bound Indigenous Peoples operate under, is not tied to inflation or keeping within the spirit of the original agreements.

Other systems of oppression were also evident. The structures that governed the reservations also disempowered and harmed Indigenous Peoples (Johnston). These

systems prevent economic development (Loney), or if there was development, it came at the behest of setting aside their beliefs about land use (Bone; Adams; Loney). These policies dissuaded not only culturally appropriate economic development; they did harm to their physical wellbeing.

One plan to help improve the quality of life through greenhouses to grow fresh produce for consumption and sale was prevented by the federal government (Loney 2017). Because of their status as wards of the state, funding that went from subsidizing unhealthy processed food, such as soft drinks, could not be used to fund 'infrastructure' programs such as community gardens (Loney 2017).

The off-reserve experience is not much better, especially in terms of encountering a Canadian public with an extremely negative view of Indigenous Peoples (Adams 2017). Stereotypes mean that actions are often scrutinized, Indigenous People feel like they must work twice as hard to prove themselves as reliable or trustworthy (Spillett 2017; Spence 2017; Adams 2017). This has the consequence of alienating Indigenous People within Canada, so much so that there is a question of 'citizenship' within society at all.

The 'citizenship' program wherein values are espoused outwardly from society is largely a myth that has existed in most nation states over the last several centuries (Young 1990). Canada is not what it purports to be in the media; a tolerant and diverse nation that respects its Indigenous predecessors (Jamieson 2016). This idea of citizenship is sold to Indigenous youth in the education system (Deer 2017). It is presented as a means for embracing diversity, but it is seen by some of the participants as an extension of long-time assimilationist policies (Mashkode Bizhiki 2017).

The sense I got was that this feeling of alienation from the 'citizenship' ideology creates a system where Indigenous People withdraw from Canadian society. Even the government of Canada acknowledged this with its earlier White Paper (1969). The consequence of this is that it makes it harder to reach them with essential services that are necessary to increase

the quality of life and decrease marginalization. But given that the current identity for Canada does not include the values of the original inhabitants, some of the participants do not see this as much of a loss.

6.5.3 Reconciliation Efforts

This theme looked at reconciliation, as defined in the introduction, context, and literature review chapters, in Canada since 1991, the date of the first apology from an actor associated with the states aim of assimilation. In the context chapter the first theme of 'instruments of colonization' explained the historical practices that served to indicate and influence the perception and action of non-Indigenous peoples towards Canada's Indigenous populations. This genealogy from first contact until the current day has noted an agenda to 'kill the Indian' (Milloy 1999: 20). This policy, discussed in Chapter Four, was meant to remove the social and cultural attributes of the Indigenous Peoples and make them part of the body politic. While overt practices such as the residential schools died out in the early 1990s, many of the participants, and academic and social commenters note that current practice is no less harmful. This could be seen in the 'restless natives' (Âpihtawikosisân 2012) response to Indigenous activism and calls for self-governance (Crosby and Monaghan 2012). As a space to discuss reconciliation has been forged. it has become possible to critically examine how mechanisms such as the apology, the IRSSA, and the TRC have changed Indigenous Canadians' experiences.

I wanted to look at the participants' recollections of those mechanisms, their perceived intent and outcome, and how they affected Indigenous Canadians. I meant to provide a space for narratives of the 'lived' experience rather than focusing on 'measurables' and indicators from the dominant frame. Van Manen defined the use of the lived experience in social science research as an "interpretive model that place human situations central and are based on the belief that we can best understand human beings from the experiential reality of their lifeworlds" (xi 2007).

The original research question, as noted in the introduction, was *how effective was transitional justice in Canada in dealing with Indigenous Peoples' problems?* This was quickly identified in the pre-interview process and the early interviews, as we will see in the subsequent data chapters, as problematic because of the way that Canada talks about 'transitional justice' (Jung 2009b; Jung 2009a; Matsunaga; Coulthard 2014). The compartmentalized nature of reconciliation in Canada identified in the introduction and context chapter and referenced in the specific themes of the literature review, was identified in practice by the lack of representation of the concept in the lexicon of reconciliation in the lived experience of Indigenous Canadians. There was certainly an understanding of transitional justice, superficially, among many of the participants. They were familiar with situations where transitional justice had been applied, such as South Africa, but commonly referenced mechanisms rather than the programs themselves (Johnston 2017; Spillett 2017; McMahon 2017). When asked to engage with the concept of transitional justice, as explained by the researcher, within the Canadian context, many of the participants provided realizations of the analysis done by the researchers identified above, that Canada compartmentalized the reconciliation experience for Indigenous Peoples (Johnston 2017; Spillett 2017; McMahon 2017; Spence 2017; Mashkode Bizhiki 2017). By limiting the scope of reconciliation mechanisms (Logan 2017), the Canadian government can 'divide and conquer', on the one hand, and limit their legal obligation, on the other (McMahon 2017; Johnston 2017).

This concern about the state trying to limit the extent to which it had to provide remedy, legally, (Logan 2017) as well as change the social conditions and solutions for harm was another point echoed by the participants (Johnston 2017). There is a real concern that reconciliation, even excluding the transitional justice discourse, does not do enough to really be effective (McMahon 2017; Spillett; Logan 2017; P.E. 2017; Adams 2017).

This concern comes from presented critiques that reconciliation, in its compartmentalized form, may have failed to provide its own level of *relational accountability* (to borrow that term

momentarily) to itself, namely satisfying its own operationalizations. Participant reflection on reconciliation practice led to the emergence of three operationalized themes (Johnston 2017; Favel 2017; Bone 2017; Loney 2017; Spillett 2017). These are structural, social, and environmental²³.

Structural reconciliation was the “easiest to do because you just have to change laws and policies” (Johnston 2017). Social reconciliation was more difficult because it means that generations of teachings and histories must be undone (Johnston 2017; Spillett 2017; McMahon 2017). Environmental reconciliation revolves around Indigenous Peoples understanding of our role within this world (Bone 2017; Johnston 2017; Loney 2017; Adams 2017).

6.5.3.1 Structural Reconciliation

Structural reconciliation evokes some of the strongest discussion because its success relies on the existence of the political will to foster structural change, which participants suggested has always been lacking. It was felt that structural reconciliation provides the framework for substantive change and related to the idea that the process of reconciliation was intended to make others feel good about themselves (Johnston 2017; McMahon 2017; Fontaine 2017; Spillett 2017; Loney 2017; Favel 2017; Redhead 2017; Mashkode Bizhiki 2017; Spence 2017). The challenges Indigenous Peoples face are structural, the harm is still happening today; it is not a system that has been left behind (Favel 2017; Spillett 2017; E.P. 2017; Favel 2017; McMahon 2017; Mashkode Bizhiki 2017; Spence 2017). Even if Indigenous People wanted to withdraw from a racist Canada, they would still have to deal with damaging policies in education, childcare, the economy, self-governance, healthcare, and almost every other service that many Canadians access every day.

For a fuller discussion on quantitative analysis, a broader understanding of how politics informs the collection of data (from a broad frame) see: Walter and Anderson 2013: 7-20

One of the participants noted that Indigenous leaders have been vocal about fixing the structural systems and providing a framework for empowered, enabled, Indigenous Peoples for decades (McMahon 2017). For instance, funding for Indigenous education was noted to be at least 30 percent less per student than funding for non-Indigenous students (Drummond 2013). A 2016 report from the Parliamentary Budget Officer for the federal government noted that this trend would persist for the next several years at the very least (PBO 2016). It went on to argue that current levels of commitments, even if brought close to parity, would “not be sufficient to close outcome gaps” (PBO 2016: 46). Most recently, the Kelowna Accord, a meeting of government and Indigenous leaders from across Canada, put together an action plan and budget for improving the lives of the Indigenous Peoples. This plan only asked for a small portion of money to address social condition between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Canadians, the overwhelming majority was to be earmarked for economic, education, and healthcare (Parker et al. 2006).

6.5.3.2 *Social Reconciliation*

We have seen in the introduction and the context chapters that social reconciliation is one area where Canada has focused efforts. This is changing the attitudes of all Canadians to reflect an environment of mutual respect and recognition (Canada 2016h: 113). But attitudes and behaviors that have been taught and reinforced for decades make it harder to undo these lessons. Galtung suggests this was a form of ‘cultural’ violence, this is elements of the “symbolic sphere of our existence... that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence” (1990: 291). In Canada there are attitudes that are embedded into the national conscience. This could be seen during Canada’s 150th anniversary that occurred during my fieldwork period. Indigenous protesters ‘occupied’ Parliament Hill in Ottawa, the capital of Canada, in the days leading up to the anniversary and celebration. As Canada chose to acknowledge itself as a nation, some asked, “is Canada 150 a national party or a celebration of colonization” (Carter 2017). Although Canadians were largely aware of some

of their colonial past (Neuman 2016), the majority of non-Indigenous Canadians did not acknowledge the continued need to account for that past (Reconciliation Canada 2017)²⁴.

But there was a sense amongst almost all of the participants that things were changing, to varying degrees of magnitude. The mechanisms such as the 2008 formal apology on behalf of the Canadian government were necessary, and helpful (McMahon 2017) in releasing some of the harm and shame that were within them. But support for some parts of the reconciliation project were not without criticism of others (Spillett 2017; Logan 2017).

The Common Experience Payment (CEP) the government's residential school settlement was helpful in that it provided compensation for victims of trauma and intergenerational trauma; those who attended the schools, including survivors or deceased (during attendance or since attendance), and their parents, grandparents, children, and grandchildren. But the reparations program also alienated large groups of victims who did not fit the criteria (Logan 2017). The department that oversaw the program critiqued itself for the speed at which the entire process took place, stating that it left the program with deficiencies in promoting, designing, and implementing it (2017).

We saw in the Chapter 4 how widespread the harm was caused by the residential school experience. The effects of it were summed up best in the Final Report of the TRC where it was called "cultural genocide" (Canada 2015: 1). While the settlement may have been necessary for many Indigenous Peoples (McMahon 2017), some feel it was done with a maximal emphasis of expediency (Logan 2017) and a minimal emphasis on planning for effective change (E.P. 2017). Furthermore, the program itself had a short mandate, and much of the money ended up in the hands of lawyers (Logan 2017). This meant that Indigenous People, many of whom did not wholly trust the government, that were slow to act

²⁴ 61% of non-Indigenous Canadians (n=1,529) felt there was a collective responsibility to make up for mistreatment of Indigenous Peoples

on the offer due to educational, social, or other factors, were left without any compensation (Logan 2017).

Reconciliation was recognized as something that was not for them. But many of the participants were concerned that by not fully participating, and resisting the ideas articulated within Canadian reconciliation narratives that were not satisfying the needs of future generations, they were running the risk of being excluded from the dialogue entirely (McMahon). Some identified participation in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as a key example of what can happen when reconciliation fully engages with Indigenous Peoples and is reflective of an inclusive process that emphasizes the voices of the harmed.

6.5.3.3 Existential/Environmental Reconciliation

Environmental reconciliation is an area where there has been little work. The attachment of Indigenous Peoples to the land represents a dramatic schism, one that is perhaps the most important and difficult to resolve (Bone 2017; Spillett 2017; Adams 2017). It was felt that Indigenous people should not be forced to continue to take development policies that undermine their cultural attachment to the land and its future (Bone 2017; Loney 2017). But instead of recognizing this and protecting the most sacred of Indigenous values, government continues to support capitalism and the invisible hand pushes reconciliation that supports an agenda of western values over one that is culturally appropriate, and most sound for humanity going forward.

As suggested in Chapter 2, Indigenous Peoples of Canada have a connection with their physical and metaphysical world. Reconciliation is largely concerned with interpersonal, intercommunity, or intercultural reconciliation. This is a fault of a system that prioritizes non-Indigenous values and worldviews or Indigenous ones. TRC Commissioners often heard that “reconciliation will never occur unless we are also reconciled with the earth” (Canada 2015a: 18). Mi’kmaq law, for instance, reflects that life is the sum of all creation, physical,

ethereal, innate, and animate. Blackfoot Piikani Elder Reg Crowshoe stated that Indigenous worldviews should have a role in defining reconciliation,

When we talk about the concept of reconciliation, I think about some of the stories that I've heard in our culture and stories are important.... These stories are so important as theories but at the same time stories are important to oral cultures. So when we talk about stories, we talk about defining our environment and how we look at authorities that come from the land and how that land, when we talk about our relationship with the land, how we look at forgiveness and reconciliation is so important when we look at it historically.

We have stories in our culture about our superheroes, how we treat each other. Stories about how animals and plants give us authorities and privileges to use plants as healing, but we also have stories about practices. How would we practise reconciliation? How would we practise getting together to talk about reconciliation in an oral perspective? And those practices are so important. (2015h: 123)

Jason Bone spoke about the challenges in reconciliation regarding these aspects of Indigenous worldview. Resistance to forms of economic development, for instance, such as resource extraction, degradation of the environment, or damaging of water sources is not on the basis that Indigenous people are incompatible with some forms of the modern Western (and global) economy, but that they are against practices that are hardlines in their own belief system (2017). Corntassel asks, "what happens when the salmon people can no longer catch salmon in the rivers... or when the medicines, waters, and traditional foods that Indigenous Peoples have relied on... for millennia become contaminated..." (2012: 94)?

Part of the challenge I had when classifying this last, and important, category of reconciliation was finding a word that did not diminish or demean Indigenous Peoples and the need for this form of reconciliation. If there is one area that is lacking in the reconciliation discourse it is the regard for Indigenous worldviews. The TRC makes scant mention of the environment and earth with respect to reconciliation. It mentions, through Elder and survivor

quotes, Indigenous worldviews but does not incorporate them into the reconciliation discussion. Environmental forms of reconciliation are not just an aspect of Indigenous life, but as we have seen the discussion worldviews, they are their life.

6.5.4 Looking Forward, Thinking Back

The TRC noted that non-Indigenous and Indigenous Canadians have a different view of how reconciliation can be achieved (2015: 187). We have seen in earlier chapters how systems of harm have disempowered Indigenous agency, cultural practices, and social, economic, and political structures. Reconciliation is about partnership and mutual respect, as the TRC (Canada 2015h: 113-114). But until there is a reckoning and outright acknowledgement of the disempowering and unbalanced nature of reconciliation/transitional justice realizations (Robbins 2011) it is important to privilege the voices of the harmed populations so that their claim of agency is recognized. Reconciliation needs to provide a space for Indigenous reflection on the challenges ahead, an assessment of the future of reconciliation, and provide an opportunity to inform the discourse based on Indigenous input. This thesis was an attempt to facilitate that discussion.

Interviewees identified gaps between government, society, and Indigenous Peoples. Trust was one component in these discussions. One of the big promises of this generation of mechanisms has been the revisiting of the official narrative that is Canada. At the public launch of the TRC in 2010, Commissioner Marie Wilson stated the aim of the commission was to re-write history and acknowledge the harm of the past (2010). Many of the TRC and the RCAP have promoted an agenda that includes changes what is taught about Canada's colonial legacy (Canada 1995; 2015). Many of the participants reflected on the importance of this. Damon Johnston noted that "reconciliation must begin with truth" (2017). Many of the respondents who worked in the arts echoed this sentiment (Adams; McMahon 2017; Monkman 2017). Art and social expression were not only seen to assert Indigenous

perspectives on history and culture but also as a means to challenge the status quo (Monkman 2017; Adams 2017).

The Canadian government had long denied the extent to which it acted in a colonizing fashion. Mentioned in an earlier chapter, but bearing repeating is the anecdote of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's remarks at the 2009 G20 Summit in Pittsburgh that 'Canada had no history of colonialism'. But as mechanisms such as the TRC fulfill their mandate, the truth about the harm that happened to the Indigenous Peoples was indeed coming out (Logan 2017; McMahon 2017; Currie 2017; Fontaine 2017) but resistance among non-Indigenous Canadians to taking ownership for their past or accepting the longstanding harm that past had caused was absent (Currie 2017; Spillett 2017; E.P. 2017). The idea that reconciliation was not for Indigenous people, but something that was used to make "white people feel better about what had happened (McMahon 2017)," was not just an isolated note (Spillett 2017; Favel 2017; Redhead 2017; Mashkode Bizhiki 2017; Spence 2017; Adams 2017).

In response to this assessment, many of the participants have noted that reconciliation has given rise to a sort of resistance to the process and current civil, political, and social climate. This has meant that Indigenous people are finding their own way in reconciliation (Spillett 2017; Favel 2017; Redhead-Champaign 2017; Monkman 2017; Adams 2017). It would be easy to confuse this with grass-roots mechanism in transitional justice conceptualizations, but it could also be ascribed as a parallel system. These have occurred because of continued perceived efforts of assimilation and the above noted lack of a reconciliation agenda targeting the needs of Indigenous Peoples, on all three identified operationalized themes.

In taking ownership of reconciliation through Indigenous cultural values, societal and social needs, and broader themes such as environmental connectivity fit within the resistance narrative. This resistance is not just a means of survival but is providing the framework for the next generation of reconciliation in Canada (Bone 2017). Robust leadership and

culturally appropriate templates for development are reinvigorating many Indigenous communities (Loney 2017). Indigenous language and culture are becoming broader agendas in places like higher education (Deer 2017) as Indigenous Peoples gain access to segments of society blocked to them even a few years ago (Fontaine 2017). There is still much harm, though (Spillett 2017; Favel; E.P. 2017; Adams 2017; Fontaine 2017; Johnston 2017). And with that harm are additional challenges that the participants note need to be overcome (Redhead 2017, Favel 2017). Trust is one area where work needs to be done.

There is a lack of trust between Indigenous People and the institutions and Peoples who have attempted to eradicate them over the last few centuries (Spillett 2017; McMahon 2017). This is perpetuated today by treatment of Indigenous People by the child welfare, political, educational, economic, and social systems. But attitudes towards Indigenous Peoples are changing though reconciliation efforts (Sinclair 2016: 1-5). Many have noted or agreed that mechanism like the TRC have created a space where the Canadian public could interface with reconciliation through the 'calls to action' (Currie 2017; Deer 2017).

The uptake by non-Indigenous Canadians on many of these calls to action has indicated a real interest in understanding what they can do to address past harm (Currie 2017). Some of these calls to action have resulted in cross cultural dialogue, bringing those who may never have had contact with the other group into 'sharing circles' wherein they can fully appreciate the harm that has been dealt (Currie 2017). But even as these actions are undertaken, there are some who feel that it is more effort to make the colonizer feel better about themselves, all the while continuing a system of structural harm (Spillett 2017; Johnston 2017; McMahon 2017).

Change is occurring though, and attitudes are slowly beginning to shift from ambivalence to awareness. Reconciliation has at the very least opened a space where Indigenous resistance and an understanding of the continued harm that they face is brought to the forefront of Canadian culture, especially during important public celebrations such as

Canada 150 anniversary. This contact forces Canadians to come to terms with its colonial past and address it within the context of its perceived values and identity

6.5.5 Making Sense

This interview theme explored Indigenous understandings of reconciliation and the way it has been realized in Canada. Reconciliation, in Canada, has played a significant role in making Canadians aware of their colonial history (Jamieson 2017). Participants noted excitement about some projects that have emerged from the reconciliation agenda (Deer 2017; Currie 2017; Logan 2017) and it has allowed for Indigenous people to rebuild some of the lost cultural traditions and empower themselves. But reconciliation is in danger of becoming another industry; it already has, to some (McMahon 2017; Spillett 2017; Adams 2017).

There is money being made by individuals and organizations undertaking reconciliation efforts, certainly there is a cost to reconciliation, but some fear that the agenda is not focusing enough on the needs of Indigenous society (McMahon 2017). Reconciliation has become a buzzword in Canadian society, and although that has increased recognition, it has always meant that it has the capacity to disempower:

So, what is the end point? It's social harmony in Canada. It's cross-cultural, cross-national social harmony, understanding, probably quite a lofty goal in some respects, ways of understanding these things. To repeat what Wab said, if it's an issue of part to spin a labor economy, and I've been working in and around professional faculties and so forth, where I find it difficult to disagree with what he's saying, then I think that's an important dimension to Canadiana reconciliation. (Deer 2017)

The process is becoming increasingly populated with experts who feel like they can be part of the panacea for Indigenous harm. This means that Indigenous insight runs the risk of being fetishized, under-appreciated, or even ignored. This all indicates to some of the participants as another attempt to assimilate and colonize Indigenous Peoples (Mashkode Bizhiki 2017).

Looking back at the form of reconciliation that empowers Indigenous cultural frameworks it is important to note that it cannot be one sided. Many of the participants felt that there should be a change on behalf of non-Indigenous society to understand and even embrace Indigenous thinking (Bone 2017; Loney 2017). This is especially evident when it comes to the environment.

Reconciliation is necessary, but it is only useful if it engages with Indigenous needs, values, and does not seek to reintroduce the colonial policy of assimilation. The next two chapters seek to place Indigenous perspectives within a relevant frame for understanding reconciliation.

Chapter 7. Chapter Seven

7.1 Nanda-Gikendan

“That which the tree exhales, I inhale. That which I exhale, the tree inhales” (Graveline 1998: 57).

This chapter represents the learning journey that I undertook, from that early understanding to my growth with each interview. This journey towards understanding is central to Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing (Martin and Miraboopa 2003). As I listened, I learned, as I learned I understood. This personal journey towards understanding was facilitated by the means of inquiry, the research paradigm that I used. This chapter seeks to articulate that understanding as I have experienced it.

In practice, Indigenous (LaBoucane-Benson 2009) and non-Indigenous (Goulet 1998) researchers have noted the personal element of Indigenous knowledge. Bastien, looking at *Siksikaitsitap*²⁵ ways of knowing, states that traditional learning uses the experiential to facilitate knowing (2004: 119). Methods used in this thesis are like what Kovach calls a conversational method, meant that I was a co-producer of knowledge (2010: 46). This co-production meant that the connection between me and the data collected was largely intertwined. This meant that I would need to account for myself in the data analysis. This would be satisfied by reflecting on the values and lessons of the Indigenous research paradigm.

In seeking to understand what was shared with me in these conversations, I was influenced by several aspects identified by Indigenous scholars. Bastien, again reflecting on the personal journey of knowing, stated that a culturally relevant mode would utilize both the natural world and my cultural reality (2004: 119). We will see that in practice in this chapter.

²⁵ Blackfoot

The structure of my analysis is informed to fill out my worldview into the research space. Kovach suggested that Indigenous research was best served by a “contextual presentation of the findings” (2010: 46). This is due to the “personal and particular,” nature of Indigenous knowledge (Battiste and Henderson 2000: 36). This challenge of presenting the data in a form that was reflective of my personal journey, shared with me by the participants, resulted in a mode of categorization that built both on the natural world and my cultural reality.

There is a tension, I felt, when presenting and analyzing data between maintaining the context, empowering the people who shared the data, and finding meaning. Because I was part of the research, and the journey in understanding the research question was my own, I was able to bridge this gap. Looking back at Chapter Two, there is a discussion about the personal nature of knowledge and understanding. This research is a journey through my levels of knowledge, articulated and reported as experienced by myself. My search to find meaning is the process of research, and something that is universal. Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous research paradigms see data analysis as a map to find meaning.

For some researchers this map would include data reduction, this might be in the form of coding and categorizing the research data. As noted within the Knowing chapter, this could be problematic for Indigenous research as it may decontextualize the data, making its message difficult to decipher save for what the author decides. Unfortunately, this is going to be the case in even the most sensitive of researchers. I am going to try and be explicit in the work that I have done to categorize or ‘code’ the research data.

I discussed my mode of comprehending the research data through multiple exposures across time as an alternative to explicit coding done in social science research. As noted with the discussion on the Iroquois longhouse, presented in Chapter Two, allows a structure for researchers to interpret and reinterpret data based on their knowledge and contextual frame. For me this was important because as I listened, I learned, and as I learned, I changed. Each subsequent listening to the research data meant that my understanding was changed, as if I

was entering the same house a different way. It did not change the data, but it did change how it was viewed. This could be tied to the idea of multiple truths identified in Chapter Two. In this same frame this practice could be suggested as multiple listening. It was important in this process to catalogue my personal growth, how the research changed me and how my understanding changed.

In deciding on how to code and categorize this data, I took my inspiration from a memory I have of my father, and how that memory made me think about his own history. My father's residential school experience was not something that he spoke about to many, but the consequences were hinted at in interactions he had and the challenges he faced in life. For me, this seemed to manifest in the image of a tree. It was an important symbol for many reasons, first, the spatial representation of the tree could be identified in the way he moved around all his life, never finding his roots in any soil for exceptionally long. The Michel First Nation, his people, had been enfranchised. Enfranchisement was an end-game policy aimed at removing Indigenous legal identity, effectively making them part of MacDonald's dream of reducing Indigenous peoples to just another part of the body politic. This means that they lost their identity as 'Indians', legally, but also means that their reservation, their land, ceased to be theirs. Many Indigenous Peoples are not on their traditional lands, but for the Michel First Nation, there was no land to call their own at all.

Indigenous people have a connection to the land, this is often noted: they hunt for food, trap for clothing and trade, live, grow, and celebrate their culture and traditions with the land. This is true even today, in contemporary Canadian society. For my father, the lack of roots was damaging to his cultural identity. I thought of this when looking at reconciliation in Canada. The public policy and attitudes, as we saw in the Context chapter, damaged the cultural identity and eroded the roots of the Indigenous people. Disempowering policies such as the residential school played an active role in this.

The idea of harm being rooted allowed me to think of reconciliation like a living organism, fitting with one of the imperatives of understanding research within the natural and cultural world. The participants gave their impressions of the state of reconciliation in Canada. These were first broadly divided into what were perceived as harmful (a sick state) and helpful (a healthy state). This is the divide for the two data findings chapters. The roots flow naturally into an image of a plant or tree, a universally understood organism. From my father's reflection on his 'rootedness' in his culture and life, I sought to expand that concept into other categories for analysis.

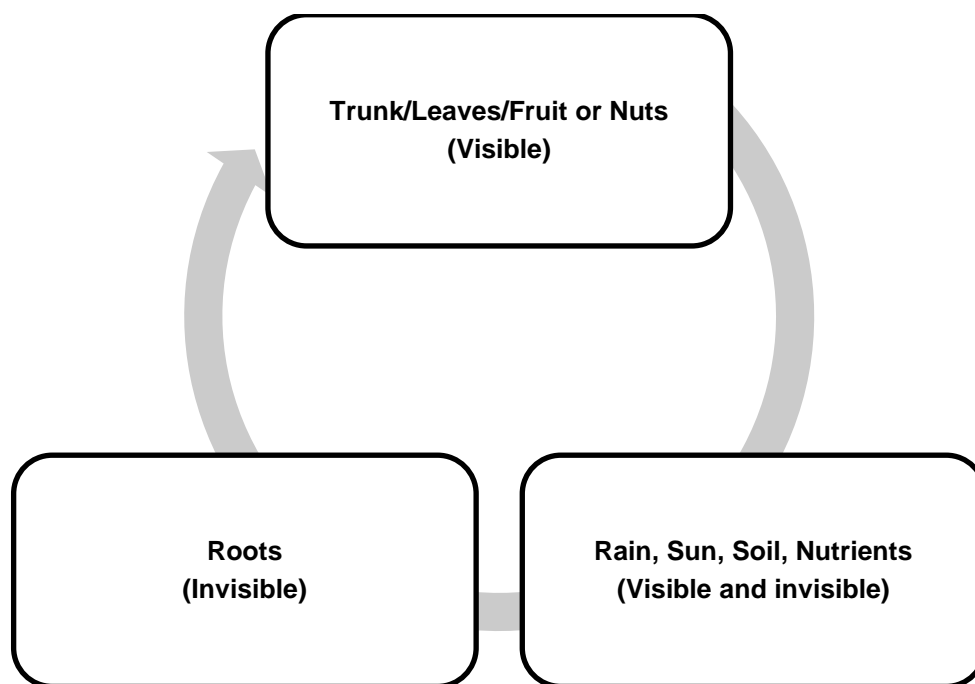


Figure 3 – Interrelated system of tree

The structures of the tree are identified further in the next section; these were the broad categories for analysis that persist across both data analysis chapters (Figure 3). The roots of the tree are the harm and trauma that Indigenous people live with, intergenerationally. The next structure would be the visible portion of the tree; its trunk, leaves, and fruit. This

was best aligned with expectations of Indigenous Peoples within society: education, economic, social, cultural, and political capacities and outcomes. Finally, the last category is the sustenance of the tree: water, soil, nourishment. This fits with the policies and structures that serve to promote wellbeing on the other two components. Within these categories I 'coded' based on my feeling of what category the participant was referring to, and how those influenced the overall picture of a healthy or unhealthy tree. This was done by free-coding or hand-coding rather than through software. Part of the problem with software coding within an Indigenous research paradigm that I have outlined is the contextualized nature of the data presentation means that some coded passages become muddled, they lose their contextualized meaning and take on more of the form that the researcher chooses.

There are three structures that support tree (Fig. 4). The roots, the foundation that holds up the tree, provide the base of the seen tree. The wellbeing; leaves, nuts or fruit, this is the evidence that the tree is healthy, and that its care is successful. Finally, the structures that provide for the care of the tree, this is the sustenance; the air, water, and nutrients that allow the tree to grow, as well as the care for the tree itself by the hands of its keeper.

This chapter will address this frame in three parts. It will first look at the roots. The discussion in this section will look at the effects of harm, how traditions have been disempowered, the effects of the residential schools, and the effects of structures.

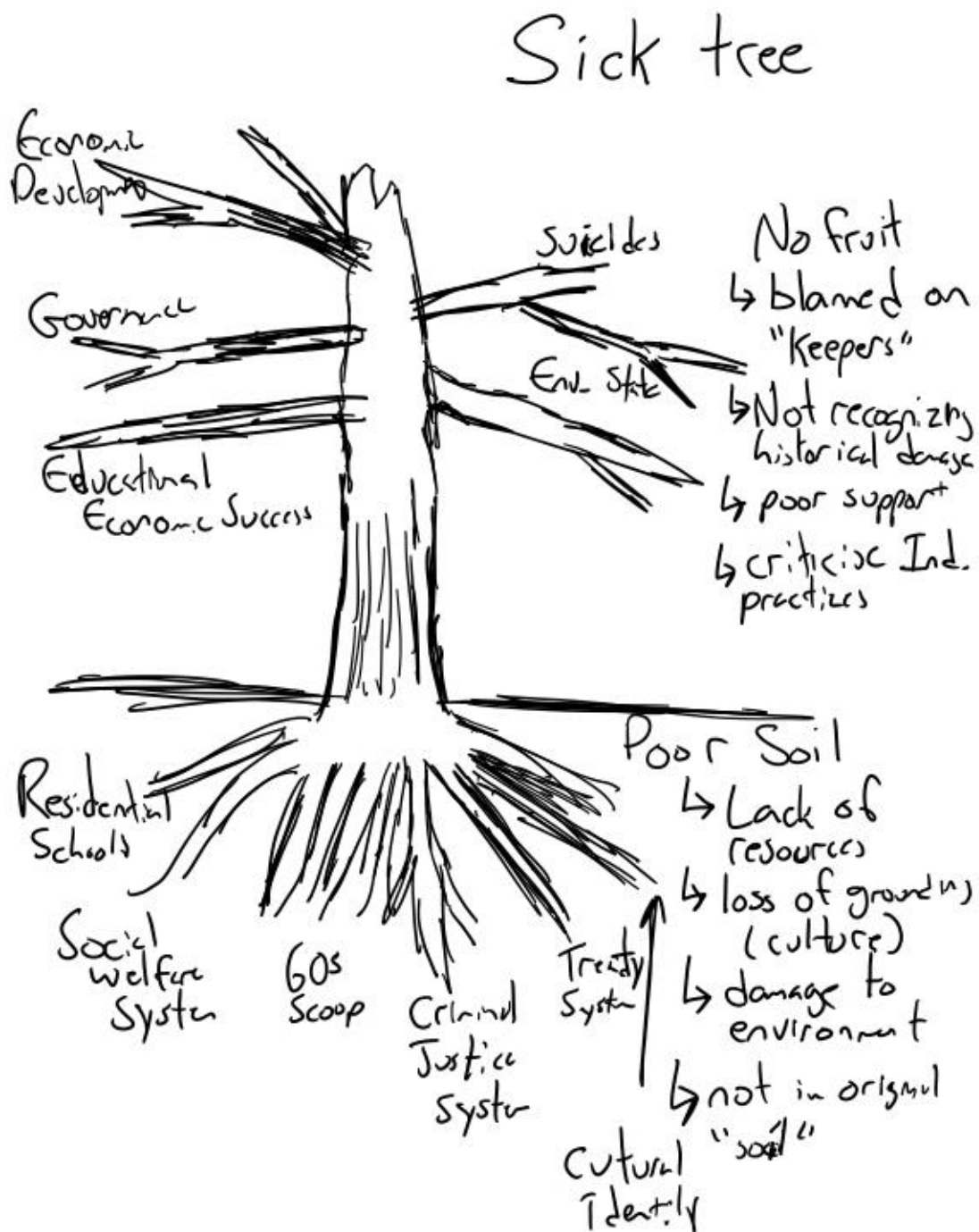


Figure 4 – Aakozi mitig (sick tree)

The roots, examined in Fig. 4, represent the hidden aspects of Indigenous society, they are the structural, social, cultural, economic, physical, and spiritual violence faced across centuries embedded in institutions of colonisation. Looking back at the discussion on coloniality of power in Chapter Four it can be inferred that these hidden consequences of colonisation are themselves rooted in colonial and patriarchal structures that exist and replicate through discourses such as liberalism and enlightenment. This chapter, and indeed this thesis, is about looking at how embedded systems are part of a larger circular cycle. The hidden aspects of Indigenous society are informed and inform the observable aspects and the silent influences.

The second section will consider the part of the tree that is observable, and the analogy within this thesis links to the ideas that this tree should bear fruit/nuts, have growth and leaves, which is all linked to the idea of conforming within the non-Indigenous society. This would be linked to ideas of success; economic, social, educational, and cultural. This section will look at observations that reflect on that 'success', the conditions that prevent 'growth', and the perceptions of Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

The observable aspects of the tree are perhaps where reconciliation takes place, Chapter 6 looked at three types of reconciliation: structural, social, and existential, as they relate to an Indigenous perspective. These next two chapters will examine, reflecting to the literature review, how reconciliation has homogenized harm and trauma within the dominant frame, essentially creating a template for examining and resolving harm in society without basing the practice of reconciliation in a cultural frame. In Canada the compartmentalisation of harm has meant that reconciliation has been piecemeal and essentially ineffective in providing Indigenous culture with a remedy. Within the concept of a tree, reconciliation could be construed as picking on branch of a tree and taking action hoping it bears fruit, not taking into account that the tree is a part of a system of interrelated and interdependent structures. The third section addresses the external factors influencing the tree. This would be the nutrients, and the care for the tree. In this section, themes examined are the reluctance for

non-Indigenous Canada to reflect on the harm caused, the compartmentalization of that harm, poor or ineffective reconciliation efforts, the chronic underfunding of the Indigenous Peoples, the stigma that Indigenous Peoples face in Canada, the structural harm that still exists, and the environment that exists to undermine Indigenous values.

This aspect of the tree is deeply embedded in coloniality and dominant discourse in society. The systems identified by Quijano; hierarchies, knowledge, and culture, serve to counteract demands for structural reform. Aspects that directly affect the wellbeing of the tree, noted in Fig. 3, play the largest role in the ability of the tree to survive and thrive. These aspects, as we have seen in Chapter 4, actively serve to harm the roots of the tree. Again, this is reflected in the discussion on coloniality as well as Coulthard's analysis of recognition examined in Chapter 5. The compartmentalised nature of reconciliation in Canada along with the a continued patriarchal attitude towards Indigenous peoples' agency has prevented a discussion on the dismantling of these apparatus and structures from taking place.

7.2 Giizhik – The Beginning

As Indigenous people our existence is our resistance
(*Black Snakes* 2017)

This chapter explains the framework for analysis that was presented in the context chapter, that reconciliation is the story of two trees. The first tree, analyzed in this chapter, is the one that currently exists. It has roots that are diseased and rotten, bears no leaves or fruit/nuts, and is poorly nourished.

Before moving on to the next section it is important for me to address two key points, first to put limitations on what I can do or say. This has to do with agency. Indigenous author, activist, comedian and storyteller Ryan McMahon reminded me of something important that I wish to convey before presenting the words of knowledge presented to me by these participants. Speaking about himself, within the context of storytelling, he noted, "I'm really aware of my limitations in terms of storytelling, so I don't speak for my nation. I don't even

“speak for my community. I suppose for my family, and for those that have asked me to speak for them” (2017). Canada Research Chair on Indigenous Languages Frank Deer noted that challenges in reconciliation have occurred because “you’ve got problems about representation. I’ve no interest to speak on behalf of anybody but myself, but there are many, many people out there who are speaking on my behalf, whether they’ve asked me or not” (2017).

My participants all tell their own stories, and the stories that those who have asked to speak for them. Another leader who participated, Leslie Spillett, noted that there are many who want to talk, or who have stories to tell that do not have the voice to speak. And some of these participants speak on behalf of those who do not yet have the voice to speak because of their place within their communities or organizations.

Second, to address the contested space in which myself, as an academic, must operate. Many of the participants noted, as Smith has, that the role of the academic is problematic at times, regarding Indigenous Peoples (1999). This role of the academy in allowing for Indigenous voices to tell their own stories was reflected by participant Leslie Spillett:

I look at my life and where... I've come to consciousness is by rejecting that colonial hierarchy of who's important and why they are important... [I]n some ways, it's based on class, but it's also, there's so many other ways to categorize or to recognize people. A lot of it has to do with the academy. One of the not good things about the academy is that people think that they become thinking that they're the experts and they are more important, because by virtue of their ability to attain that equivalence in a ... western equivalence. (Spillett 2017)

The attempt here is to not act the expert, but perhaps play the fool. The Indigenous researcher, building upon the construction of Indigenous learning outline in Chapter 2, should consider approaching their research to learn rather than explicitly validate. Goulet’s reflection mentioned in Chapter Two about approaching with relative ignorance, seeking understanding, is a salient aspect of the Indigenous researcher. To revisit the concept of the

Iroquois longhouse identified in Chapter Two, though the researcher is ‘visiting’ (researching) the same ‘place’ (knowledges) but approaching it from a different entrance (context). The research journey is a personal one, the research findings are too contextualise in one’s personal knowledge space. The findings are meant to be a reflection on what is said, rather than a deconstruction of factors that could disempower. It has been suggested by another participant that, “to me, if my auntie on the rez²⁶ can’t read your research, what good is it?” (McMahon, 2017). I have endeavored to satisfy both of those concerns, though there is the obvious caveat that this is still done within a dominant western framework of a thesis.

7.3 Aakozi Ojibik – The roots are disease

My stepfather said he never spoke Cree to me partially because of the shame he felt. At first, he never articulated the source of the shame, but a few years ago he said it was a result of his residential school experiences. He often spoke to me with a heavy heart, saying, “there are so many things I cannot express to you in English because there are only Cree words to describe what I am feeling.

Professor Lorena Sekwan Fontaine: Sagkeeng First Nation in Manitoba (Canada 2015e: 109)

Through the bravery of the survivors of residential schools, those who challenged the authority of the crown to control Indigenous lives, and those who advocate on behalf of the others who have not found a way to express their pain and that trauma and harm run deep in the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. There have been attempts to articulate the magnitude of the harm, through art, advocacy, resistance, and ceremony. What is difficult to understand is that this harm is deep, intergenerational, endemic, and across Indigenous Canadian

²⁶ This is the colloquial term for ‘reservation’. The land in which Indigenous Peoples of Canada legally occupy through their settlements with the state.

society (Chansonneuve 2005; 2007). The participants in fieldwork expressed their own challenges with the historical trauma and the struggles they face in overcoming it. Community leader James Favel noted, "I'm one of the ones that has lost the language and culture, and so I don't have those things. I'm 48 years old, I'll be 49 in November and I'm still learning (Favel)" But within this harm there are beautiful stories of triumph. Author and social entrepreneur advocate, Loney, told me a story of his step-son and his journey with his grandmother to reconnect with their language:

He doesn't know Ojibwe. His mom didn't teach him Ojibwe. It got stuck in her throat all the time. She had a dream, about 10 years ago, she's walking across a frozen lake, and inside her jacket was this yellow bird. [The dream] was just crystal clear. So, she goes to an Elder and is like, "What the hell's with the yellow bird?" She said, "Oh, that's language. Something about you're passing along the language". So, she and the grandson, my stepson, they start pounding away on learning Ojibwe. She builds her own company, which becomes an Indigenous language publishing company. (Loney 2017)

But almost all the participants noted a feeling of hope, despite the continued hardship facing the reconciliation journey for Canada. Member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, Nahanni Fontaine expressed this optimism:

It inevitably changes. It inevitably changes people, but it inevitably, in my mind, changes Canada. So, I think we have to have faith that we can make a better Canada. I have to. What's the point of doing any of this work? And again, I fundamentally believe in humanity. I really do. I always have and I always will. And I think that that's where the narrative, or the discourse on reconciliation makes a really transformative change in Peoples' lives. (Fontaine 2017)

But this change in Canadian society has been slow, and, as this section hopes to demonstrate, has not fully addressed the underlying trauma facing the Indigenous Peoples of Canada.

7.3.1 Effects of harm

There's been so much damage and hurt and trauma that's been perpetrated on the lives and spirits and bodies of Indigenous Peoples. (Fontaine 2017)

One of the main realizations that emerged from this reconciliation era is an appreciation, at least within the mechanisms that studied the effects of the Indigenous experience, for the harm projected upon the original inhabitants of this country.²⁷ It has been noted earlier in this thesis that this harm has persisted and is deeply rooted in the contemporary experience of Indigenous Peoples. Mixed within this narrative, for some participants is one of resistance to the 'colonial project':

It's those people in the community that haven't really done that aspiring to elevation based on a colonial model, that have kept the truest to the traditions around being a part of a collective, and that the power adheres in a collective. Rather than giving your power to a politician or to another party. And that's the other thing, is that the whole relationship and the assimilation process has created people who are dependent. There's a sense of dependence. (Spillett 2017)

Throughout this chapter these themes of reflection upon resistance, frameworks of understanding, and programs designed to harm Indigenous Peoples appear again and again. Spillett's reflection on this in the previous excerpt notes all three of these narratives. The idea that resistance to that colonial model, something that even happened at residential schools, allowed for the continued existence of Indigenous culture, and that these two cultures are having a fundamental clash of ideology.

²⁷ These two mechanisms would be the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People (1995) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015)

This ideology interplay has been at work since first contact, but within the reconciliation context of contemporary Canada it has been a debate that happens on the personal level.

For me, reconciliation needs to begin with myself, right, so that I can reconcile that I am good. I am okay. And I'm saying I as in the generic I. Like, I'm okay. The stuff that we've been fed for generations and generations ... To learn to be able to kind of deconstruct that and reject that, that I'm okay. I'm okay as an Indigenous person. I'm okay with my brown skin. I'm okay. There is so much internalized colonialism that we just, we loathe ourselves, right? So combined, compounded with all this trauma and the way people deal with trauma ... So, I really do think that we have to come internally, within ourselves, to a place where we forgive ourselves. Right? Forgive ourselves for actions and behaviors and activities that we've participated in, which I would argue in most cases is predicated upon this colonial, inter-generational trauma. Right. (Fontaine 2017)

The challenge that individuals face to negotiate their own identity within the dominant frame that has disempowered them is something reflected in the personal anecdotes of the participants lives:

Yeah, you know what my dad got? Dead at 34. I met him when I was 15, he was gone by the time I was 17. Died at 34 years old, alcoholism, kidney transplant, diabetes. My mom used to tell me that my dad would sit in his bedroom and stare at the ceiling for days on end, waiting for the next time he'd get a cheque, so he could go drink. (Favel 2017)

Favel's reflection is also a reflection of myself, as noted in the Introduction chapter; I have a similar story about my own father. His death at an early age was not without consequence on my life, but not in a positive way. His shame and disconnect that manifested in alcoholism and violence resulted in the projection beyond his own life, into that of his wife and children. These narratives are not isolated and the TRC commission had thousands of accounts of survivors listing their history of trauma for public record.

Speaking about attending the TRC, McMahon noted “I attended three of the national events, and they were so hard to sit through, and really, really difficult to witness, but at the same time, you're witnessing people on stage just baring their souls and their wounds and their damage” (2017). McMahon notes that these moments of reflection on trauma also gave rise to moments of resistance, one anecdote framed in this dual mode centres around the children tricking a priest to lock them into the kitchen, where they ate as much food as they could until the ruse was discovered and punished (McMahon 2017).

But this trauma, despite the resistance of some, has manifested in deep-seeded anger that does not have a face. This generic anger often presents and manifests in animosity towards those closest to them. At a celebration of the work that his organization had done, James Favel reflected upon both what had been lost by the trauma, and how that loss manifested in his own family,

And so, one of the things that really struck me since I've started working with Bear Clan, it's great. One of the things that it's allowed me to do is to work with the Filipino community first, with the Islamic community, and IRCOM (Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba), I got to work with those people over there. And one thing that strikes me about all that is their families are still intact, they still have their language, the East Indian, the Asians, they all have their language, they all have their culture and their families are intact. I see them, I was at the Islamic Social Services Association (of Manitoba) gave us the Ihsan award this spring. And I see them and they're hugging, they're loving and caring to one another.

And I know personally, and in my family, that there's jealousy, you have this, and your cousin doesn't, and they get pissed off and then there's infighting and things like that. And that's because of the destruction of our families. And again, everything I think comes back to that a lot, that was part of their mandate, was to destroy our family, destroy our language, destroy our culture, take all of those things away from us. When I see these other communities and how they act together, it shows me that that's what we need to get back. (Favel 2017)

This journey through the pain is not just one at the community level, but also at the personal level within many of the participants:

I think I self-medicated with booze, and drugs. That's what I filled that hole with. I see a healthier youth population now. I see young people very different than people 20 years ago, as a young person. Then on the complete opposite end of the spectrum, I still see many of our communities stuck in these third world conditions that ... There's this first world reality and third world reality, and it's like either/or right now, and I think that's really dangerous. (McMahon 2017)

But still, as seen in McMahon's reflection above, this pain and trauma crosses communities. This pain does not have a single point of origin, and often perpetuates itself by manifesting in different capacities. The ability for the community, and the individual to deal with that harm is limited, as we will see in the next section, by the modes with which this colonial project disempowered the cultural traditions, institutions, and capacities of the Indigenous Peoples.

7.3.2 Disempower traditions

So, this Indian agent named William Graham. He's like ... the date escapes me, but something like 1880 to 1930. It was a long time. They had total control over First Nations. He took 12 kids, boys, from residential school. Twelve girls. Force-married them, and separated them from their families, and gave them plots of land on First Nations. He wasn't coughing up more land than they already had. And turned them into farmers. It was like a very Aryan-like kind of approach.

So, these Indian agents had an incredible amount of influence. They didn't have much confidence that First Nations could do anything for themselves. They administered a system that repressed their own economies and enhanced the economic activity off the First Nation. That system is still in place today. I firmly believe that INAC (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada) is a remnant that grew out of the role of Indian agents in the beginning. (Loney 2017)

Part of the colonial project was to discredit and dismantle the traditions and culture of the Indigenous People (RCAP; TRC 2016). This was done within the idea of cultural superiority of the colonizers, but it was empowered by the structural mechanisms, such as legislation that arrived with colonization. These mechanisms, along with programs such as the residential schools, created a longstanding outcome wherein cultural identity was challenged and disempowered. This was done to reflect that superiority, but to also expedite the obligation and challenge to the new dominion:

And that's how we divide ourselves as well, by believing in that stuff, because we have been colonized in significant ways, but to recognize everybody's value and recognizing that people have to reclaim their own power, because that was a part of the colonial project, was to create ... It's embedded in the *Indian Act*, like we're the Queen's children. (Spillett 2017)

This idea of Indigenous People being children is present in today, the language of the *Indian Act* and many of the treaties reflects the notion that the Indigenous Peoples are 'wards of the state', incapable of making decisions for themselves. What followed this was the rationale that Indigenous culture was inferior, and that their framework of understanding was not of consequence in the new 'Canada'. This reduction of Indigenous capacity has reduced their ability to combat and resist the colonial structures. What was once their strength, was now seen as their weakness:

So many of our stories actually speak to our law, our governance structures, and inter-nation treaties and things that were signed between Indigenous Peoples long before anyone else was here. When you disempower people legally, it allows to call in question the validity of oral traditions or oral culture as a means of governance or law. (McMahon 2017)

The legal disempowerment that McMahon is discussing is exemplified by the *Indian Act*, policies like the reservation system and the residential school system. Daman Johnston, an

Indigenous Elder and organization leader, says these attitudes “are still sustained today in the *Indian Act* and the legislation. That, in the end they have the final say. The chief and council need their permission” (Johnston, 2017). In contemporary times this is again manifested in structures: the recent change to the transparency of the Indigenous governments enacted by the Conservative policy ‘First Nations Financial Transparency Act’. Policies like this limit the extent to which Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians ‘trust’ the Indigenous People to govern themselves, within their own cultural framework.

This undermines to the ability of Indigenous culture to satisfy the challenges of the ‘modern’ world assumes that Indigenous needs are the same as that world, which again denies their unique framework:

We know how to take care of our self, we always did. We were as healthy of societies as any that have ever lived on this earth. We're not perfect. But we, we didn't need that technological change to continue living, no not for a minute. So, it was brought to us, and then we were attacked.
(Johnston 2017)

This disempowerment of traditions has meant that current grass-roots reconciliation efforts have faced challenges in proving the ‘worth’ of Indigenous Peoples within contemporary society:

And so again, with Bear Clan, that's one of the things that we're trying to demonstrate, is that these people that we work with, they have greater capacity than what they're being told that they can have. I said it in an interview I did, that I said there's this X amount of jobs that are available out there, if you don't fit into that paradigm, you're out. There's nothing for you. You're sidelined, you're marginalized. But you've got all kinds of people that have got all kinds of skills in our community. Gardening, drum making, beating, all kinds of artists and things like that. And they're all fucking poor, they all got skills but they're poor because nobody values that. (Favel 2017)

It creates a vicious cycle, one that is intended to prevent the realization of the potential of Indigenous values in the contemporary world. Several scholars reflect that this cycle included aspects of shame (Partridge 2010: 51; Chrisjohn, Young, and Maraun 2006: 33), and harm and self-harm (Aguilar and Halseth 2015) that result in a cycle of historical abuse (Denham 2008; Nutton and Fast 2015). The harm has reduced the traditions and culture to allow Indigenous Canadians to express themselves within broader society as 'equals', while improving the position of the rhetoric that their old ways are capable of negotiating contemporary society. This vicious cycle manifests repeatedly across the breadth of the history, post-colonization:

Yeah but it's not possible for us to move on when our families are destroyed generationally and we're still dealing with that. We still have parents raising children that weren't properly raised by their own parents because their own parents weren't properly raised by their own parents, and they were taken into foster situations where the people who were supposed to be caring for them, [they] fucking abused them, treated them miserably, so now they revisit that back on their children, because that's the only fucking way they know. (Favel 2017)

This reality is perceived as part-and-parcel with the agenda set out by the colonial project: disempower the traditions, reduce the perceived capacity of the people, reflect on a notion of superiority, and then offer the opportunity to join this superior society without their historical 'baggage'. This agenda was adopted through policies design to facilitate it, "stripping our lands and destroying it, forced removals. What fucking idiot thought about that" (Favel, 2017).

Many of the participants were clear that the Indigenous way was not superior, but appropriate for their worldview. One that existed prior to contact and still resonates within the hearts of many Indigenous Peoples:

A Pacific Elder [was] asked him how long have you been here, and he says, “well they say we've been here for 60000 years, but it's been much longer than that. We come directly from the dreamtime of the creator's ancestors”, we kept it as it was on the first day. And that's worth aspiring to in my mind, that's what I would aspire to, not these monuments to men, not these permanent civilizations that cause all the pollution and the degradation of the lands and things like that. I would much prefer to live wild and free. (Favel 2017)

This idea of a different way of engaging with our world and environment was reflected in other participants as well. They spoke of a notion that community, central to this worldview, was under attack in a clash of civilizations:

So, to me, for me, I'm gonna say this in a very awkward way, but to me that power adheres in the community and you can't ... and you have to, that's where that ... And that's why there's such an assault. So that the western world gives a lot of attention to people that mirror their values and really demonizes the people in the community. (Spillett 2017)

This idea of community playing a vital role within the ideology of Indigenous identity is something that emerges in several of the participants. That attack has not only happened within the political and social sphere but is rooted in an ‘academic’ frame that occurred, as Smith (1999) describes, at the moment of first contact. She noted that there was an immediate attempt to catalogue and categorize Indigenous Peoples within the frame of the explorers. This deconstruction sought not to understand the phenomena expressed within its own cultural context but, rather, to place it in opposition and dissect it through the ‘discoverers’ conceptual framework:

When you were talking about these years and decades and millennia of becoming something, they want to put it into things like the seven sacred teachings and apply that generally to everybody. Like an algebra formula is appropriate for every western culture, but ours also has to fit into those kinds of things. (Spillett 2017)

Once the process of deconstruction began, so to started the process of disempowering and discrediting the Peoples attached to those cultures:

One of the things is around the part of the colonial mindset is that somehow, we are not fully human, or we're not fully developed. And all of that, our spirituality, which is understood in such a different way than a western somebody would understand spirituality, but that it always comes back to ... I think that's still very prominent, just in the mainstream culture, is that somehow, we're still not fully developed and yeah, so it always bends towards assimilation, the reconciliation that they're ... If it reflects their values, then it must be good. If they don't understand it, then it must be not good. (Spillett 2017)

The by-product of this would, as we have noted, manifest in policies and practices. Every attempt was made to 'save the savage' from their own ways. What would emerge from this perhaps the most destructive of all to Indigenous societies, the residential school system. A practice considered to be part of a "cultural genocide" (Canada 2015a: 1; Haskell and Randall 2009; Mitchell and Maracle 2005; Neu and Therrien 2003; Kendall 2001; Martin 2013).

7.3.3 Effects of the residential schools

And still to this day, he harbors so much hatred and resentment towards our grandmother, his mother, because she had no control over him going into residential school. She went to residential school too, but she had no control, and then all these things happened, and then all this stuff happened in the community. So, you know, the family is broken as well, and when you try to talk to him about, look, this is a consequence of all of that. (Fontaine 2017)

The effects of the trauma of residential schools are not unique insofar as the consequences of the program, but more so the extent at which the state persisted with the practice, from 1870 to 1996, as a means of "killing the Indian" (Canada 2015e: 84), to "save the man"

(Pratt in Canada 2015a: 137). It was a widespread effort that saw over 150,000 children taken from their families and culture, and educated in a foreign manner, often without their language, or peers (Canada 2015a: 1). Unpacking the outcomes of this program has been difficult, despite the efforts of the TRC. This is because the trauma of the experience is deeply embedded within the Indigenous communities. The TRC, though it offered an outlet, only highlighted this depth:

There are thousands, hundreds of thousands of people who never came forward during the process at all, who weren't ready with their own, you know maybe five generations of their family who went to residential school. Headed on whatever healing journey they're on were at that time in that window of time when they were accepting applications not ready to give their statements.

People are still giving their statements to the NCTR now who weren't ready during the TRC who weren't ready either emotionally or physically or mentally or in any capacity ready to give a statement or provide their statement or sit in front of an adjudicator and go detailed through their accounts of abuse. So, in that way it was a very western format. Was a very Western legal, government format that you had to fit into and if you didn't... (Logan 2017)

While the TRC did its best to provide an environment for Indigenous People to talk about their trauma, participants noted that it was not enough to just offer one venue, because the perceived threat from non-Indigenous society was so strong. It was difficult to trust the process of reconciliation because the underlying structures had not changed at all:

We're afraid. I mean, I see a lot of people that are afraid of hurting. I mean, god, we live in a colonial context. You can see it and feel it in so many ways and certainly in Winnipeg, and we've also seen a lot of people trying to do things, like taking on different projects, but if it's not about power and control, if it's not about recognizing that the colonial project, including the residential school was to remove power and control from Indigenous people, then reconciliation has to be the antidote to that. There has to be.

You can't treat [without] medicine; you can't cure something without an appropriate response. (Spillett 2017)

The depth to which the residential school experience affected Indigenous Peoples was reflected by the participants. It created lasting harm for Indigenous Peoples that were difficult to overcome. Fontaine noted that the TRC and the apology, “kind of, it opens up all these wounds. Even if you didn't go to residential school, you're mourning your family, you're mourning all of our communities, you're mourning the atrocities that happened” (2017). This mourning is reflected in the duality of the response to reconciliation, this will be discussed in greater length in the third section of this chapter, but what it meant was that the healing journey could be very different for communities and individuals, some were more able to rebuild their culture and traditions, while others languished with the harm that had pervaded across over a century, and, as noted by Spillett and Fontaine above, had not changed the dominant culture with which this reconciliation was occurring in.

Examining this, McMahon noted:

I really think there's two kind of realities out there. Like today, I was just in a roomful of 25 young, vibrant storytellers who were just starting out on their academic journey. I looked in the room, and the mix of kids that are from the Rez, from urban spaces ... and some of them are raised with language culture, some of them not, but what is important to them today is the culture, language, and what their ... that hole in their heart that I'm sure you grew up with, I know I grew up with, that hole in their heart, that's what colonialism does. It's heartbreaking. It breaks your heart. (McMahon 2017)

There is a sense that some of the effects of the residential school are hidden, even from the survivors and their children. These effects manifest in ways that are not directly associated or attributed to their experience. Psychiatrist Charles Brasfield noted that the use of the diagnostic term *residential school syndrome* is becoming increasingly prevalent in survivors and their families (2001: 78). Affected individuals exhibit many of the same symptoms of

PTSD. Within their own lives they suffer from detachment and relationship problem, as well as “diminished interest and participation in aboriginal cultural activities and markedly deficient knowledge of traditional culture and skills” (Brasfield 2001: 79). Also, as a direct consequent there is lack of parenting skills due to their attendance of the residential school as a proxy for contact with parents (Brasfield 2001: 79). Ryan McMahon said that the apology unearthed emotions and understandings that some of the survivors had not anticipated:

Lee Maracle also says this in *Colonization Road*, in my film, she says her dad needed white people to tell him that it wasn't his fault. My grandmother, that was almost the exact same experience. She needed to hear that she was a good person, and that was not responsible for her not being a great mom. She needed to hear that this is the damage that the residential school did. I guess she had never framed her experience in that way before. (McMahon 2017)

But the residential school was just one of the tools used to harm Indigenous Peoples and present a legacy, one that undermines the roots of this tree of reconciliation. For many the effects of abuse, disempowerment, and colonization will have no remedy so long as the structures exist to perpetuate that harm.

7.3.4 The Effects of structures

Yeah, there's so many [laws and policies], but if you look at the whole *Indian Act* with respect to its impact on Indigenous women and reconciliation from that lens, as an active reconciliation, so Canada says that they have human rights based on gender, blah, blah, blah, but the *Indian Act* has discriminated against Indian women since the beginning, since its inception. Now we're all talking reconciliation, but this government, this Indian Affairs Minister, refuses to change ... I mean, they continue to refuse to change the *Indian Act* to eliminate discrimination and repair that damage, because that was a huge ... that was one example of a huge, huge damage that this colonial project has. (Spillett 2017)

The structures that were created to perpetuate harm upon Indigenous Peoples have not given way. They exist in policies and actions of successive governments, often entrenched in a national psyche that sees Canada as a nation where Indigenous People have increasingly lived in harmony, their cultural rights protected. In the quote above, Spillett highlights one of the primary areas where control over Indigenous lives is still expressed. The *Indian Act* has served not only to define and control Indigenous Peoples, but also to disempower them, especially women. It is just part of a series of structures that were there early in the relationship with Indigenous People and persist:

In order to promote economic reconciliation, the federal government needs to move away from ... Recognize the role of an Indian agent. Recognize what parts of that are common still today, and to address it in the bureaucracy. Because the civil servants, they act in a very different way than government. Government says, we want reconciliation. Trudeau²⁸ says, the most important relationship to me is the one with Indigenous people, but none of that means anything to an Indian agent. (Loney 2017)

These structures have been criticized as being paternalistic, and their presence in that frame continues to harm all the attitudes, behaviors, and structures towards all Indigenous Peoples. Damon Johnston noted that the “*Indian Act*... [is] a construct that is paternalistic, that is colonial that is parental. We are the children and they need to take care of us” (2017). It creates a false identity for Indigenous Peoples, based on the expectations and interpretations of non-Indigenous society. Spillett says that its existence, and the attitudes perpetuated within it harm the potential for healing.

The policies, such as the *Indian Act*, are deliberately non-inclusive, and do not reflect the historical identity of Indigenous Culture, but that of a society that values individualism and competition over collective identity and values. She states that, “What does reconciliation

²⁸ Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada in 2017

mean if it doesn't mean ending discrimination against women? Which is what they say, "We don't discriminate. We're opposed to discrimination based on gender" (Spillett).

But the *Indian Act*, and the policies set up to support it, including chief and band control of Indigenous affairs by proxy, have specific language designed to disempower women. In many respects, this reflects the continued battle between resistance and colonization:

There was no other options in there and in thinking of our grandmothers and our grandfathers, even just by acknowledging grandmothers and rural Indigenous women have played in the survival of our people, of me, is a part of that resistance, because if you look at how patriarchy and how identity has been so compromised and in terms of Indigenous women and the roles of Indigenous women, that any ... That women who assert anything in terms of their agency or their power is an act of resistance. (Spillett 2017)

These structures, below the surface, are the roots of this idea of reconciliation as living and growing. The ability of the tree to flourish is not just hindered by the activity we see, but the base that we don't see. These 'hidden' structures support any growth, and reconciliation that doesn't account for remedy of their state is not reconciliation but an exercise in futility. This hidden mechanism for impacting on Indigenous Peoples fits with Galtung and Höivik's definition of structural violence (1971). Their definition of structural violence is framed with how one dies, slowly and broadly without violence (1971: 73). They suggest that one mode for identifying structural violence in a society is the disparity in life expectancy between social groups (1971: 74-75). In Canada, Indigenous Peoples have a lower life expectancy than non-Indigenous Canadians (Michalowski et al. 2005). Recent reports have suggested that it could be as much as 15 years less than the national average (The Canadian Press 2018). Johnston summarizes the suggestion of structural violence, noting:

And then when you start to quantify the damage that has been done to individuals and families, to nations, tribes, whatever you want to call them Including the Métis, including the Inuit. When you start to quantify the

damage. It becomes very clear here the cost is, beyond imagination. It's so huge, it is almost insurmountable. And the people that have already left us now, are gone, because of all of that. And the suicide and all those things that are direct outcome of these, this legislation, policies, and structure. It's almost ongoing. (Johnston 2017)

This deep trauma is a factor in inhibiting wellbeing, regardless of ideological framework. Indigenous values and customs have been eroded to the point where huge investments of time and effort are needed to rebuild them (Spillett). Dealing with that trauma has been a primary concern of the reconciliation program, backed by medical and academic outputs.²⁹ But the next section will examine the problems with those practices, namely they are still primarily offered through a colonial lens (Spillett 2017; McMahon 2017; Johnston 2017). As the discussion on the hidden aspects of the tree are concluded the dialogue will shift to the visible aspects. Reconciliation in Canada has been an attempt to acknowledge the visible aspects of harm and trauma. Indigenous peoples and academics had drawn parallels to the effects of harm and trauma to these consequences. This builds upon that discussion by contextualising harm within the framework of the visible aspects of the tree.

7.4 Bangiishenhwagiziwag gaaskibag – Few dry leaves

There are so much worse things out there than the last 150 years. We're talking about today: hungry children., we're talking about a CFS system on the brink of collapse because there are so many Native kids involved in CFS. We're talking about an estimated 4,000 missing and murdered Indigenous women. (McMahon 2017)

Framing reconciliation within the construct of a tree is helpful because it looks at the relationship between all the elements of the tree³⁰ as something that has multiple points of

²⁹ See the opening statements of the TRC and RCAP (2015; 1996), the Statement of apology to former students of Indian Residential Schools (Canada 2008); Söchting et al 2007: 320 offers a short literature review on trauma within the medical discourse

³⁰ As well as reconciliation and Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations.

input. It also reflects on something that is dynamic, evolving, and changing. The previous section sought to establish some Indigenous perspectives on the legacy of harm. This harm, viewed through the framework of the tree, is a sickness in the roots. When a tree's roots are diseased it cannot thrive, no matter the support or hope/expectations. Those desired outcomes, that the tree will grow and flourish, are not informed by Indigenous understandings of reconciliation with that harm, but non-Indigenous expectations of the reconciliation project.

7.4.1 Need for fruit (results)

One of the challenges facing Indigenous Peoples in Canada is the expectation to think, act, produce, and persist within it. Indigenous people are often called lazy, uneducated, or worse. The refusal to accept both that Indigenous Peoples often operate under a different worldview, one that is less connected with the accumulation of capital, and that Indigenous people's harm from the colonizing experience is deep and endemic. Spillett reflects on this attitude and the challenges that it presents:

Somehow, we're blamed for our own misery. Like we drink too much or ...
That lens on framing how Indigenous have survived in a colonial project by
just now blaming everything for their individual failings, or family failings or
whatever nation had failings, I guess like that, or guess that. (Spillett 2017)

This has led some to question reconciliation itself. It has often been associated with the act of forgetting (Green 2012) and less about healing and remedy. It has been criticized, even in the form of transitional justice, for being top down. This top down approach is no different than attitudes of superiority that have persisted since contact:

The idea is that reconciliation is actually dangerously close to
recolonization. If we don't get it right, whatever that means, that's it. We
have one kick at the can here. Whatever we end up with at the end of the
day when this reconciliation effort is over is going to be what this country
will become. I just think that's such a dangerous idea, and such a hard

truth to battle with, that the need to center Indigenous voices becomes tantamount to anything we do, because, goddamn it, we're not going to have this chance to do it again. We're not going to have a do-over.

(McMahon 2017)

McMahon expresses what many Indigenous Peoples feel, that reconciliation sounds great, conceptually, and that if Indigenous people do not get 'on board' they face being ostracized under the same frame that called them lazy or 'lesser-than'. Survivor Theodore Fontaine said these attitudes persisted within him well after leaving the residential school, his experiences of being told he would not achieve what a 'normal' non-Indigenous Canadian could achieve because of his race left him with an internal dialogue surrounding inadequacy and self-worth (2011: 181) These attitudes mean that Indigenous people are squeezed from both sides, the force of reconciliation moving them forward (as the civilizing experience did) and the failure to overcome the trauma due to a lack of substantive reconciliation. When 'reconciliation' happens without substantive action and support, it means that old adages and attitude towards Indigenous Peoples are normalized, and codified as a truth:

The cynical me says, "Well, that's the design of it and it was purposefully designed," because that still belief is in Indigenous people, unless they are just doing what we do every day, don't ... can't raise children, they can't raise families, because the value systems are imposed on Indigenous communities living in poverty mostly. I mean, there's an economic element as well to this, and rather than the state saying, "Hey, this is not working," and somebody at some point ... There are times when children have to be removed from their parents, but for the most part, I mean, we have 11,000 children right now under state care and most of them are being, again, most of them are raised outside of our culture and it's just yet another generation of children who are lost and who have no idea about who they are, and rather than saying, "Okay, we're going to invest that money in communities, in community development, in families," like giving people opportunities to ... If my child is raised by a third party, they get money for it, but if ... I don't get money to raise my children. So, it's really around reproductive justice, is that not only do we have the right to have children,

but we have the right to expect that this society will help raise children. It does take a ... People always say those kinds of things, "It takes a village," but they don't mean it. (Spillett 2017)

What Spillett is saying is that the state still endorses colonizing action, the child welfare system being one. And they do this under the justification that Indigenous people are not good enough to do it themselves. They cannot be trusted to raise their own children, forgetting that it was their system that created that perceived gap. Indigenous Peoples face a catch-22 scenario, wherein their demand for self-accountability is faced with the expectation of perfection:

The other thing is, is that we have ... We don't know everything. We are picking up the pieces and we're gonna make mistakes, but we are held at such a higher level of [expectations]. Yeah, I don't know. I just think it's a part of the systemic racism that that exists. Somehow if an Indian makes a mistake, it's a big deal. (Spillett 2017)

This relates to the expectation in society that Indigenous people be perfect. The colonizing spirit preloads opinions of failure. These attitudes are hard to break without true reconciliation. But the reconciliation that exists is a doppelganger for that true reconciliation. This is problematic because Indigenous Peoples face expectations that are not present in non-Indigenous society.³¹ Their status as 'wards' of the state³², children who need to be protected from themselves, makes the threshold for 'success' perceptibly higher. Palmater examined contemporary policies against historical ones and concluded "the old policy of treating Indigenous Peoples as wards of the state continues as INAC makes unilateral decisions about their individual and communal lives often without consultation. The recent

³¹ The most recent example of this was *Bill C-575: First Nations Financial Transparency Act*. This was designed to force Indigenous nations to adhere to a level of open scrutiny in everyday governance that no level of non-Indigenous government in Canada was.

³² This concept of 'wards' of the state also occurred during the patriation of the Constitution in 1980. Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau did not have the right to consultation or consent as they were, "wards of the state, not agents of their own national futures" (Herbert 2019: 572)

bills introduced in the House before the last federal election are a prime example of this” (2011: 123). But as noted in the Context chapter, reconciliation has not provided the tools for success, nor accounted for the unconscious biases of those who are judging.

7.4.2 Not dealing with the conditions that prevent wellbeing

Part of the problem with short-sighted, under-delivered reconciliation is that it creates a system that cannot perform as expected. This is by design, according to the participants: “So, it's one thing to talk about an apology. It's one thing to talk about kind of reconciliation, but still have the conditions in place, those systemic conditions in place that guarantee that reconciliation isn't gonna happen” (Fontaine 2017). Reconciliation has not eliminated the systemic conditions preventing Indigenous Peoples from achieving even the lofty standards that non-Indigenous peoples have for them. These systemic conditions create a lack of opportunity for success. Poverty that is endemic for Indigenous Peoples is seen as reducing the opportunity to succeed, “Yeah. Well, that's what poverty is, it takes away your choices” (Loney 2017). This means that ‘bad’ choices are often the only choices:

And I'm always speaking about this, but the vast majority of women who are sexually exploited, even though they're adults, the vast majority of them were first sexually exploited as children. And so, you're groomed and pushed and pulled into sexual expectations. So, it's ... You know, it's this fallacy that yeah, yeah, I'm choosing to be a sex trade worker. Nobody does. No little girl when they're ten wants to be, “Yeah, I think I'm gonna be a prostitute”. Like yeah, no. (Fontaine 2017)

The overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples in social, economic, and cultural conditions viewed in a negative light comes from the lack of opportunity that has been afforded to them. Chronic poverty, for instance, was a condition “originally created and now sustained by federal policy” (Palmer 2011: 123). But it is the role of reconciliation to help Indigenous people overcome those conditions, and as long as reconciliation does not take a maximalist

approach, it cannot be successful.³³ And Indigenous Peoples are not taking their 'shortcomings' lightly, the attitudes of self-worth and capacity that have emerged from centuries of disempowerment pervade in how they feel about these social challenges and inform the choices they make:

Again, we're always coming up against the barriers to education, we're always coming up against the barriers to employment. A lot of those are self-inflicted wounds because you get frustrated, and that was my problem too. Why would I sit in class for six hours, listening to this guy fucking talk when I go and sell fucking hash and make 200 dollars in a day when I'm 16. (Favel 2017)

As Loney noted, being in poverty means that you have less choices, but the attitudes of Canadians towards Indigenous Peoples mean the pressure is higher, and the consequences greater. The result of poverty and harm are social systems overrepresented by Indigenous Peoples, the antecedent is non-Indigenous people's sponsorship of harmful policies and the lack of forms of support:

Yes, 70 percent of the inmates at Stony Mountain correctional institution are Indigenous. Why is that? We've got 11,000 kids in care, why is that? They'll give Filipino family 900 dollars a month per child to take care of our kids, but they won't do that for us. We still got to struggle, and then that's part of the problem, that's one of the things that I see as part of the problem. They haven't properly addressed the EIA³⁴ rates, so anybody that's on the EIA, you've got Indigenous people that have various

³³ Minimalist versions of reconciliation are concerned with the reestablishment of the least levels of recognition of the underlying political, social, cultural, or economic causes of conflict or harm within society. It tends to ignore calls for forgiveness and social cohesion (Dwyer 1999). This is also framed as realist or realistic standards of reconciliation within transitional justice frames (Waldorf 2009). Maximalist forms of reconciliation are associated with frameworks set out by those like Desmond Tutu, focusing on restorative justice, restoring relations, and positive social and personal relations (2000). This is often associated with religious forms of reconciliation (Philpott 2012).

³⁴ Employment Income Assistance

employment, various education, and then they're relying on the social services to support them, and they're failing. (Favel 2017)

Despite the recognition that colonial attitudes still exist, and they are harmful not only towards Indigenous Peoples directly, but also harmful towards non-Indigenous expectations of Indigenous Peoples. These attitudes are informed by the lack of awareness for the depth of Indigenous trauma, but are also the result of national mythmaking and the othering that occurred since contact and colonization:

I have a lot of people who say, "How can you live on the rez? You can't hunt and fish, or you can't do this". I'm like, "Hey, you know, that's not your problem. Your problem is the fact that you owe us money. That's the real problem here. Don't come to us and be concerned about something you know nothing about, because we've trusted your capacity to understand our culture in the past, and it's got it wrong. We don't all play lacrosse. We don't all live in teepees. So, let's forget about that. You are not the expert. What you are the expert of is taking money and dividing money up, and now it's time to bring some of that money back". (McMahon 2017)

Smith directly confronts this reality (1999). Other academics have echoed this mentality of external experts who project their unstated biases upon Indigenous Peoples. This is discussed in the Chapter 2. The histories that have been written by these experts further entrench colonial myths and fail to account for the damages, Spillett:

It's like having a bomb explode, that's what happened, the colonial project was like a bomb exploding and that we are even beginning to ... I mean, when you ... The aftermath of that is such that we're just kind of beginning to pick up things and try to understand things, so it's so hard to say, "Well, this is what ... this is the recipe". People want a recipe of what you can do, but it's ... And then if we fail to say, "Well, this is this, this, this, this, and this," they give them the recipe, then it's somehow, we still don't know what even we want. (Spillett 2017)

The participants often recognize that the priorities of reconciliation are out of sync with the reality. These priorities use institutions that are known for being paternalistic and colonial as mechanisms to enforce their norms, rather than decolonize them. The lack of a balanced perspective on what is needed is problematic because it limits the choices for Indigenous Peoples by presenting them with the dream of reconciliation, a reality that is out of reach, thus preserving the dreamlike status of reconciliation. Funding is recognized as a major barrier for achieving that dream, and those colonial, paternal institutions are reinforced to barricade progress:

There's more kids being taken away from their families, as we speak.
There's Indigenous men being incarcerated. There's Indigenous women on the streets, being exploited. Those things could double, triple in size.
Governments would say, "Here's more money for police. Here's more money for seizing more kids. Here's more money to buy fossil fuels".
They're obsessed and addicted to problems. (Loney 2017)

This section discusses how external attitudes inform reconciliation, and these attitudes reflect what the participants see in contemporary Canadian society. Reconciliation is hamstrung by the lack of political will. There is a lack of understanding on behalf of the Canadian public, and old attitudes are reinforced through the idea of reconciliation without attention to the process of it. To overcome the challenges of expectations there needs to be pushback on how Indigenous people are perceived, something that is problematic even to Indigenous Peoples at times:

I was really entrenched into that way of thinking. Canadiana, my dad's very patriotic, so we were very patriotic. I was brought through the public-school system, to believe a certain way towards Indigenous people. My own people. I didn't see myself a part of that. (Adams 2017)

7.4.3 Perceptions

Yeah, that's exactly when you go into dealing with the system on begins its investigation against you. They attach a risk management assessment protocol to your file, and they ask you questions about your history and your present, who you are and how, you know, your, your history. As a person who grew up in a home with damaged people, you're going to answer those questions honestly. You're going to say, yes. I, I grew up in violence. There was addiction, there was this, there was that, um, that immediately elevates your risk of apprehension to the highest level based on your history (Spence 2017).

A lot of these challenges are to do with how Indigenous people are perceived. The colonization project was informed out of imperialist, colonial, and paternalistic thinking that saw non-Indigenous society as superior. Woods discussed how groups entrenched in that mode of thought see their efforts as a sacred enterprise (2013). It is difficult for non-Indigenous people to overcome their perceptions because they are built-in to society, in a Foucauldian sense. Indigenous people are still beset with difficulties empowering their own mode of thought, their autonomy, and their capacity:

They don't trust us to be able to look after our own selves, that they don't trust us that our knowledge and our ways of acquiring that knowledge are legitimate. So, there's a ... Trust is not for us to trust them, that they're ... (Spillett 2017)

Participants noted interactions with non-Indigenous Canadians that reinforced this reality:

One day, she said to me, "You know what, I had no idea natives were so normal". I said, what? She says, "Everything that I see or read outside of your family, of course, everything I see and read about Indigenous people are negative, because in the newspaper, they're talking about CFS, kids being apprehended, drugs, drug dealers, gang members. Then when you're on the streets, the people that you see on the streets are begging for money. You go in a parking lot, somebody's asking you for money, and

they're Indigenous". She said, "I never see the side where they're going to work, making a living, they have a mortgage, they're paying taxes". She doesn't see that. Of course, I know that. She doesn't know that. How would she? She doesn't get exposed to it. I knew I wanted to do a piece that showed the other side that no one ever sees. (Adams 2017)

These lessons that have been taught through formal and informal learning vectors: schools, institutions, homes, cultural norms, and contact, reflect the true work to be done in reconciliation. This is what participants mean by 'social reconciliation'. This is the unseen reconciliation that is not encapsulated in apologies, truth commissions, or settlement money. Yet despite being unseen its effects are pervasive and palpable:

Do you really want to take the temperature of reconciliation in this country?
Go to a small town anywhere. I guarantee you it is not being talked about
in the Tim Horton's³⁵, you know? (McMahon 2017)

Even in institutions like universities that are increasingly declared decolonized, or recent immigrants to Canada, the social reconciliation that is needed to inform perceptions has a long road:

Yeah, and what is to me, trust is a, "Oh, we want you to trust us," but they don't trust us, because there's still that fear. There's still that narrative in Canada that Canada has, and I actually do a little bit of teaching over at the University of Winnipeg and most of the students are international students, and without an exception, every group has a story of being told by somebody that we are dangerous, to stay away from us because we're all messed up, and so sometimes things they observe around people dealing with addictions and people dealing with those sorts of invisible disenfranchisement, or I don't even know if that's the right word, but it kind

³⁵ Tim Horton's is a Canadian coffee shop named after a former ice hockey player.

of verifies that narrative and I think there's still so much fear, so I don't think that they trust us either. (Spillett 2017)

These beliefs are not only hidden beneath the surface in the attitudes towards Indigenous Peoples, they are directly reinforced by structures such as long-standing laws and legal structures.

It's embedded in the *Indian Act*, like we're the Queen's children. We've been infantilized by the colonial project as if we're not competent or capable of taking care of ourselves, that we lack ... and white supremacy based on that our tools of culture are not relevant or not important or not ... they just don't have value. (Spillett 2017)

The *Indian Act* is one such mechanism. Until quite recently it actively discriminated against women, aside from Indigenous people in general. These structures reinforce perceptions because they are public vehicles to drive those perceptions. But Indigenous Peoples have done immense work, with the support of many non-Indigenous to break down these perceptions:

I've been really trying to focus hard on trying to get a positive message out of our community, 'cause they focus so much on the negative, the dark, the ugly, the hurt, the pain and the poison but they don't talk about the good things and the good people that are doing those things in the community. And so that's been my focus over the last couple of years, is trying to get some of those positive messages out. (Favel 2017)

But while this work satisfies the need for Indigenous Peoples to demonstrate their 'trustworthiness', hard work, and capacity, some feel that they should not be the ones to change others' perceptions. That journey, in fitting with Indigenous knowledge practices, should come from within non-Indigenous peoples. There is a real sense of inequality that comes from having to do the work to prove your value within society against the norm:

Yeah, victim blaming, shaming, you're lazy, you don't apply yourself, you don't go out and try, you got to get a job. Well when I go to get a job, the only job I can get is a fucking ten dollar an hour job for minimum wage, sweeping shit up, fuck that man. You know what I mean? I'm better than that, I got more to offer. And there's a lot of us out there. (Favel 2017)

And, again, these perceptions are reinforced publicly by monolithic institutions such as the Canadian Museum of Human Rights, which chose not to confront perceptions but leave it up for the viewer to decide. There is a lack of facilitation on behalf of these institutions, an omission that serves to reinforce the perceptions of Indigenous Peoples:

So, to me, it was an act of cowardliness in some ways and then in terms of the museum, and then they've commissioned installations and that's good. I'm not suggesting that that's good, just to raise awareness, but we are not taught by our systems to be critical. So, I think you can go through that museum and see all these red dresses hanging that are represented of murdered and missing women and not in saying, "Oh, those women, they shouldn't have been prostitutes," or they shouldn't have been drug users, because that's where we're conditioned.

Not, "Oh my god, they're victims of a war against Indigenous people". A colonial war that's continuing to this day. I don't know, it's kind of frustrating in that way. (Spillett 2017)

7.5 *Aakozi Wiiyagaseh/Aki – The soil is sick*

Leslie: People always say those kind of things, "It takes a village," but they don't mean it. (Spillett 2017)

The literature review discusses the compartmentalization of transitional justice mechanisms and attitudes towards harm and trauma. But participants looked at policy as a means of perpetuating harm, and as a means of limiting reconciliation. Despite a shift in attitudes and practices from previous generations, policy and practice remain strong influencers on reconciliation.

Conditions for Indigenous people are different from non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. Despite the disparity in educational funding, community-level funding for infrastructure and economy, social funding, and political funding, many believe that poor policy is a thing of the past. But many of the participants see no change, despite the move towards this perception of equality, such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

No, our human rights, our Indigenous rights are violated all the time, just by the conditions that people are surviving in, and no one ... Maybe the international interlocutor for the United Nations comes and does a spin through the area and goes back and tells the international committee how horrible it is, but this government does have an opportunity to make that change (Spillett 2017)

This section will look at how policies and practices contribute to poor reconciliation. It looks at how Indigenous people perceive reconciliation. Public policy and practice, acting as the mechanism to nourish the tree actually, in poor reconciliation and policy outputs, to harm it. The participants felt that despite the intention of reconciliation, there is little progress. And in many ways, this continues the cycle of harm toward Indigenous Peoples.

7.5.1 Denial of Harm

So much of reconciliation right now is focused on making white people feel better. (McMahon 2017)

Reconciliation is seen by some as not actually an act for the better of Indigenous people's lives, but to resolve a guilt within non-Indigenous Canadians. This is a difficult truth but the reality, when looking at Indigenous attitudes towards reconciliation combined with research outputs is that reconciliation and public policy are harming. Indigenous Peoples feel that Canadians are not facing the truth about reconciliation, and for several reasons they do not want to admit that there is still a problem:

Getting to the truth, together is absolutely essential to reconciliation. And if we don't do that first then I don't think reconciliation is possible, OK, it's then glossed over. They're not facing that. The truth can be ugly, right. So, it's really hard to get the perpetrators to admit that. And then they're willing to change it. Whatever action is required by all of them. ...Even today in the news media and the talk on the street, wherever, you hear a reconciliation [but] you don't hear a truth. We absolutely need truth. (Johnston 2017)

Indigenous Peoples feel that their calls for reconciliation and equal quality of life are not being heard, because the difficult reality of the truth is easier to ignore than face. Indigenous people still feel that this is not the middle or the end of the process, but the very beginning. The need to resist the idea that reconciliation is going well is imperative. The truth of the harm and the continued persistence of policy and attitudes that started it still exist:

I don't think had it been for resistance that we would be where we are even now, which is just as the beginning maybe, the very beginning steps towards living in a Canada that fully recognizes and acknowledges us as nations within a colonized Canada. I think that there's ... That we're, again, that we're just beginning, but I don't think that would have come without those either collective and/or individual acknowledgement of how we've

resisted, and in how many ways, because the colonial project was either around extermination or assimilation. (Spillett 2017)

There is a sense that the work that has been done is enough or is a good start. Indigenous Peoples feel that it is disrespectful to those who are still struggling with the harmful legacies. Indigenous Canadians know that it is not enough, but they fear that non-Indigenous Canadians are content to put the past behind them:

After reconciliation it is, "Back to business as usual. And again, after I witnessed last year, I do not believe that the truth and reconciliation is meant to help the victims of the violence, it's meant to placate the rest, make them feel, oh we've done something about it now, so you can stop worrying about it. And it's that whole, it's get over it now. It's in the history, let's move on now." (Favel 2017)

And there are large issues still to contend with, ones that require consensus among all Canadians. Some feel that Canadians are reluctant to face the reality of the past and present; "Oh, for fuck's sake. If Colonialism 101 is breaking your heart, you are in for a rough ride" (McMahon 2017). The idea that what has happened, and some of what is still happening should be called a genocide has arisen:

Food was a weapon of war and I know our chief, one of our chiefs had Big Bear around the First Rebellion. I don't know if that's a thing that they were starved. People were starved too and only accepted a treaty thinking that their people would survive it and then it was ... then it was the treaties were ... and people are still starving, so going back to the genocide, which is a continuing thing, is that they were saying, "Well, we don't want to call it a genocide because we want people to reach their own conclusions". (Spillett 2017)

This assessment is not something that is just shared by a few, but former Prime Minister Paul Martin, and the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission also agreed with that assessment. That has not stopped state institutions from resisting the assessment,

“That's absolutely the case. They don't ever look internally around their own ... Even in recognizing genocide here as a bonafide genocide, even the Canadian Human Rights Museum [wouldn't admit it]” (Spillett 2017).

The participants know that it is a difficult subject, but the idea that a genocide has been committed in Canada is a reality that we have to face as a country:

Are we agreeable that this is the truth in terms of Canada's treatment of Indigenous People, OK? And that's it that's a tough. That's a tough equation. OK. Because when you go to truth then you're going into words like genocide. And then and then that goes outside of the boundaries of Canada that becomes an international discourse. Because Canada as a country right now only recognizes, I think, five genocides. Our Genocide is not recognized by the country. (Johnston 2017)

Until there is a discussion on the major issues surrounding reconciliation, and the legacy of the abuse there is no substantive reconciliation. It becomes a fetishized item, one that serves to harm rather than heal. The Canadian Human Rights Museum's refusal to acknowledge what had been agreed upon by articles such as the Final Report from the TRC indicates there is a problem with reconciliation, and that there is a problem admitting the extent to which harm was done:

When they made this museum, which is another thing, which is kind of a form of racism as well, and that's kind of why we want to kind of pussyfoot around the language and tiptoe around the language, because they're so scared of offending anybody. It's not okay to offend people, but it's okay to keep people in systems of oppression. It's just, I don't know, I just don't understand that. (Spillett 2017)

And this reluctance is noticed by Indigenous Peoples. It puts reconciliation in a questionable light. It loses some of its power or intent for them, it becomes just a thing, without substance, “You know, it's one thing to espouse or to breathe reconciliation. It's just a word” (Fontaine). Once again, the notion of a compartmentalized agenda, putting harm into a specific box, not

including problems with policy and attitudes in reconciliation, arises. The idea of three types of reconciliation: social, structural, and existential, is inferred. Political will, from which much of the reconciliation agenda takes impetus and structure, is seen as a litmus test for the overall strength and resolve to see fruitful reconciliation, “you think that would be the easy thing to do but there has to be political will to [change these structural policies], and right now it doesn't exist yet” (Favel 2017).

Many participants felt that structural reconciliation needs to precede social reconciliation. It needs to be the engine that drives changing attitudes, rather than follow behind it. For many, the evidence of the social reconciliation is already being seen. But for Canada to reconcile there must be movement towards a culture of understanding and truth. Participants feel that people want to learn, and they want to change, but there are still difficulties to overcome:

That's the challenge, I think, in this country, is that we have to find a way to unlearn a whole lot of stuff. We have to find a way into people's hearts and minds, just a sliver. You've just got to crack the door open a bit, and then start playing this stuff. I think that's where laughter gets really ... laughter, music, and art... (McMahon 2017)

7.5.2 Poor reconciliation

One area identified by many of the participants as contributing to the challenges of reconciliation is that previous efforts were poorly designed and implemented. The design itself comes from a colonial model that seeks to change others or merely note wrongdoings rather than take ownership over the past:

Canadians have been so programmed or their culture is so focused on changing other people, changing Indigenous people or helping us or saving us or whatever their kind of framework is, but there's always this ... It comes from that very first belief that we need to change. It's still assimilationist. Reconciliation is still being done in an assimilationist way (Spillett 2017)

Reconciliation is omnipresent in contemporary Canadian discourse, but this has not necessarily been a good thing. There is lots of funding for reconciliation projects; both public and private, but this contributes to another problem:

I guess I'm kind of confused a little bit about what we're fighting for. I'm a little bit confused about what it is that we're fighting for right now in the name of reconciliation. So much has gone into it. You know, this is an industry that is being built around reconciliation. (McMahon 2017)

This notion of an industry surrounding reconciliation is something that other participants also noted. It is problematic because the public is aware that there is an increased rhetoric surrounding reconciliation, and that funding is increasingly being allocated for it, but the results are not clearly defined or measured. The lack of a perceived result, or an understanding of what reconciliation is trying to achieve increases this perception of waste or overstates the extent to which reconciliation is working:

So then, what is reconciliation? Like what is it? Is it just literally ... literally, it's just a person, or it's just the Prime Minister expressing air. Which means nothing. It literally means nothing if you're not going to back it up. (Fontaine 2017)

Assessments of two major milestones in reconciliation, the residential school apology and the settlement, meet with mixed reception. The apology, which took place in 2008, caused mixed emotions:

So yeah, I guess this all led us to this place that we're in. I don't know what the value of really looking back at the apology, for me, and criticizing it too harshly ... I don't know what the value would be there for me, because it was meaningful to my Gran. She didn't accept it. She was like, "What am I supposed to do now?" You know? (McMahon 2017)

The apology was essential for many Indigenous people, but in delivering an apology some of the participants felt it was, again, just air. But some feel it is part of a continued agenda to disempower and colonize:

Harper was a bad, bad man. He did a lot of evil things. He had an agenda, he was enacting the White Paper, I feel. Little by little. I think they talked about that economics guy who came out and said, "look if you try to do this all at once, it will never work. You have to do it slowly and trickle down," And sure enough, 30 years later the White Paper is still happening. And that's the truth of it. If he's going to smile at us and apologize, behind those sneaky teeth, it means nothing. And I don't value it, I never did. The people that need to be convinced that it's not your fault, I understand it, and again that's a large part of the problem is we have so many people that are under-educated and unprepared to deal with the realities that we face here. And so, they do need that prompting and that support that way. (Favel 2017)

This is not to diminish the apology. But as noted in the literature review that apologies need to be part of a larger reconciliation plan, and their timing should come at the end of a program of reconciliation, rather than at the beginning or in the middle (Gibney et al 2008, Torpey 2001). The timing of the apology did not suggest that it was part of a comprehensive plan, but an ad-hoc plan, regardless of the necessity for an apology for many Indigenous people in Canada:

Yeah, the apology was a weird one because it kind of caught people off guard. Just all of a sudden, Phil Fontaine announced there was going to be this apology, and Stephen Harper was going to be the one to do it. I watched the apology with my grandmother when it was happening. She weirdly needed to hear that. She needed to hear that from the government. I agree that the apology fell woefully short in terms of it potentially could have been, but for so many people, just what it was is so cathartic, and so beneficial to their own lives. (McMahon 2017)

The apology preceded the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) and Common Experience Payment (CEP), a second major mechanism dealing with the legacy of some of the harm felt by Indigenous Peoples. Just like the apology, the settlement was not without some shortfalls:

You can see, especially with the settlement agreement process, I think what did most harm was the short amount of time they gave to it. You know there was always a time limit, 2011 was the deadline for CEP [Common Experience Payment], 2012 September with the deadline for IAP [Independent Assessment Protocol]. And if you didn't get your claim in after... You know people continually said they felt rushed through it and felt confused through it on both sides of the parties every party involved in the agreement said 'too fast', 'not enough support', you know, clearly an instrument to push it through fast. And in doing so, so many things through the cracks and fell through in this very rushed very truncated legal process. They said we're trying to do it fast because survivors are passing away. Of course, I see that point and that point is clear and to go through with the TRC in an efficient manner. (Logan 2017)

Negotiating a bureaucracy, especially one so tightly tied to trauma, was going to be difficult for many survivors. As with the apology, there was little thought to timing and designing a system that sought to heal and reconcile as a function of the overall aim, rather than the specific goal of giving money to a group of people affected by part of a larger social, cultural, and political agenda. Some of the participants felt that the goal was not reconciliation, as such, but rather a token amount to write off previous harm, and its design was not to better the lives of those affected, but to simply wash their hands of one element of the problem. The settlement money, a payout from the IRRSA, did not change the lives of the survivors and was not tied to any widespread economic development. Participants noted that businesses outside the reservations were keenly aware of the opportunity that an influx of money would present:

That money that was attached to it, it just left such a bad taste in my mouth. I know we are being set up. When I worked in the car industry, they know where to put a dealership, they know where to send the salesmen when they need to send them. The dealerships in the small towns, they were loading up with salespeople when the money was coming. That's like a big thing when I was selling cars, they would say, "what reserve are you from, why don't you go out there and try to bring some people here". And you are just stealing. They are overcharging for something that would cost less somewhere else. (E.P. 2017)

This practice is not new in Canada:

The story that I start the book out with, I believe, is Graham, the Indian agent. 1905. He's on horseback. He's coming up to the top of Qu'Appelle Valley. ...He's got RCMP³⁶ escorts and some staff with him, and he looks down into the valley. There's 3,000 Indians that are waiting for him. Hudson's Bay traders are there. He's got 15,000 one-dollar bills with him. Do you know what's happening? Well, it's treaty days. They're each gonna get five one-dollar bills. You can see what's gonna happen. The Indians are the customers. They'll get the money for about five minutes. Then the beneficiaries are the Hudson's Bay traders. The power is with the Indian agent. (Loney 2017)

Participants felt that this undermined the effectiveness of reconciliation. Indigenous people were not better off for it, and the apology and the settlement served to further alienate non-Indigenous Canadians from the lasting impacts of colonization by using reconciliation as a buffer. There was a strong sense that either reconciliation was designed to cause harm, or that non-Indigenous Canadians were so naïve that they would continue to make the same

³⁶ Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the national police service in Canada.

mistakes, in their hubris of thinking that they would make the 'Indian' better they would actually cause them more harm.

This was best demonstrated by the creation of a school, run by Jesuits, in lower income, high Indigenous population neighbourhood in Winnipeg. The Jesuits were one of the religious orders that ran residential schools. This new Jesuit school, in the heart of an Indigenous neighborhood was part of the reconciliation efforts that coincide with the TRC. In a report for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, authors Morrisette and Favel suggested, "despite all of this, the Catholic Church continues to believe that they know better than us what our children need" (2016: 2).

So, this maybe two or three years ago, as their work and reconciliation, they created a school, a class, a school for Indigenous children and maybe [newcomers] ... I always say newcomer in hyphens, because brown people, mostly Africans I imagine, they created a school in the Point Douglas area, that was their act of reconciliation and when they came here, ...I said, "Why do you even think that you can just ..". Wab Kinew said this, "reconciliation can't mean that you get to try again", which is what I thought this school was about, rather than investing in Indigenous capacity to run our own schools and to support an immersion or a freedom school that was Indigenous centric in however that is designed to be. So, it's just a ... To me, that people just want it as a ... using reconciliation as a way of [redoing the past]. (Spillett 2017)

7.5.3 Underfund

One of the largest challenges noted by the participants is that reconciliation and correcting the consequences of centuries of inequality is underfunded. Member of the Legislative Assembly for Manitoba, Nahanni Fontaine noted that the federal government has continually fought against its legal obligations, often a last resort of Indigenous communities and individuals, while spending exponentially more on items like defense and procurement:

Here is the Liberal government that has espoused this narrative, that what's most important is our Indigenous people, and yet they still have refused what is really a measly \$155 million to rectify the Canadian Human Rights tribunals. And that's for children. That's for babies. Like how ... And not seeing anything wrong with still fighting it legally. In the grand scheme of ... And I always say this: if Canada is in the process of finding or procuring new fighter jets for, I don't know what the latest figure is. Every year it goes up and down, so I don't know if it's \$32 billion right now, like God knows what that is. In that context, to procure and get fighter jets to go God knows where to do God knows what, you don't have it within you, even though you're saying its in your mandate to insure this relationship, you don't have it within your mandate, your policy, your budget, or your spirit to offset the discriminatory financial practices of a measly \$155 million? (Fontaine 2017)

She is reminded again of the narrative presented by the participants that reconciliation is more vapour than substance, “It's just a word. It means nothing if you don't back it up with substantial, committed activities, policies, and dollars” (Fontaine 2017). And this lack of commitment is perceived as influencing non-Indigenous Canadians:

Well even when it was, when they announced... [the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls] ... I don't know, I was getting these random tweets and this one guy was tweeting, he would just go @NahanniFontaine, and it was just the dollar sign. Like the dollar emoji. And then again, and then cha-ching, and then when they announced it, there is that fight between what is perceived as giving more money to Indigenous people. Rather than, you know, an exercise in giving some semblance of justice and closure to families. (Fontaine 2017)

Local grass-roots initiatives to augment or take the place of externally instigated reconciliation efforts also struggle to get financial support. In many cases these programs serve to rebuild centuries of lost capacity and improve outcomes for Indigenous Peoples. In many communities these are the only substantial services offered for Indigenous Peoples.

Many of the people have histories of contact with the justice system with high recidivism due to lack of opportunity. Grass-roots actors lament the challenges they face:

We've been at this now two years, we've had some serious positive outcomes. We've seen some real growth here. We're really building capacity within our membership and our communities. But they want to touch us, no support for financing. And the restorative justice we were looking at, we were going to get some money from there to help us. And then they pull the fucking pin on it. ...They don't want us to get any ground. (Favel 2017)

Beyond the grass-roots and community organized initiatives, there is also chronic underfunding on social services such as education, healthcare, and structural support. In 2016 the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal found the Canadian government discriminated against Indigenous children living on reservations regarding funding levels (2016). The child welfare system also faces the challenges of underfunding. The system itself problematizes Indigenous Peoples, fulfills the role of reinforcing stereotypes rather than acting as a catalyst for change and development. Rather than recognizing the intergenerational harm and damage to Indigenous cultures and societies, the system functions on a bounty-based incentive, meaning that money is only allocated to remove children rather than build capacity:

In the child welfare system, it's like you know there's millions of dollars spent, probably \$200, \$250 million dollars a year just to keep that system running and it mostly relies on removal of children. That money is only produced if you apprehend children, so it's all focused on taking away children from families, but it has the poorest outcomes, so it's not ... It's just self-perpetuating then. It has poor outcomes, that's how ... It's systemically how the system survives, and it just creates cycles of the same thing over and over again. Nothing really changes. (Spillett 2017)

To return to the idea of reconciliation being a tree, underfunding and problematizing the symptom of previous trauma and harm only diminishes the capacity to heal. The tree is not nourished and so cannot flourish. Despite the public statements and actions supporting reconciliation, participants feel that the actual evidence of support is non-existent.

Community organizers who work to make communities more resilient and heal the harm of past policies note that “almost everything we do here is battling government. It's hand to hand combat most days. I dream of the day when government is behind us, rather than blocking us” (Loney 2017). This affirmation of reconciliation publicly but actively discouragement of reconciliation in practice is seen as part of a colonial project to revisit history to get it right. Indigenous Peoples face the same problems as they had 150 years ago. The argument of genocide taking a kinder turn, but the intent still the same, “what more can they get, they want it all, and they don't want to have to pay anything for it. Because what they do, it's like handouts, it is a lot of money, they're just slowly taking it away from them, and aboriginal people just have to fend for themselves” (E.P. 2017).

7.5.4 Structural harm

Ian: So, we have a problem?

James: We have a fucking problem. (Favel 2017)

Finally, the challenge Indigenous and non-Indigenous people face in supporting reconciliation, in allowing for new growth to occur on that tree, is to remedy the structural harm still endemic in Canadian society. Social reconciliation is only part of the solution, and real growth must happen from an honest appraisal of reconciliation and its agenda:

I think that those reconciliation circles might produce, may produce, I don't know, a change in people's attitudes and behaviors, and I think that's okay, but if we never get to substantive structural changes, then nothing ... then the colonial project, the things that we need to reconcile with never shifts, and so that power ... It's all about power and control. (Spillett 2017)

Participants identify the structural harm as a central component inhibiting reconciliation. Starting with the *Indian Act*, the set of laws governing many of the relations between the state and the Indigenous Peoples, structures exist that disempower and harm, they have existed since the formation of the country. We saw in the context chapter how these predated even the confederation. But the intent of these structures is clear, “it's like the *Indian Act* it's a construct that is paternalistic, that is colonial that is parental. We are the children and they need to take care of us” (Johnston 2017).

The outcome of a top-down system of structural harm is that it feeds into the stereotypes and perceived roles for Indigenous people, and places the non-Indigenous above them:

I see this in Winnipeg that out of all that colonial process, all that, right now we have created an economy of misery that's the economy. I don't know, someone should do an analysis of the economy of misery. That's all the jails, the judges, the lawyers, the child welfare system, the jailers, the police. I mean, everything is still, I mean, we are, in terms of policing, we are way, way, way over policed and under policed at the same time. We exist in that we're always the bad guys in terms of policing, or the victims of it, and ... (Spillett 2017)

Grass-roots actors have tried to offer an alternative to the structural harm, noting that because of these systems Indigenous Peoples are left to fend for themselves, so that their rights and needs are met, “It's about taking back responsibility for our own safety and our well being. We're not going to live it to the police who were disinterested in tending to our needs. I'll do it myself” (Favel).

But some of the participants noted that ignoring the problem is not solving the problem. And the structures need to be changed but this occurs slowly:

Even our ancestors, we've, I think we've always attempted, I can see, to work, to make that treaty work, but it's not understood. The value systems

of each other are so different and the needs. So yeah, it's a long process.
(Spillett 2017)

But the existence of laws by one cultural group to govern another cultural group is problematic. In the past these structures have been used to impose an external agenda upon them. The treaty system and the *Indian Act* are two examples of deeply embedded structural apparatus. These systems impose control over Indigenous lives and livelihoods and make Indigenous Peoples reliant on the government. Some participants feel if they exist, there can be no reconciliation in the manner that Indigenous people see it:

I believe, totally, that the *Indian Act* was put in place to render the treaties meaningless, virtually meaningless. To give absolute control over Indians and lands. And that's how sharing that you just mentioned never occurred. It gave them the power to come in and take the resources; the land, the minerals, the oil, the gas and whatever it is. And it is still there today.
(Johnston 2017)

The treaties themselves offer rights secured between the different nations who inhabited Canada. These rights have often been eroded through the *Indian Act* or other policies, such as underfunding education, social welfare, economic development, and the child welfare state. As it stands, many of the concessions of the treaties have never been fulfilled or have been fulfilled in a minimalist conceptualization of them. These treaties offered protections and guarantees, the overarching policy over the last 150 years has been to reduce the obligation of the state with regard to fulfillment, rather than increase it. Some see the program of reconciliation as another step in that plan, "I don't know, my view on the apology [and reconciliation] is that they are inching towards washing their hands with it and tearing up the treaties" (E.P. 2017).

7.6 Conclusion

Reconciliation is kind of like when you're in a really bad relationship and that's the word that used to make up every time something is done wrong to you. And then you, you buy it and then you go, okay, I'll give you another chance. And then it kind of goes around in like a cycle, which happens to us historically. It has since the dawn of contact. (Spence 2017)

This chapter looked at how many of my participants felt about reconciliation in Canada. For them, the definition of reconciliation is in a maximalist form, that it includes rectifying as much of the harm from the past as possible and securing a future where Indigenous Canadians are equals in every sense of the word with regard to rights, social mobility, economic and educational potential, and cultural identity. The idea that reconciliation is, like a society, a living organism is important within an Indigenous frame. This chapter attempted to categorize the research findings and broadly code the findings while maintaining an emphasis contextualized understanding and relational accountability. The use of the conversational method facilitated my understanding of the topic. In turn this chapter reflected my personal journey with this knowledge as it evolved beyond the early understandings informed by the literature.

Chapter 8. Healthy Tree

8.1 Introduction

It must be remembered that we have not lived as free women and men in the past hundred years... We have only survived within a prison of deprivation, poverty, and genocide. For too long now we have accepted freedom as a gift and that always produces berries with poison in it.

(George Manuel)

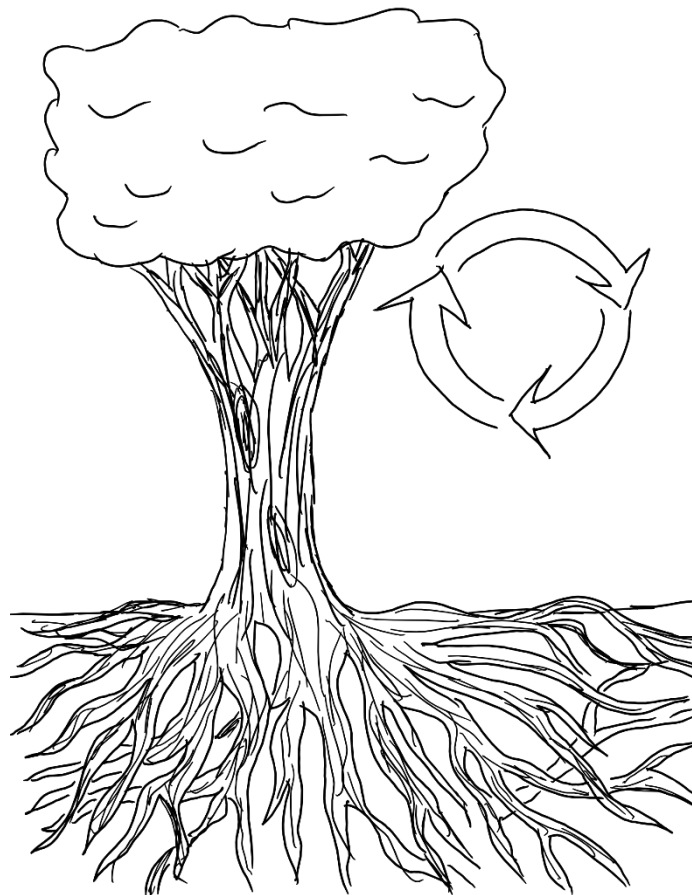


Figure 5 - Healthy Tree

This chapter seeks to establish a framework for understanding what reconciliation looks like, from an Indigenous perspective. It uses the proxy of a tree to discuss a realization of

reconciliation that suggests conditions that allow the tree to flourish and thrive.

Reconciliation is a project not unlike the relationship some Indigenous cultures espouse about our connection to the environment. The chapter considers how my perspective on an Indigenous worldview informs my analytical perspective on interpreting the findings into a structure that can operationalize that worldview. I use the categorization outlined in the previous chapter: the structures of the roots (invisible); the trunk, branches, leaves and fruits (visible); and the factors such as air quality, soil quality, rain, and nutrients (structural). In each category I will outline themes identified through discussions with the participants and frame those themes within the literature and data. The goal is to establish an overall picture of how Indigenous perspectives perceive reconciliation within a frame that honours the values of Indigenous research and worldviews.

8.2 Rationale

In the ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing Chapter I emphasized the importance of circles in many Indigenous cultures. Tafoya states that stories go in circles, they have no beginning and end and can be repeated, each time with a different meaning or interpretation (1995). Participant Jason Bone relates how these meanings are derived from many factors: the intention of the teller, the intention of the listener or, the context (2017). In a research context this would suggest that data analysis is not very different, one's interpretation is seen as subjective to another's. The context that the data is collected, analyzed, or articulated informs or obfuscates. I want to be clear, as I had in the last chapter, as to how I choose to analyze and articulate this data into a system that is natural for me. It was noted then that natural systems are one way to articulate and digest meanings within Indigenous culture (Simonds and Christopher 2013: 2186-2187). Again, Jason Bone reminded me of this as he noted how stories served many purposes. The research story I chose to tell was how Indigenous people understand reconciliation, as it has been done, and how it could be done. This was best explained for me in the system of a tree. In the last chapter I noted how the circular system created a feedback loop that harmed each of the structures or tiers of that

ecosystem. One harm begat another so that the outcome was a tree that was sick and unable to cope with the interrelated influences thrust upon it. Fixing one system on a tree that is sick may not be enough to fully recover, it may always be a tree that never reaches its full potential.

The system proposed, through my frame of analysis, by an Indigenous perspective on reconciliation is one of renewal and regrowth, with an aspect of rebirth. It is as if a clipping of the old tree is taken, all of the memories, histories, stories, trauma, pain, resilience, and resistance are kept. These lessons are important, as with many stories, as they serve to remind, to teach, to inspire, and to restore. This reconstruction based on the original, like the clipping of a tree, is used in other contexts by those seeking to articulate their values within a shared space. Robert Beckford examined the use of dub to facilitate this expression. Dub is a form of music originating in Jamaican culture that itself is extrapolation of the original composition, it used segments of an original track but reconstructed another song overtop. Beckford suggests this deconstruction and reconstruction serves to enable “new ways of hearing and understanding” (2006: 2). Reconciliation can be deconstructed and reconstructed in the same manner. Indigenous voices and values in this process are essential to reflecting their meanings and understandings. Indigenous care of this reconciliation tree, because it is relevant to them, is necessary in this frame as well. The fruit of the tree, its wellbeing: evidence of its success, is seen by non-Indigenous society, but the tree is an Indigenous one. Under the colonial system Indigenous people were not charged with the care of this tree, they ‘lack civilization’, their ‘uncompletedness’ as participant Spillett mentions, meant that care was assumed by the ‘superior race’. At a talk at Ryerson University, Roberta Jamieson makes two points on this: Indigenous leadership of their own futures has been a recipe for success and recognition and support for differences rather than a cohesive entity (2016). One point that Jamieson articulated many times related to sustainability: this word was one that was echoed in many forms in the literature and the participants who shared in this research. Corntassel and Bryce reflect that reconciliation, for

many Indigenous Peoples, needs to fit is the cultural imperative of an accountable relationship with the land and environment (2011). There is a connection between the relationships between humanity and nature that goes beyond aspects of identity that are stereotypically associated with Indigenous Peoples, the 2007 UNDRIP directly addresses the connection between Indigenous Peoples and the land as an essential component of not only identity, but existence (2007: Article 25). In the natural world, sustainable growth often occurs when the conditions to support the wellbeing do not hinder, at many levels, the process. This chapter uses that language of sustainability to present a circular system that endeavors to self-support positive outcomes based on structures that are culturally appropriate. Corntassel and Bryce suggest that sustainable means “honoring longstanding, reciprocal relationships with the natural world, as well as by transmitting knowledge and everyday cultural practices to future generations” (2011: 156). The World Commission on Environment and Development suggested that sustainability was the relationship between development to meet current needs while allowing for, “future generations to meet their own needs” (1987 in UNDRIP 2014: 66). These definitions contrast with the suggestion that sustainability may be about reconciling and tolerating damage while extracting surplus value (Medovoi 2010). Sustainability as an Indigenous concept is reflected in many central practices, such as the Iroquois seven-generation perspective, *Gayanashagowa*, noted in earlier chapters. It is connected to the circular flow of life, rather than seen as a value deriving relationship to be tested. In a 2014 UNRIP report Corntassel recalls a conversation with Cherokee Elder Benny Smith who equate sustainability with a circular relationship involving identity, life, and existence (2014: 66). Corntassel summarizes Indigenous perspectives on sustainability as the need for respectful relations to the earth, “resilience’ systems of reciprocity; and humanity” (2014: 66), that are central to the continuation of Indigenous life, and, all life. This chapter will use the premise of sustainability through the proxy of a natural system to interpret an Indigenous perspective of reconciliation in Canada.

These three structures are those mentioned in the previous chapter: roots, wellbeing, and sustenance. Whereas the previous chapter established an Indigenous perspective on sick structures, all linked to inhibit a healthy tree, this one uses these perspectives to frame a healthy one. The roots, structures that are not immediately evident but essential to collecting and distributing sustenance, have to be strong enough to supply the tree with what it needs to grow, but also wide enough and strong enough to support that wellbeing, and in turn grow itself. The codes that I used for this category are reconciling the past, rebuilding tradition, building connections, Indigenous contributions and led reconciliation, building community capacity, and honouring Indigenous values. This process of 'coding' was done manually, I would listen and relisten to the interviews, and read, then reread the transcripts. As noted in both the Knowing, Being, and Doing chapter, and the Methodology chapter, there is a tension in maintaining a contextual connection when analysing and interpreting data within an Indigenous research paradigm. Kovach, in her work on conversational method in Indigenous research, spoke of this challenge, noting that "thematically group[ing] stories works to fragment data" (2010: 47). I agree that this tension is essential to understanding the imperatives of Indigenous research identified in earlier chapters, but also use the didactic notes suggested by storytelling tradition to build a new understanding or reinforce inherent paradigms.

The second category: wellbeing, was the evidence of the new system working. The factor of sustainability would be judged by this across the generations of this tree. Connections, culturally relevant frames, community health, and traditions could be evidence of wellbeing. Participants reflected that Indigenous Peoples are perceived that they are judged to a more rigorous standard than other Canadians (McMahon 2017; Johnston 2017). This 'double-standard' belief is addressed in how traditional knowledge is viewed by the academy and society (Bala and Joseph 2007: 48). It is evident in recent practice from the Canadian government extending the scrutiny into the public sector (Henderson 2012). The fact that Indigenous Canadians are over-represented in the jails, contact with child and family

services, have poorer outcomes in health, education, financial, and social aspects is not seen by many as a symptom of colonization but a condition of being Indigenous. In the previous chapter this was suggested by the participants, opinions on Indigenous people may not reflect the effects of harm nor the cultural values of Indigenous Peoples. The participants' narratives suggested alternative indicators to examine wellbeing. In my data analysis this was represented in the following codes: youth connecting with culture, reconnecting with Indigenous culture, arts, Indigenous traditions, and grass-roots efforts. These codes represented just some of the evidence the participants suggested could be used to identify positive reconciliation, from an Indigenous frame.

Finally, the participants identified some of the elements that would promote the roots and wellbeing. These, as with the previous chapter, were ascribed as the sustenance of the healthy ecosystem. Many of these are opposites of those found in the last chapter: funding, policy changes, governance changes, and societal changes. But there were some themes that repeatedly emerged across many of the participants: equal funding, self-government/self-realization, the *Indian Act*, treaties, social welfare, and removing barriers. Jamieson highlighted the importance of this substance, and the role that it played in enabling the other elements of this suggested ecosystem to thrive, "[w]e need support in doing that, we can't just do it ourselves, but it is important to hear who needs to be in control of the vision" (*Ideas* 2017).

This chapter uses the broad themes identified in the last chapter, the ecosystem or structure of the tree, and broadens the roots, branches, leaves, and systems through identifying 'codes' from the data shared by the participants. Just as the caveat of representation was noted in the previous chapter, so too does it apply here. Reconciliation has many meanings, as noted in the literature review, and these meanings are problematic when they are applied to the totality of the reconciliation discourse.

8.3 Strong Roots

There's this powerful thing happening right now, and I think 30 or 40 years from now, they're going to write a book about this time. (McMahon 2017)

8.3.1 Reconciling the past

Reconciliation should look forward, but it cannot ignore the harm of the past. This sentiment and dichotomy are expressed in the literature on reconciliation. Some, like Rigney, are “not convinced of the appropriateness of opening up the past and talking about it as a means of dealing with the hurt” (2001: 1). But others see both a transformative and transitional aspect in looking back to look ahead. Bonhoeffer challenges those seeking reconciliation to overcome the difficult task of talking and confronting differences to move towards a different or resolved relationship (1971: 300). de Gruchy reflects on reconciliation as movement informed by the context (2002: 21). Daye suggested that the act of forgiveness, an essential component of reconciliation started with embracing a discourse on the past (2004).

Regardless of the merits identified in the literature, most of the participants agreed that the past was an essential component to reconciliation. Not just the acts of commemoration, validation of a narrative, or truth-telling involved in that discourse, but also the capacity to understand the lessons as a means of replanting, regrowing, and rebuilding Indigenous culture, traditions, capacities, and worldviews.

Truth commissions and investigations into past actions are one of the means that societies have used to account for past harm. Canada has used the process of truth telling to understand the extent of past and present harm and the role it plays in the daily lives of Indigenous Peoples. Many participants echoed the sentiment that to have reconciliation you must have truth (Johnston 2017). Understanding what truth is, and the problems with agency and truth is discussed briefly in the literature review. At the 2014 Traditional Knowledge Keepers Forum, Elder Dave Courchene asked, with respect to the TRC, “whose truth are you talking about (2014 in Canada 2016f: 7). The commission’s response was that truth

included not only the documents and archives of the government, residential schools, churches, and organizations involved in the residential schools, but also the lived experiences of the Survivors, their families, and communities. Getting to that truth, in Canada was the role of the TRC building upon the work of the RCAP.

Hayner's assessment of truth commissions and the search for truth in post-harm societies leaves the impression that act, while cathartic, leaves some lacking (2011: 6). Her assessment of this centred on the fact that while recommendations provided an opportunity for states and societies to learn from the truths identified, the commissions themselves lacked the capacity to bind them to action (2011:6-7). In the first findings chapter there is a discussion on this embedded with the 'types of reconciliation' portion. Action on many of the recommendations was buried in the ability for political will to translate them into actions. But still, for many of the participants the search for truth, and the investigation of the past is an action that can bring about change in society.

The search for truth and establishing a unified narrative of the past was one the goals of the RCAP and the TRC. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) in 1996 noted the "false premise" that was ubiquitous in the national narrative (Canada 1996b: 1). This false premise, outlined in Roberta Jamieson's talk (2016), reinforcing Chrisjohn's assessment after the RCAP, was that Canadian policy and opinions were based on ideas of superiority of non-Indigenous settlers over Indigenous Peoples (1994). Policy and practice were informed by the belief that the Indigenous Peoples were savages who faced the disparate choice of conforming to the ways of the superior west or to "survive only as an anthropological footnote" (1996b: 1). The role of the truth commission was to validate the experience of Indigenous Peoples and their resistance to this narrative, and to counter highlight the role the government played in projecting that narrative into policy and society.

The definitions of reconciliation discussed within the literature review centre around the ideas of progress, recognition, and forgiveness. These discussions note the prevailing

frames that inform reconciliation practice. Miroslav Volf suggests that reconciliation happens after “the truth about transgressions between people has been told and justice is established” (2000: 169). Reconciling the past might require a shift beyond just truth to include justice, as Volf suggests, as part of an “overarching framework” (2000: 169). Looking at the South African TRC Desmond Tutu suggested that reconciliation comes with forgiveness and was part of an almost ceremonial or spiritual process of truth-telling between the victim and the perpetrator (1999). de Gruchy suggests that the struggle for justice was of primary concern, which thought of first justice, then reconciliation (2002). There is a danger in the exact recipe for reconciliation wherein society can become too enamoured with a retributive frame or eschew that frame and risk what has been suggested by Ignatieff as a false reconciliation (1996). Ignatieff stresses the importance of reconciliation getting it right, offering a set of outcomes that serve the interests of the victims while operating within the political and social realities.

The participants, building upon the idea presented in the first two volumes of the RCAP report, agree with the importance of reconciliation that builds mutual understanding and respect (Institute on Governance 1997: 2). The Truth and Reconciliation Commission final report examined the impacts of residential schools, along with the policies that coincided with colonization which were discussed in the Context chapter.

Participant opinions on reconciling with the past were varied. Many noted the imperative to start from that recognition, but some felt that it needed to be addressed with action (Adams 2017; Fontaine 2017; Johnson 2017; McMahon 2017;). Adams felt that it was time for Canadians to open themselves up to learning from the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. The RCAP reflected this in its findings, it noted that mutuality would be an essential element of reconciling the past harm, and the schism between non-Indigenous and Indigenous (1997: 2). Some of the participants suggest that that non-Indigenous Canadians need to focus on what they are doing for reconciliation and take an active role in bridging past attitudes and practices, this is supported by recent studies such as the 2016 Environics report *Canadian*

Public Opinion on Aboriginal Peoples. This study found that 35% of the Canadians polled had an unfavourable opinion about reconciliation and 44% were classified as 'uninformed' as to both the history and the issues surrounding reconciliation (2016: 45-50). While there are still many non-Indigenous Canadians who are aware, taking an active role in reconciliation is seen as out of reach for many of them, whereas the participants felt that many Indigenous Peoples lived their own reconciliation journey, one that could include a personal, familial, community, cultural, and national journey:

For me, I say when somebody came and interviewed me one time about, "What're you doing in terms of reconciliations?" We've been working on reconciliation for a long time. I don't think that we've ever not worked on reconciliation... Even our ancestors, we've, I think we've always attempted, I can see, to work, to make that treaty work, but it's not understood.
(Spillett 2017)

Reconciliation needs to be knowledge not only for the sake of knowing, but as an impetus for action. Participants discussed the notion of cooperation that exists in the Canadian historical vernacular, early historical accounts noting the lengths that the Indigenous Peoples of Canada went to offer aid and support to early Europeans. Indigenous historian Olive Dickason devotes much of the first chapter to her work, *A Concise History of Canada's First Nations* to those initial relationships noting the reliance of the Europeans on Indigenous Peoples for their local knowledge and resources (2006). The survival of many of the first explorers and, later, settlers was facilitated by the Indigenous Peoples (Canada 1996b: 42). Historian J.R. Miller suggested that early relationships were reciprocal and that there was mutual recognition as political equals (1989: 44-45). Some feel that this charity was seen as weakness, or that attitudes of superiority gave rise to a sense of entitlement, such as the concepts of *terra nullius* in Australia, manifest destiny in America, and the rhetoric of the first Canadian Prime Minister John A. MacDonald who reflected that providence had afforded the

new settlers a nation, unbroken, from sea to sea to sea, that would be peopled by Europeans under God (MacDonald in Jamieson 2016).

The previous chapter noted some critiques of Canadian views on reconciliation and its agenda. But despite those opinions, many feels that reconciliation is an opportunity for real change, so long as non-Indigenous and Indigenous Canadians are open to the challenge.

Prior reconciliation efforts, especially those mechanisms that legitimized the agency of it, such as the apology to the residential school survivors, and broadened understanding of the actions and impacts of the past, such as the RCAP and TRC, help establish the necessity for change. But translating that necessity into action is seen as the difficult portion:

That's the challenge, I think, in this country, we have to find a way to unlearn a whole lot of stuff. We have to find a way into people's hearts and minds, just a sliver. You've just got to crack the door open a bit. (McMahon 2017)

Still, many of the participants were optimistic that reconciliation, despite its divergent agendas or definitions, could find, as the RCAP hoped, a common thread of mutuality.

I personally wouldn't do any of the work that I was doing if I didn't actually have faith in humanity, that we can make a better Canada. We can. (Fontaine)

8.3.2 Rebuilding tradition

The process of colonization was difficult for Indigenous Peoples. One of the most painful and traumatic aspects was the loss of culture, traditions, knowledge, and identity that came from what the TRC labelled as a 'cultural genocide' (Canada 2016a). As the standards for Indigenous rights have progressed, so too has the imperative to protect tradition and culture. The UNDRIP directly addresses the need to promote and protect the cultures and identities of Indigenous Peoples while cautioning against harmful practices that have existed worldwide (2007). The TRC process identified the harm caused Residential Schools and

government policies, while noting that “Indigenous Peoples have always resisted attacks on their cultures, languages, and ways of life (2016f: 81-82). Ryan McMahon, an Indigenous comedian, commentator, and educator reflects on this resistance, “I mean, it's probably a bumper sticker of some kind, because it's almost too good to be true, but Indigenous existence is resistance” (2017).

The idea of resistance demonstrates the importance of traditional practices in Indigenous society, ceremonies that were banned under colonial law were preserved as best they could. But the loss of culture was still profound, many of the participants had some story of their own challenges in reconnecting:

It was a very long journey, to get to where I am now. It's through ceremony, through meeting Elders, and realizing that there is a connection to the land that is missing. A long time ago in Europe, they were very connected to the land at one point in time. (Adams 2017)

KC Adams, an artist, was keenly aware of the damage done but the loss of tradition. One of the projects she worked on was recreating local pottery that was prominent in the Winnipeg region prior to contact. The process for making the pottery was lost after contact, not only from the cultural harm, but also the diseases and illnesses that the initial contact with the west brought. Adams felt profoundly impacted by rebuilding these traditions, especially when her work brought her into contact with previously lost portions of those practices, while working with other learners and Elders in traditional lands, Adams found fragments of pottery:

I started crying. I was like, I can't believe this just happened. I'm sharing the knowledge with my community, and then I look down, and there is pottery shard that someone created maybe 400, 800 years ago, they buried it so that they could come back to it... I brought it and I showed everybody. The last person to touch this was a woman. The creator of this

pot is just, the ancestors were right there. The knowledge was there.
(Adams 2017)

The restoration of tradition, sometimes from nothing but a memory is part of the journey Indigenous people must travel to reconciliation. In the next section Member of the Legislative Assembly Wab Kinew will note how reconciliation is not an opportunity to try colonization again. Elder Leslie Spillett, speaking about plans to build a Jesuit school in a largely Indigenous neighbourhood, agreed that reconciliation was an opportunity to create a relationship based on mutual respect, rather than retry the colonial agenda in a modern form (2017). This means that reconciliation itself must use rebuilt or reinvigorated Indigenous forms of politics, law, and society. Corntassel's criticisms of reconciliation in Canada have centred around the westernized approach to law and politics (Corntassel 2012; Corntassel, Chaw-win-is and T'lakwadzi 2009: 146; Corntassel, Snelgrove, and Dhamoon 2014).

The TRC agreed that western institutions would have to give way for Indigenous practices in law and politics, and Indigenous forms of reconciliation to have a space to enter the discourse (Canada 2016e: 45). The TRC noted that, "If Canada is to transform its relationship with Aboriginal Peoples, Canadians must understand and respect First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people's own concepts of reconciliation. Many of these concepts are found in Indigenous law. (2016e: 46). By allowing for these traditions to enter the public discourse, enabling Indigenous Peoples to rebuild them and their capacity to utilize them, then reconciliation can be articulated with the aim of restoring an equal relationship rather than the patriarchal system of the past.

This discussion on public discourse builds upon Coulthard's discussion on the politics of recognition in Chapter Five. Rather than engage in political battle embedded in the power dynamics of coloniality there needs to be a further embracing of a plurinational state based on cultural recognition that engenders political recognition. Pallares' genealogy of plurinational politics in Ecuador traces the legitimisation of a multicultural nation as an antecedent to plurinational politics (2002: 195-196). Legitimising Indigenous cultural

institutions and traditional practices as an alternative to dominant practices is part of this transition to effective reconciliation.

8.3.3 Building connections

Reconciliation is an opportunity to not only restore the identity of Indigenous Peoples, but, as seen in the Literature Review, it is an opportunity to revisit relationships. Much of the discussion around reconciliation pertains to the roles of the perpetrator and the victim. The TRC used the definition of reconciliation restoring that relationship, in South Africa the vehicle that Desmond Tutu used was forgiveness. Forgiveness has criticisms, namely the concept of cheap reconciliation/forgiveness identified in the *Kairos Document* prior to the dismantling of the apartheid state (Volf 2000: 169). The participants were quite clear about the worry of this 'cheap' reconciliation. In the first Data chapter Damon Johnston suggested one form of 'cheap' reconciliation, one requiring political will (2017). But the other 'cheap' reconciliation was that which apologized but offered no changes to the structures and systems that still perpetuated harm. Honorary Witness to the TRC Wab Kinew noted that, "The truth about reconciliation is this: It is not a second chance at assimilation. It should not be a kinder, gentler evangelism, free from the horrors of the residential school era. Rather, true reconciliation is a second chance at building a mutually respectful relationship" (Kinew in Canada 2016f: 82).

Some of the participants, such as Shaun Loney and Dr. Raymond Currie take an active role in building that 'respectful relationship' that Kinew suggests. Others do work with Indigenous communities rebuilding capacity, culture, and communities (Favel 2017; Redhead-Champagne 2017). This work is important because it engages directly with the needs of each group, but engagement across the divide is essential to promote relationships. Reconciliation that does not reconcile the past and validate Indigenous tradition is another opportunity, as noted above, to colonize. There is a tendency, as suggested in the Sick Tree chapter to problematize the Indigenous experience and not emphasise the role that an equal

relationship will play in promoting reconciliation. Adams suggests that this top-down approach runs the risk of alienating both sides, but that there can be an exchange in the reconciliation process:

My feeling is that we've had enough of that knowledge... What needs to happen is the knowledge and learning needs to go the other way. The direction of information needs to flow the other way now. Not exclusively, but certainly yes, it needs to flow the other way, because the health and welfare of our planet depends on it. (Adams)

Other participants are much more colourful but still stress the same sentiment, that there must be a real relationship formed from the process of reconciliation:

I want people to look at one another when they're walking down the street instead of looking at their fucking shoes. These are humans, these are your cousins, just because you're not blood related you still are sharing this physical space, and why not work together instead of sniping at one another and being petty and violent, and hurting. (Favel 2017)

These connections between communities and cultures are only part of the connections that are required for reconciliation. The land plays an integral role within an Indigenous understanding of reconciliation (Manuel and Derrickson 2015; Manuel and Derrickson 2017). Participants suggested two main categories in which the themes of land and connection play a part in reconciliation. The pertinent section for building strong roots is the idea of Indigenous and non-Indigenous connection with the land from a perspective that is in line with Indigenous worldviews surrounding respect, sacredness, and reciprocity (Bone 2017; Adams 2017; McMahon 2017). The second category, discussed in the Sustenance section, will reference the Indigenous connection to the land in a tangible sense, its role in development and the economic derivatives the benefit Indigenous Peoples and communities (Loney 2017; Johnston 2017).

The development of a reconciled relationship with the land is an essential part of humanity, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. For Indigenous Peoples, “Without respectful relationships to the land, water and natural world; resilience; systems of reciprocity; and humility, Indigenous lifeways cannot flourish” (Corntassel in CIGI 2014: 66). Indigenous language scholar Jason Bone reminded that many stories from Indigenous cultures reflect on the imperative to restore and maintain healthy relations with the land lest lose connections to their identity and even existence (2017).

Respecting Indigenous relationships with the earth is an outcome directed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) but does not go far enough to recognize the importance of utilizing Indigenous worldviews to understand that relationship, rather than an extractive western-based capitalist perspective. These non-Indigenous relationships under the language of conservation do not go far enough to some scholars (Altamirano-Jiménez 2013; Nadasdy 2005). Some participants were more cynical suggesting that the approach of some of the Abrahamic traditions which view the earth as a temporary vessel on a journey to paradise are contrasted with Indigenous perspectives. Corntassel’s critique, using the perspectives of other Indigenous scholars and allies, notes the UNDRIP’s dilution of original language designed to not only protect and respect Indigenous (and non-Indigenous) relationships with the earth (CIGI 2014). In a society that is increasingly concerned with the well-being of the earth, Corntassel suggests that sustainability is an essential part of reconciliation (CIGI 2014: 70). In my interview with him Jason Bone reminds us that any reconciliation that does not include Indigenous perspectives and collaboration on land is a false reconciliation (2017). While it may seem that resistance to reconciliation that does not include these concessions is counterproductive, for Indigenous Peoples, using the land in ways that are counterproductive and contrary to their cultural identity is a form of colonization and oppression (Bone 2017; Loney 2017). Corntassel and Bryce summarized this perspective in the political sphere with his discussion on political rights, “rights are state constructions that do not necessarily reflect inherent Indigenous

responsibilities to their homelands” (2011: 152), this digression is relevant because recognition of rights is part of the UNDRIP and part of the reconciliation aims stated earlier in this chapter. For Indigenous communities, the benefits of considering sustainable practices and the relationship with the land results in healthier communities and Peoples (Corn tassel in CIGI 2014: 70). This connection, spatially, is felt even after generations away from their home territory (their proxy home, on the reservation, rather than their ancestral territory). One study found that 86% of urban Indigenous Peoples had a close connection to their ‘community of origin (Environics 2010: 33). Reconciling the past, rebuilding tradition, and building connections in multiple forms serve as a strong basis for the roots of a healthy and vibrant tree. Building capacity and enabling Indigenous people to articulate their own ‘brand’ of reconciliation is also an essential part of the roots system. The two are interconnected, as the previous three themes are, and are important to creating a healthy tree.

8.3.4 Build community capacity and Grass-roots Reconciliation

Indigenous Peoples in Canada faced a difficult challenge of maintaining their cultural identity in the face of the challenges of colonization and racism since the decline in their relationship with the settlers. Many of the participants stated their amazement and appreciation for the role their ancestors had in keeping the torch of their community alive despite attempts to ‘kill the Indian’ by federal policy and practice:

The idea that somehow through a miracle, policy, law, legislation, racism, misogyny, patriarchy didn't kill us, and our ancestors found a way to dig deep, and through love and sheer will, they found a reason to live. So that resistance has been consistent. It's never gone away. (McMahon 2017)

Resistance to colonization has been seen by many Indigenous Peoples as the first step towards recognition, which in turn has led to the push towards accountability and reconciliation. This process started with the response to the *White Paper* in 1969, a moment which Roberta Jamieson characterized as one of the seminal moments in reconciliation,

albeit through resistance (2017). Events like the *Red Paper*, Harold Cardinal's response to the *White Paper*, and *Indian Control of Indian Education* from the National Indian Brotherhood, George Manuel and the Constitutional Express, and the events leading up to the Meech Lake Accord crisis, and the Oka Crisis, were all moments where Indigenous Peoples turned recognition into the start of reconciliation:

So, if you look at let's say Manitoba, Winnipeg, during the Oka crisis, which is the peace village here. And you know, what did that do? Well it created this awareness and this movement that literally has trickled down and planted seeds and flourished in so many Peoples' families and in their spirits, and so I think that this has been going on for generations (Fontaine 2017)

With each of these acts, and the countless small acts by Indigenous Peoples across Canada there was a shift in Indigenous Peoples expecting to be seen as equals and building their capacity, through their own agency or the agency generated from others, to put forth a strong voice:

So, I don't necessarily feel just that the TRC created this space, but that the work that's been done for decades now to create the space in which the TRC could actually exist. And again, has created this space in which people can embrace this notion of reconciliation. They can interpret what this notion and this discourse of reconciliation. They can embrace it, or they can reject it. Or they can demand more. (Fontaine 2017)

As Indigenous Peoples push for agency and a space to create a reconciliation began to emerge, so too was the space for greater capacity within Indigenous communities and Peoples. Into these spaces Indigenous Peoples forged pathways to enable their communities, cultures, and Peoples would be represented:

So, to me, the way I see all these transformative moments in history is a marrying of all these different kinds of passions and agencies and spirits.

And spirits in the sense of those people that have stood on the front lines,
and the front lines being not only this ... But the front lines in government...
And actually, those folks are on the front lines as well. Fighting and
changing from the inside. (Fontaine 2017)

Resistance as reconciliation is not a new concept, though the two terms seem initially at odds (Clarke and Byrne 2017). This is part of a trilogy of interrelated concepts centred by the concept of recognition (Byrne and Clark 2017). Coulthard suggested that there was a politics of recognition that has limited the ability to translate resistance into reconciliation (2007; 2014). Indeed, the currency with which reconciliation is bought could be characterized as recognition. Indigenous Peoples used their resistance to gain recognition, the currency derived from that recognition both increased the value of their own currency, or exchange rate, and also the ability to produce surplus value. In this sense, as Indigenous Peoples resisted, they were able to derive greater value than had been ascribed in the colonial model of thinking, as well as within more contemporary perspectives. When then Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau remarked, “well I guess you have more rights than I thought you did” (*Ideas* 2010), after resistance to the colonial policy of the *White Paper* and recognition from the Canadian Supreme Court on *Calder v British Columbia* in 1973. That was the beginning, to revisit Jamieson, of the currency of recognition being bartered. Chief George Manuel and Michael Posluns charted this progress in spite of obstacles in an ironic fashion, noting, “real recognition of our presence and humanity would require a genuine reconsideration of so many people’s role in North American society that it would amount to a genuine leap of imagination” (1974: 224). Trudeau’s surprise was one of those ‘leaps of imagination’ that resulted in recognition.

As Indigenous people have transferred their resistance to recognition to acquire reconciliation so too has the need for their capacity to resist and reconcile, in many forms. The ‘leap of imagination’ that was required on behalf of many non-Indigenous Canadians resulted in challenges to reconciliation being more than an idea but providing substantive

changes to the structures and attitudes that instigated and perpetuated colonization.

Participants noted the barriers to achieving reconciliation:

The measurement of any reconciliation act..., has to be about change and... that change is inherent in human beings, but it has to be also in systemic change. (Spillett 2017)

The systemic change that Spillett is discussing is presented in the first Data Chapter and will be discussed further in the Strong Sustenance section of this chapter. Johnston and I discussed three types of reconciliation: structural, social, and existential (2017). The structural reconciliation to which Spillett refers includes changing the systems that allow for recognition, fulfillment of UNDRIP, and self-addressed capacity building. Recognition, for many Canadians, of Indigenous Peoples is a difficult 'leap of imagination' so long as the symptoms of colonization appear and can be correlated to those old, but omnipresent, attitudes of superiority of non-Indigenous, inferiority of Indigenous Peoples, and problematization of outcomes for Indigenous Peoples as evidence of the prior two facts. This has meant that Indigenous people have had to generate the capacity to find reconciliation within their own community at the grass-roots level along with the capacity to resist. Many of the participants work on their own community level providing opportunities to build capacity along with reconciliation from an Indigenous frame, it's all about building capacity and not just to the communities that we're serving, but the membership that serves them 'cause we use a lot of the marginalized people for our community. (Favel 2017).

Grass-roots reconciliation by many of the participants was a vehicle to build capacity and change attitudes within Indigenous Peoples have taken root within their culture across the period of colonization

Sometimes we absorb those kinds of values and within a society, so I've chosen always to do my work right in the community, because that's where I think ... I believe that change comes from the bottom up and that it is still

that rejection of this individualism and how individuals are, in a western point of view, are the ones that are the change makers. (Spillett 2017)

Community organizers like Redhead-Champagne have seen dividends from this form of reconciliation and capacity building. And this work has provided the currency of recognition from the bottom-up, which is then re-invested into reconciliation within the broader community of non-Indigenous Canadians. In her work *Activists Beyond Borders*, Sikkink and Keck hypothesized of a theory they called the boomerang effect, wherein local activist would use external agents to overcome 'blockages' that inhibited their work (1997). The local activists were seeking a way to move an agenda, discussion, or right forward but lacked the ability or capacity to do so. They needed to generate recognition beyond the blockage, which many of them were able to do because recognition is easier bartered among like sources, and they were often working within the western-thought human rights discourse during these transactions. By using the external recognition to bypass the blockage they could barter that with external agents would then boomerang that currency in the form of advocacy to subvert the blockade from both sides, often because the external agents had a larger level of recognition or 'clout' along with the implications on the blocking agent, usually a local or national government, in terms of their own recognition, the local actors were often successful (1997). In the case of Canada, Indigenous Peoples have historically used their resistance locally to generate recognition, both domestically and abroad to force the reconciliation agenda. Canada sees itself as a tolerant nation with "no history of colonialism (Harper 2009)," and to maintain their recognition must offer some form of reconciliation to maintain the status quo in that regard. As Indigenous capacity is increased and the willingness of Canada to offer more substantial and necessary forms of reconciliation diminishes recognition is bartered at the grass-roots level and reconciliation at the grass-roots becomes a form of engendering the currency of recognition. We see reconciliation as a mutual recognition of the rights and agency of each group, a restoration of equilibrium; real or theoretical. For this to be achieved Indigenous Peoples need to increase their capacity.

This is to say that Indigenous Peoples during the darkest era of the colonial period where they were given no agency, had little recognition, and were lesser than non-Indigenous peoples, had very little real potential for capacity. As they resisted their real potential for capacity grew along with their actual fulfilled capacity.

From the 1960s onward, through the use of recognition but the ineffectiveness of reconciliation to overcome historical trauma, Indigenous Peoples have had to find their own way to generate a surplus capacity to fill the potential maximum. Many of the participants agreed, McMahon noted, “the focus, 100% ... is that Indigenous communities need to focus on Indigenous communities, and Indigenous families need to rebuild. That's what reconciliation is. There should be no mistake there” (2017). Grass-roots efforts, along with building capacity through bartering for remedy through reconciliation or self-fulfilled, are part of the transition from unequal to equals, along with the ability to have power in a historically imbalanced relationship, “so, reconciliation has to be about restoring power and control in Indigenous people and that can look different in different ways. (Spillett 2017)

8.4 Strong Sustenance

If Indigenous peoples are going to overcome the past harm and historic inequalities then there needs to be an effort on behalf of the federal government to provide parity, honour obligations, and negotiate outstanding issues surrounding land, land use, and funding. The TRC called upon the government to approach those issues with culturally appropriate and comprehensive level of support that “addresses the need for improvements in health, education, and economic development in Aboriginal communities” (Canada 2015a: 181).

For the participants there was divide as to the extent of other factors that inhibit or support this sustenance. For some the idea of autonomy was an essential element, this autonomy ranged from a full split (Mashkode Bizhiki 2017), a devolution of many bureaucratic apparatus such as INAC, CFS, and the education departments (Johnston 2017), while others broadened the debate to the idea of nationhood and identity:

I don't know if you need the Canadiana. I don't know if you need the TRC representation if you understand and wish to just consider at a fundamental level what reconciliation means. As soon as you get down to that fundamental level, you have to embrace ... the quality concern is the nationhood issue. That has yet to be developed well. The presumption about the utility of, or the importance of the Canadian state on the one hand, versus a meeting of nations on the other. (Deer 2017)

Regardless of where the debate lay, sustenance fell into the 'structural' reconciliation side of the spectrum, it was something that required political will, overcoming cultural bias on behalf of non-Indigenous peoples to allow for Indigenous Peoples to fully embrace their identities within the legal framework of the treaties and the *Indian Act*. But political will was something that is also difficult to predict:

So, I really do think in many respects, pursuing true, dedicated reconciliation actually involves courage. It involves the courage of the federal government to say look, we're just gonna do it. And again, I still, I can never wrap my mind around the jets thing because it's \$32 billion, you know, that taxpayers are gonna have to pay. Like why would you need courage to put in \$155 million when at the same time, you're putting \$32 billion into fighter jets? Like what's the courage that you need? It's like a no brainer. (Fontaine 2017)

Fontaine as a unique insight into this discussion, she has been a sitting Member of the Legislative Assembly in Manitoba for several years. The UNDRIP was suggested as a framework for reconciliation. It is seen as a confirmatory instrument that builds a standard of recognition that Indigenous Peoples can operate within (Anaya 2009: 196). At the basis it places an imperative on several factors: recognition of the historical relationship, self-determination, consent, and as well as recognition of legal, cultural, social, and economic rights derived from the unique relationship with the state. This section will look at how some of the factors, namely the role of self-determination, traces a thread to strong sustenance that is essential for the regrowth of the tree.

8.4.1 Self-government and self-determination

If we are going to talk about the next 150 years in this country, we need to have autonomy over our own life. Full stop. There just ... There's no question. There's no question about it. (McMahon 2017)

Self-government, and other forms of self-realization, was one area that has been identified in both the literature and by the participants. Like many Indigenous systems, there is not beginning or end to the notion of self-government. Participants presented a fluid notion of self-government/realization that goes beyond Indigenous control of Indigenous affairs. It broadens to a wholistic view of what it means to be governed. Just as Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies* suggested that Indigenous research can operate under a culturally relevant frame, so to is there a need for self-realization on an Indigenous level (1999).

Literature on decolonization suggests the need for control over one's own culture. Vandana Shiva noted that colonization's function of disempowerment created systems that went "over and above rendering local knowledge invisible by declaring it non-existent or illegitimate, the dominant system also makes alternatives disappear by erasing and destroying the reality which they attempt to represent" (1993: 12). Reconciliation, in some manner, is the empowerment of self-realization in a holistic sense, one that may be symbolically noted through self-government, but through the connections made beyond symbolic, regrows and reinvigorates self-worth and identity.

In understanding how harm and colonization affected other systems, we can understand why many of the participants identified self-government as a mode of reconciliation.

I asked the question: Why do you think as settler Canadians, why do you presume that you have any fucking say over my life anyway? What bullshit! Just sitting at home going, "Yeah, I want to have control over what these Indians are doing." What kind of person does that? What are you, racist? (McMahon 2017)

Self-determination or self-government do not necessarily emerge from a need to control within the state, but also from the need to reflect the values of Indigenous culture in everyday life. Cornthassel suggested that economic practices that exploited the land, centred on extractive and destructive economies practically demanded that Indigenous Peoples push for self-determination (2012: 96). The goal of secession from is not the primary aim, the restoring and affirming historical relationships Indigenous Peoples have with their environment but they argue they have an inherent right and responsibility “to land, to culture and to community: (Alfred 2005: 113). Article 46 of the *Declaration* suggests that the relationship with the state is responsible for the rights of Indigenous Peoples but Indigenous Peoples relationship with the land stems from a historical relationship that predates the state.

What this looks like in the practice of reconciliation will be discussed in 8.4.4. But the analysis of the literature and the responses of the participants suggest that while there is discussion on how broadly along the spectrum of autonomy from secession, self-government, and self-determination there is consensus that the federal government has not upheld both the recently affirmed obligations of the UNDRIP or its longstanding historical agreements such as the *Indian Act* and various numbered or negotiated treaties.

8.4.2 *Indian Act*

[T]hese treaties and these agreements and these efforts at reconciliation is like drawing this box and saying you can come out anytime you'd like, but you have to give something up or you have to, you have adhere to what we're telling you we want. Because this will always be on [their] terms. And that's how I see the government. The legislation hasn't changed, so we're stuck in that box. Do you want to leave that box? You want it to enfranchise from that *Indian Act*? (Spence 2017)

The *Indian Act* has been called by participants and the literature as a racist, colonial, and harmful document (Spillette 2017; Johnston 2017; Spence 2017; Mashkode Bizhiki 2017;

McMahon 2017; Boutilier 2017; Leslie 2002). It was devised without the consent or participation of Indigenous Peoples (Leslie 2002: 23). Chapter 4 discussed the evolution of the document and its use to coerce Indigenous Peoples, but that it is one of the few documents that entrenches the special relationship between the state and the Indigenous nations and Peoples in law (Leslie 2002: 27). From a reconciliation perspective examining the *Indian Act* would seem to be an important aspect as it controls daily activities in Indigenous lives from a legislative and policy standpoint. Many of the participants mentioned it but the TRC offered little guidance dealing the *Indian Act* (Boutilier 2017: 13).

Participants suggested that the control vested in the *Indian Act* has overarching colonial implications that make substantive changes to Indigenous ability to self-determine:

Well here's some truth from my perspective, as one leader of an organization. I believe, totally, that the *Indian Act* was put in place to render the treaties meaningless, virtually meaningless. To give absolute control over Indians and lands. And that's how sharing that you just mentioned never occurred. It gave them the power to come in and take the resources; the land, the minerals, the oil, the gas and whatever it is. And it is still there today. (Johnston 2017)

But the *Indian Act* is one of the only areas in Canadian law where Indigenous rights are entrenched. Dissolving it would be a leap of faith on behalf of the Indigenous Peoples, one that trusts in the untested norms of the UNDRIP. Spence agrees with the assessment, “so there's, there's a lot of things that could change, but how do you walk away from the *Indian Act*, when if you do your poor” (2017). Johnston feels, however, that it is so anachronistic that its existence undermines many of the goals of reconciliation, such as recognition, “it's like the *Indian Act* it's a construct that is paternalistic, that is colonial that is parental. We are the children and they need to take care of us” (Johnston 2017). Removing it is a necessary evil, and a necessary element of reconciliation, “one big one would be a commitment by the Government of Canada to put a process in place that would lead to the abolition of and

ending in *Indian Act*. It has to go” (Johnston 2017). But as the *Indian Act* bounds Indigenous Peoples into a block of text on a page, that box, as Spence suggested, requires trust in a state that has seldom given reason to trust:

“Lot of people are talking about that. Leaving the box means you give up all of these things that the government apparently is going to give these people, I mean accordance to these treaties that were made” (Spence 2017).

Johnston’s critique of the *Indian Act* serving as a structure to diminish the treaties is an important note within the discussion of the coloniality of power. The *Indian Act*, while entrenching certain rights embedded from the historical relationship between Indigenous peoples and the settlers serves as a cultural structure to enforce hegemony of a colonial hierarchy. Discussion in Canada to devolve the *Indian Act* in the past were discussed within the frame of liberalism in Chapter Four. The White Paper was an attempt to erase Indigenous identity under the guise of equal opportunity in a liberal spirit. Spence’s discussion of the ‘Box’ that Indigenous peoples are place in is a demonstration of the hierarchy in practice. My own personal narrative of my father’s peoples being enfranchised, stepping outside of their ‘Indigenous’ identity into the body politic is relevant here. Despite being enfranchised many Indigenous peoples still attended residential schools, as my father did, and the structures that exist in Canadian society, such as racism, still impose upon their lives. Plurinational identity within Canada has been discussed in this thesis as a national reality on paper subverted by the colonial project. The participants, as noted above, were unsure as to how best proceed but agreed that the *Indian Act* needed to be included on any discussion of reconciliation.

8.4.3 Treaties

Because the treaties were written in such a way where we're substantively not the way that our ancestors, like the land sharing and that kind of stuff, that parallel development, I think; although it wasn't a word that they

would've used, but I think that's the intent, and that's where in the Mohawk [history of the treaty] that two rows on wampum belts are, that two parallel development lanes. (Spillett 2017)

Treaties are the second area that needs to be addressed within this idea of self-determination and sustenance. Treaties are supposed to be living documents, their interpretation is supposed to evolve throughout history, but this is not always how Indigenous Peoples feel the government has treated them. We looked in Chapter 7 at how they have been used to disempower and stigmatize, one aspect was the annuity of \$5 which was supposed to be adjusted for inflation. One aspect of treaties is that of recognition (Boutilier 2017: 9; Anaya 2009: 15). Recognition in the treaty entails recognition of land, in order for the UNDRIP to apply in the case of consultation and self-determination is if the legal status of the land is recognized nationally (Anaya 2009: 15). One of the challenges is interpreting the treaties, this has been an issue due to their meaning actually being lost historically, according to KC Adams:

Actually, in the Manitoba Archives, I can't remember the author's name, she was doing a piece about Chief Peguis. In her book, she was talking about how they were starting to have conversations, the Europeans were starting to have conversations with this one specific tribe, and how they were able to... There was one person who was able to understand what they were saying in English, could speak English, but also spoke their own language. That person was designated as the holder of information, so that when they came back a year later, that one person was able to verbatim repeat everything that was said to them. (Adams 2017)

Frank Deer, Canada Research Chair on Indigenous Languages feels there is confusion surrounding attitudes regarding interpretation, and within the interpretation there is the possibility to misrepresent:

You'll observe what I said about the TRC Calls to Action. You pull them off the shelf, you read them, there they are. A treaty can be treated in a

similar way. It can be. It can be seen for the complex and historical sort of thing it is. But frequently it is not. When you situate a part of the Canadian Indigenous experience in treaties, it can be done in such a way that the children there develop principally a legislative view of Indigenous Peoples. And that's everywhere. You look no further than the bottom of web-based articles, and people's proxy for understanding Canadian Indigenous experience is tax-free shit, and everything else.

Therefore, they do have this legislative experience. That's not helpful to reconciliation. It might not bother me, if I'm one of the people that are being represented. And it does. (Deer 2017)

Interpretation of the treaties is one area of reconciliation that is essential, because it serves to legitimize many of the values of reconciliation, Anaya suggest that recognition is part of the process for self-determination and that it might be essential to put the process of fulfilling treaty obligations because “self-determination is an animating force for efforts toward reconciliation—or, perhaps, more accurately, conciliation” (Anaya 2009: 196). But some of the participants have expressed that given the economic stakes the government has no interest in honouring those historic agreements:

They don't care about the treaties that we're signed, which are all false treaties to us anyway. All those treaties do those numbered treaties do is allow the government to extract the resources from the land (Mashkode Bizhiki 2017).

8.4.4 Land

If there is going to be a discussion on sustenance, one that does not involve the continued practice of Indigenous Peoples surviving on the state's obligations met at a minimum level many of the participants suggest that there needs to be a discussion about land. Currently, as discussed in Chapter 4, land is not held individually on reservations, but is held collectively. Though the participants were not suggesting that individual ownership would be a way forward there was a suggestion, within the frame of the UNDRIP, recognition, and

self-determination, that land use should be under the control of the Indigenous Peoples. Currently self-sufficient acts of sustainability are actively blocked under federal policy

If I can't grow a field of potatoes without getting somebody's permission, I'm not in a position of strength. If you plant the potatoes on your own land, and you're selling them, you're in a position of strength. Sometimes it's just a matter of assuming the sovereignty that's already there and exercising it.
(Loney 2017)

Indigenous peoples in Canada have their own cultural and economic practices that have been marginalized by the patriarchal colonial system. Loney discusses how his work on Indigenous lands has been met with resistance from government funding. Initiatives to provide self-sufficient farming and food production is routinely rejected for funding while subsidized processed foods continue to be the only source of sustenance in many northern shops.

Indigenous peoples feel that their own land is not their own.

“There is something that we can do to get out of the *Indian Act* and it's sovereignty for the people. This is our land. If they want reconciliation give us our land back” (Mashkode Bizhiki 2017).

Indigenous peoples seek to rebuild their own relationship with the land through economic practices that are in keeping with their own cultures. “In most cases, Indigenous Peoples have a bond with our means of subsistence in far more than the physical sense. When Indigenous Peoples are denied that bond, we cease to be who we were created to be (White Face 1997: 68).”

Loney suggests that Indigenous people's initiatives for land use, based in culturally relevant practices make sense from a economic, social, and wellbeing standpoint. He suggests that the problem is in this patriarchal colonial relationship. It is not based in one of equality, nor is it an effective relationship. Indigenous peoples, as Roberta Jamieson pointed out in her

2017 talk, have an immense amount of resources derived from culturally relevant land use practices to contribute to the Canadian economy. Rather than being seen as benefactors, or subsidiaries, of government funds, a new relationship would allow this to change to a reciprocal and fruitful agreement.

Well, what if we changed those around and said, the power is with the First Nation and they're going to sell goods and services to the customer, which is the federal government. And those goods and services can be renewable energy, healthy food, and indigenous child welfare, which is keeping families together, would be three examples. That would save the federal government a lot of money. That process of changing those relationships is what I would call social innovation. Centered around, in this case, economic reconciliation. (Loney 2017)

8.4.5 Social and Structural Barriers

When then Indian Affairs Minister Jean Chretien said that “to be Indian meant to lack power” (Chrétien 1969: 4), he was reflecting a societal belief that was based in perception, not in reality. The progression of the reconciliation agenda in Canada, albeit from a non-Indigenous frame, has combatted many of these attitudes by building a new history. But poor accountability for past promises, such as those outlined in the residential school apology can also reinforce “racist attitudes and fuel civic distrust” (Canada 2015a: 8). Spence suggested at the end of the last chapter that reconciliation has the ability to harm (2017).

In Chapter Six participants identified structural barriers preventing Indigenous Peoples from fulfilling their own potential. These structures are forms of silent racism, in some cases, and serve to impede progress of Indigenous Peoples. Loney’s work looking at social enterprise and economic development with Indigenous Peoples gave him firsthand experience with these barriers:

A lot of times, you go to First Nations and they're stuck in the old paradigm, where they say, "I have to go and ask a bureaucrat if that's okay," or, "I have to go and ask for some money, so that I can do these things." (Loney 2017)

In another instance, Loney recalled how an initiative to grow food and raise poultry on a reservation which had one of the highest rates of diabetes, attributed to poor diet imported from the outside, was blocked of funding. This was due to the fact that the government would subsidize food coming in from outside of the reserve, often processed and conducive of poor diet, but refused to support, both bureaucratically and financially, healthy food initiatives (Loney 2017). These social barriers are especially evident when you compare immigrants and refugees in Canada to Indigenous peoples:

I don't think there's a limit to what can be achieved. Look at the immigrant groups that have come to the country, some with a nickel in their pockets and who have now become successful in our society. Give those same opportunities to Indigenous people, take away the prejudice and discrimination and why the hell wouldn't they succeed just as well as these other groups have? (Currie 2017)

As noted in Chapter Six, removing these barriers that are structurally and socially imposed would serve to increase the capacity for Indigenous Peoples to provide sustenance through recognition, self-determination, relief from legislative and structural blocks, and ability to support themselves in a culturally relevant frame.

8.5 Strong Wellbeing

Growth in a tree does not occur without the preconditions. It needs strong roots and good support. Literature on trees suggest that the roots can be four to seven times the diameter of the crown (Marritz 2018). We looked in Chapter Seven, Fig 3, at how the visible structures of the tree and its ecosystem are only reflective of the quality of the two unseen components, the roots and the sustenance. Strong wellbeing as a result of reconciliation is a

consequence, not an antecedent. But Indigenous Peoples are noticing that reconciliation is beginning to bear some fruit.

8.5.1 Youth connecting with culture

Education got us into this mess, and I believe that education will now get us out of it. (Justice Murray Sinclair, Chief Commissioner of the TRC 2015)

Iroquois teachings speak of the seventh-generation principle, *Gayanashagowa*. Decisions made today should be framed within the concept that it is the seventh generation that you are making this decision for. As noted in Chapter 4, this teaching has relevance. Canada's 150th birthday is roughly the same duration as seven generations, so too is the first residential schools. Reconciliation needs to make decisions based within the Indigenous framework of *Gayanashagowa*. The roots set down today will bear the fruit of those future generations.

Participants were very clear that reconciliation needed to engage with Indigenous youth, and evidence of this happening on a grass-roots level was reflected by the participants (McMahon 2017). This evidence was seen in how Indigenous youth engaged within the cultural void, filling the gaps left from harmful policies, and taking up the space negotiated through previous resistances:

If you looked at just Manitoba, at least talking about this group of youth that we have right now, and they are such extraordinary youth that they are this generation that's growing up ... This new generation that's growing up completely immersed within their culture and taught to be in their culture, that they're proud, that they're all these things. But that space for many people came from years of struggle. (Fontaine 2017)

Other participants are actively involved in this practice. Michael Redhead-Champagne is a young community organizer, and his work is a part of a network of other Indigenous youth operating in the negotiated space, his initiative in Winnipeg's inner city "was founded

because young people were hungry for a sense of connection with one another. Young people were hungry for opportunities to learn about the beauty and their culture identity yes. And young people were fed up with funding cuts of government that change all the time and changed their mind all the time. So that was the motivating to some of the motivating factors behind us getting started (2017).

The funding gaps and lack of support is a contributing factor to the Sick Tree relationship we saw in Chapter Seven. But grass-roots initiatives like Redhead-Champagne's are not isolated, Indigenous communities are recognizing that if reconciliation is not going occur on their terms, they can do it themselves:

We're taking back responsibility of dealing with our own sociological issues in the community. We're seeing it spread nation-wide, so I'm confident that ground is being made. I know it doesn't look like that, to some, but I'm feeling it. (Favel 2017)

This process, as noted, is not backward looking. Programs like the TRC have done work to create a new history, albeit negotiated within the mandates outlined by the funders for those works. But this process is forward looking to, building up the seventh-generation principle, noting that some attitudes might not change now:

And some people never will. Some people never will. But if you look at the kids today ... The kids that are students now are growing and I always say this to kids when I speak at their schools. I always say like you guys are growing up in an era that my generation, my grandparents' generation, nobody talked about indigenous history or residential schools. So, imagine when you're getting those teachings and you're creating that space to better understand. (Fontaine 2017)

8.5.2 Arts

This thesis engaged with people from many perspectives, one perspective that it was particularly interest in engaging with was artists and creators. The TRC made some mention of the importance of the arts, and the survivors often spoke of the harm to their cultural identity (Canada 2015a: 317). At the same time, organizations like the Aboriginal Healing Foundation found that cultural healing interventions were prevalent in grass-roots community-based healing (Canada 2015a: 330). As a healing mechanism, art was especially important. Individual survivors used art to liberate themselves from some of the past harm (Ratuski 2013). Art also serves as apppoint of resistance, expressing things that could not be said or challenging perceived truths:

Well, again this is just about the resilience and the sheer strength and will of people to communicate through art. Artists are on the front line having to decipher these experiences and translate them into a form that can communicate the emotional experiences, the lived experiences, the histories and that's the project for an Indigenous artist and a lot of artists are doing that. (Monkman 2017)

Kent Monkman's work directly challenged these national myths and attitudes. Monkman used the Canada 150 national celebration to highlight moments in Canadian history that had not been reflected in dominant societies artistic outputs. Speaking to the CBC Radio Monkman stated, "Many of these chapters of Canadian history are not found in our art history. There were no paintings that showed the dispossession of Indigenous people from their land, there were no paintings that showed the incarceration of Poundmaker and Big Bear, there were no paintings that showed the removal of children from our communities" (*Unreserved* 2017). Artists serve to also find limits, temporary or permanent, of healing within society, acting as both explorers and guides to mark territory to those negotiating reconciliation. Art can also act as a proxy to allow communities, individuals, and cultures to

navigate 'irreconcilable spaces', places such as experiences, traumas, locations, attitudes, and histories (Canada 2015a: 281).

Artists, as these proxies for society, can directly connect with the reconciliation framework we set out in Chapter 5.6. Art can serve to re-present, re-vise, re-claim, re-name, re-member, re-connect, and re-cover.

I feel like one role that art or artists have, is bringing back that thought process of how everyone has a role, and how everyone, we all need to work together as a community. Ceremony, also connecting, instead of following ... Artists have a role in bringing back culture and bringing back pride and teaching that knowledge. (Adams 2017)

KC Adams saw herself as having multiple roles: teacher, learner, facilitator, explorer, advocate, and survivor. Her photography work directly challenged stereotypes. Her project *Perception* used large installations such as billboards and marquees and would feature two sides, one would be a photo of an Indigenous person with stereotypical roles in large block letters, these would also include derogatory terms that were historically acceptable for Indigenous Peoples. The other side would be another photo of the same individual but this time featuring text that stated their actual roles and titles. These open invitations for all Canadians to interrogate their attitudes are just one area where Indigenous arts contribute to reconciliation. Although the two participants in this thesis, Adams and Monkman, have negotiated themselves into public spaces such as the National Gallery of Canada there is still a need for reconciliation to have a space where Indigenous art is seen as equal and necessary. But this is not without its own tension:

But it's, you know, Indigenous people have also faced a lot of barriers in terms of getting their work into the mainstream and to have these forms of expression acknowledged and appreciated and, you know, generations have been fighting to get past the gatekeepers of all the institutions that, you know, we're all conspiring to kind of maintain the status quo or to

basically maintain the mainstream narrative of this country. (Monkman 2017).

But the place of the arts in reconciliation is an important one. It is healing, it is emancipatory, and it is reflective of where society is, and where society could be.

8.6 Replanting or Regrowing the Tree

We started this thesis with a reflection from Spence, an activist actively resisting contemporary colonial oppression and challenging the top-down centric form of reconciliation. But Spence is also a mother. In many Indigenous cultures the privilege to carry the sacred water, tied to motherhood, is also a responsibility to protect that water. Reconciliation is not just a word to Indigenous Peoples, looking back at how Indigenous Peoples have discussed reconciliation to me I can see that they wait patiently while non-Indigenous Canadians struggle with the importance of the task, struggle with the recognition of their role in the harm and trauma, the structures and cultures, and the challenges and opportunities that reconciliation poses. I can see that in many ways Indigenous Peoples embrace the struggles that non-Indigenous peoples have in coping with their role and facilitate their understanding of this history. But Indigenous Peoples are also aware of their role in reconciliation, and that it must reflect Indigenous perspectives on what has value in their society.

Spence suggested that paternalistic attitudes and structures such as the *Indian Act* are destructive in the same way that reconciliation can be destructive. She uses the analogy of a behaviour box in a school setting. The behaviour box she is alluding to was drawn on the floor by the teacher, when a child misbehaved it had to stand in the box. Nothing was physically keeping the children in the box but there were consequences for leaving it. Spence says that this forced compliance based on manufactured consequences is evident in the relationship between Indigenous and the government:

So these children were compliant and that's what I see how these, these treaties and these agreements and these efforts, at reconciliation is like drawing this box and saying you can come out anytime you'd like, but you have to give something up or you have to, you have to adhere to what we're telling you we want. Because this will always be on our terms. And that's how I see the government. The legislation hasn't changed, so we're stuck in that box. (Spence 2017)

Indigenous people suffer through reconciliation that has been 'drawn' on the ground, 'boxing' them in with expectations of compliance to values that are not their own. She suggested that Indigenous people have a sacred connection, in Chapter Two we discussed this connection, this worldview. Spence says we embrace our obligation to respect this connection in the everyday symbols that the world shows us, the placenta being a tree. Its roots are broad, connected back to the mother to show how important we are in providing for the future. The branches and leaves are connected to the child, smaller because they rely on our guidance, but no less important as all that we have to give, we give. Spence suggest that this connection is essential, "that's our nourishment, that's our air, it's the oxygen we breathe" (2017).

We noted the importance of reconciliation being relationally accountable to Indigenous Peoples. Looking back at the tree what we don't see is as important as what we see, sick roots from intergenerational harm weaken the other structures. But this is not an isolated system, the soil and nourishment that occur from underfunding, cultural biases, structural violence, and cultural violence.

Reconciliation is less of an act or collection of actions than a recalibration of structures and relationships. It is about challenging the colonial project and recognising that Indigenous peoples are not just the purpose of reconciliation but that non-Indigenous peoples need reconciliation in their own way, to rebuild their own society to reflect their own reality. The structure presented in Chapter Five, the locating practice, can be used as a map for navigating and planning a decolonised structure that is based on recognition and respect.

The re-presentation of Indigenous culture as an equal, not an antagonist, is an alternative to operating within the cultural system currently used in Canada. Re-visioning allows for an examination of colonial power, patriarchy, and the extent that they pervade decision making affecting aspects of the tree such as sustenance. Re-claiming is linked to the disenfranchised identity and culture of Indigenous peoples, it is an essential aspect of wellbeing in this tree, Indigenous practices and structures articulating for Indigenous lives within a plurinational state. Re-connecting relates to the dividing of the nation not for the purpose of devolution but for the purpose of empowering and reorganising based on the realities that exist in Canada. Certain realities expressed by the participants such as that Indigenous peoples have been afforded the right to self-determination and self-government by the negotiated treaties and contracts that are historically embedded. Structures such as the *Indian Act* serve to enforce a hierarchy, demean Indigenous knowledges, and entrench cultural systems of the coloniser. Re-covering is a process of growth that occurs outside of the enforced structure examining and interrogating Indigenous practices and knowledges. Outside of the colonial structure is the only place where this can occur, if the roots are bound within the confines of a small space the tree can never truly flourish, its true wellbeing limited by an external construction. Colonialism has placed a 'box' around Indigenous peoples and their true potential cannot be ascertained while operating within that box.

Chapter 9. Conclusion

When I talk to you, I want you to listen to me. I don't want to be ignored. I don't want to be pushed in the back row or pushed out the door. I don't want to be that way. There is an issue at hand. It has to do with my people, and I want to say something about it. I'm not going to send a white person to represent me. I'm going to represent myself because I speak from the heart. If people stand in front of me, if they stand in my way, I will kick their ---. If they walk behind me, I will throw all kinds of ---- on them, but, if they walk beside me, I will be their friend. And, as a Native person, I'm not going to sit back any longer and let the world run by me. I'm going to say my speech whether you do anything about it or not. It doesn't bother me because I know I've tried. (Marvin Smoker at Winnipeg Public Hearing, September 10, 1982)³⁷

9.1 Summary

Prior to the national celebration for Canada's 150th Birthday Mohawk Elder suggested that her way of commemorating the event was to "celebrate the survival of my people, against all odds" (*Ideas* 2017). The survival of Indigenous people against these odds: cultural genocide, residential schools, colonization, racism, structural and cultural violence is due to resistance and resilience in the face of those overwhelming odds Jamieson suggested. Indigenous Peoples have survived but their challenges are not overcome. Reconciliation has not been a panacea, for it has been a tool of the west to legitimise its compartmentalization of harm and it acts as state sponsored absolution.

I have often felt that reconciliation is a train. Its destination is unknown to all but the builders of its tracks. Indigenous Peoples are given tickets, they know not where they

³⁷ Cited in Kimelman 1985: 5

are going and how long the trip will take. They are told to trust the process, that this is all for them. If this journey is for them, why have they not had a role in building the line. Why are they on a strict timeline? In Canada the TRC had a fixed duration in its mandate, as did the MMIWG Inquiry, as did the CEP residential school settlement. Indigenous Peoples are told to get on the train, it is the only train and it will not be coming back to the start again, this is progress. But this is not progress. This is colonization all over again. This is the same attitudes that were generated from a superiority complex, non-Indigenous peoples knew better than Indigenous Peoples. This thesis confronted those attitudes. It sought to build not a train, but a path that could be travelled by all, on their own time, at their own pace. It privileged Indigenous perspectives and reflected those perspectives in a relationally accountable worldview. It, in of itself, is not a panacea either.

I wanted reconciliation to be understood not as a symptom of one event, one policy, or one attitude. It wanted to frame reconciliation in a holistic perspective, recognizing that a relationship, like many things is a living entity.

There have been six stages in this PhD research. First, I noted the need within Canadian society to account for the past harm and trauma inflicted upon the Indigenous Peoples. Second, I noted, and will further challenge in this closing chapter, that reconciliation has operated as another colonial project, using modes of thinking and doing, methods, and practices that are generated from the dominant discourse. Third, I suggested that Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing, should be used to decolonize the reconciliation practice and shift the discourse into a more relevant frame that reflects the voices and worldviews of the harmed and disempowered. Theirs was the harm felt, their healing should not conflict with their values to conform to the perspectives of healing owned by the harmers. I examined ways of knowing, being, and doing and highlighted characteristics from literature and practice that informs what can be called an Indigenous research paradigm. I then articulated my Indigenous

research paradigm and examined how it was to be applied in this research. Fourth, I outlined how I translated my Indigenous research paradigm into practice based on existing research methods from dominant practice as well as proxies for Indigenous practice. Fifth, I examine the literature around reconciliation, noting the evolution of the term in a societal setting and the implications of that understanding upon this thesis. I noted how several frameworks operated in reconciliation to further entrench practices that evolved out of a western mode of thinking. I examined how the TRC of Canada defined reconciliation and critiqued its adherence to the dominant frame as well as suggesting another framework for reconciliation informed from Indigenous knowledge practice. Finally, I used my Indigenous research paradigm, framework for reconciliation and my worldview to analyze attitudes towards reconciliation encountered during fieldwork and knowledge shared from Elders and leaders in the Winnipeg Indigenous community. I built a narrative and structure from understanding reconciliation showing how they can be interpreted within a natural circular representation that is in keeping with Indigenous knowledge practice and acts as a means for building reconciliation practice that acknowledges the circular pattern evident in both nature and in the cycle of harm that is present in Canadian society. I demonstrate how an Indigenous research paradigm can be a valid tool for informing practice and answering social questions, noting that the compartmentalization of harm and reconciliation in Canada that has emerged from isolating practices identified by Tafoya and Wilson in non-Indigenous worldviews serves to create more problems by not acknowledging the context.

This chapter builds upon the previous chapters, most notably drawing together the critique of non-Indigenous worldviews as a process of colonization in reconciliation, the validity of Indigenous research practice to answer challenges to Indigenous Peoples, and the use of an Indigenous research paradigm to draw upon Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing to represent knowledge in a culturally relevant and useful frame. I add to the narrative suggested in the Introduction and further defined in both

the Knowing, Being, and Doing Chapter and the Methods Chapter that Indigenous research has the capacity to provide alternative perspectives to previously researched and examined social questions, challenges, and opportunities. I will highlight in this chapter that there is a troubling trend in reconciliation research in Canada to alienate Indigenous perspectives through an Indigenous worldview to the margins of research. Finally, I will suggest opportunities for further study in reconciliation and beyond in matters concerning Indigenous Peoples that have neglected to include Indigenous research practice as a mode of inquiry.

The legacy of colonialism is embedded in my family history. My father attended a residential school, his Indian band was enfranchised, their lands acquired by individuals with close connections to the government of the time and sold off for their own profit. My maternal history is that of recent immigration from England and Ireland, both maternal grandparents were first generation Canadians. My lived experience is that of one, like many, who operates in between two groups, negotiating the privilege and trauma as a means of reconciling within myself those two heritages. The reconciliation discourse too in Canada is a negotiation. As my research journey informed my understanding of an Indigenous worldview and the imperative that faces Indigenous researchers, I came to understand this negotiation, especially as my chosen medium of invoking that negotiation was the western academy through a doctoral thesis. I noted in Chapter Six some aspects of how this research journey evolved, and though elements of this thesis reflect the destination of that research journey, this journey was epistemological, personal, experiential, spiritual, and essential.

Chapter Two, Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing, moved the discussion in the introduction to reflect what authors like Smith and Rigney suggest is the imperative of Indigenous research. Noting the historical disempowerment of Indigenous knowledge practice and worldview, this culture has persisted. Foucault would suggest that

“regimes of truth” exist to maintain hegemony over knowledge practice. In her discussion on feminism and race, bell hooks notes that these ‘regimes’ create a self-fulfilling culture that builds on the othering stereotypes noted by academics like Said. To challenge these ‘regimes’ I outlined in Chapter Two the need for relationally accountable research that honours Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing.

At the heart of this project is an effort to provide a framework for looking at a social question through an Indigenous research lens. The Context chapter outlines the harm and trauma that the Indigenous Peoples of Canada have faced since first contact in the 15th century. This cultural genocide, as labelled by documents such as the Final Report of the TRC of Canada and former Prime Minister of Canada Paul Martin in 2013, is part of a process of colonization that was embedded in worldview of the colonizer and diminished the agency of Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing. This leaves the researcher with a paradox when seeking to understand the process of reconciliation in Canada. The status quo of mainstream reconciliation efforts that have increasingly used Indigenous voices but occur because the hegemonic power structure allows them to operate only under the limitation and applications of the state. The RCAP suggested a multitude of changes but had no authority to enforce its recommendations. It was also hampered by limitations to its ability to demand records from organizations that participated in the trauma towards Indigenous Peoples. This means that the regime of reconciliation was not separated from the culture of structural harm that has persisted in contemporary Canadian society. Faced with the realization that Indigenous Peoples did not control reconciliation, beyond their grass-roots efforts and resistance, it was important to define the parameters of a research output based on culturally relevant and reflective values.

As an academic, it is not enough to just offer a sympathetic voice, to repackaged harm in a manner fitting of another worldview alone. Author, academic, and activist bell hooks summarizes this dilemma with clarity:

No need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself. No need to hear your voice. Only tell me about your pain. I want to know your story. And then I will tell it back to you in a new way. Tell it back to you in such a way that it has become mine, my own. Re-writing you, I write myself anew. I am still author, authority. I am still the colonizer, the speaking subject. and you are now at the center of my talk. (hooks 1989: 204)

The cultural imperative to operate in a relevant frame was also reflected in the process of deconstruction and interpretation of narratives from this same frame. Stories and nuances, interpretive practice, and worldviews would be an essential aspect that, while impossible to sanitise from the influence of colonialism and the dominant worldview, provide insight from another vector. Robert Beckford notes the use of cultural expression as a means of deconstructing the relationships in, between, and around culture. The use of an Indigenous culture of research represents an opportunity to renegotiate and challenge ideas of identity and repression within a relationship, never operating outside of system of power, but in contrast to it (2006: 4). This process of deconstruction is part of a shifting of both identity and culture, and within an Indigenous reality, this deconstruction must evolve to fit that new reality. Beckford's analysis of Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*, notes that rather than see identity as fixed, like the roots of a tree, there is a space for a 'nomadic' aspect wherein a 'cutting' of a culture, which retains the heritage of that culture, is replanted within a spatial/temporal/cultural fix and evolves to operate within that fixed reality (2006: 5). The Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing Chapter acted as the defining of the lineage and values of that original tree, but the Methods Chapter acted as the replanting of the 'clipping' of that tree within the context of the contemporary academy.

Other cultures have used contemporary forms as a means of expressing their cultural identity within the dominant frame. As Beckford's suggestion of dub acting as mode of deconstructing and reconstructing identity within a cultural idiom or hegemonic

structure, the Methods Chapter looks to transpose Indigenous research imperatives into research practice that operates within the hegemonic structure and offers resistance and reform. The Methods Chapter looked at how to operationalize the Indigenous worldview within a research framework, establishing a method that would examine the research question and provide a useful mode for future research that is relationally accountable. This process was validated by an examination of prevailing literature on the topic of reconciliation, noting the hegemonic power structure that flowed out of western historical development in the field of religion and politics and highlighted the need to provide a context for understanding those 'regimes' that actualize paradigms within a field.

The Literature Review provided an overview of reconciliation in a contemporary context. It was the second act of this research endeavour and would take the theory of the previous chapters and start to establish a rationale for changing the research regime. Authors like de Gruchy noted the paradox of political and religion that shaped the idea of reconciliation. These ideas were then applied across the reconciliation practice and while efforts were made to liberalize and universalize the practice these were acted out within the mode of the dominant worldview. Phillips' (2005) suggestion that reconciliation is a political process that uses recognition as a tool is also verified in local actors in Canada such as Coulthard who call this practice part of the 'politics of recognition' (Coulthard 2014). Reconciliation is difficult, but this perception is used to hinder progress and limit the ability to which aspects of reconciliation can be achieved. This chapter analyzed how the Canadian government has engaged in this practice, noting the definition of the RCAP and the TRC are at odds with the historical context (Chrisjohn and Wasacase 201) and even the anecdotes shared by Elders within the final reports (Canada 2015e). Various frameworks for reconciliation were discussed and I suggested that a valid form of reconciliation that may remedy Indigenous Peoples would need to occur from a decolonized and Indigenous frame, namely a process that

would honour the values of: re-presentation, re-vision, re-claiming, re-naming, remembering, re-connecting, and re-covering. This view of reconciliation serves not to just suggest what should be done. Using this (re)-framing perspective it is also possible to see that reconciliation has operated within a certain regime that is like the 'invisible hand' of Adam Smith, putting self-interest of the hegemonic community silently above the needs of the individuals by offering a monolithic version of humanity over a pluralistic reality.

The application of an alternative view of research practice was realized in my three Findings chapters. The Chapter Six offered an account of my research journey within the context of my pre-fieldwork, fieldwork, and post-fieldwork periods. Work with participatory research and Elders was met with similar challenges, albeit post data collection. Chapter Six serves to identify the immediate results of the data findings within the context of my contact with the participants and the sharing of knowledge. Because I was informed by my Indigenous worldview but needed to further refine my own research identity the process in this chapter is both reflective and mundane. What is important is that Indigenous research practice can look a lot like the tools of non-Indigenous. But when challenging myself to find interpretations I was met with the same challenges that Simmonds had, namely the data was not lending itself to being deconstructed in a manner that was honouring both its telling, and its cultural frame of reference. This would be remedied, I feel, by the transition of interpretive mode to one that was both personal and centred in an Indigenous worldview.

Chapter Seven and Eight, the Sick Tree and the Healthy Tree, are the realization of a mode of inquiry that is based around honouring Indigenous values. As noted earlier, this practice is by no means totemic or universal. The research journey is personal, as Goulet recalled, real knowledge is experiential, and the receiver of the knowledge transits a multitude of experiences that validate the knowledge such as the act of

listening, dreaming, thinking, and acting after the research ceremony concludes (1998).

My own research experience was a personal process of responsibility and learning.

My framework for interpreting an understanding of reconciliation was formatted through this process, and the outcome was a pathway to rearticulating the knowledge and stories in a manner that reflected Indigenous worldviews. The idea of a tree, the circular relationship between the wellbeing of that tree, and the systems imposing and helping that wellbeing were identified. This practice allowed me to see reconciliation beyond the rhetoric and in a practical light. It allowed me to honour the circular relationship in nature and move beyond restating what is seen to connecting that to what is unseen. In this process I utilized the need to place context over isolation, another essential element of my Indigenous research paradigm. This in practice was the use of long quotations, to allow the words to teach lessons and the stories to stand within their own didactic mode.

In my Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing Chapter it is suggested that this would be an important turn in contrast to some research practices. The need to, as Bloch (1949) suggests, observe and report, rather than deconstruct, isolate, and analyse, fits in with what participant Jason Bone (2017) suggested was the paradox of western knowledge. His story of *Sa'be* or *sasquatch* and how it was a creature of the dreamworld, hence its analysis in our waking world was unrealistic, because in this world its existence was fleeting to non-existent.

Again, the purpose of this thesis was to articulate an Indigenous perspective on reconciliation in Canada. The findings showed that this was best achieved through a process embedded in an Indigenous worldview. The symbolic frame of the tree suggested that in a healthy, thriving outcome, there were aspects unseen that contributed to that end. In many regards, this might be a useful means of articulating the Indigenous experience, but the process of articulation was the central desire. An

analysis of the data based on this view would suggest that reconciliation in Canada needs to utilize Indigenous voices and worldviews to understand how to best achieve it.

These outcomes see the continued resistance to colonial thinking, the rejection of structures and attitudes that project harm, and the re-invigoration of Indigenous Peoples utilizing their inherent capacities, misunderstood by contemporary non-Indigenous peoples to fulfill their lives and futures. Many of the claims of the participants, that the social, judicial, and economic systems continued to harm them were not new. The concept of an existential form of reconciliation was one that emerged, the idea that reconciliation with the earth, all of the aspects within the domain, even objects seen as inanimate such as rocks and the water, were a key and equal part of Indigenous reconciliation. This would factor into other components of existential reconciliation that involved policy.

The idea of economic inequality is expressed in much of the Canadian literature on Indigenous Peoples of Canada. But within the existential frame, development that came with an impact to their worldview on the environment was impossible. Indigenous people cannot take part in development/reconciliation that undermines their relationship with the earth. This suggests that the premise of the thesis was again validated in the sense that there are duelling realities in reconciliation, something that the literature on the compartmentalization of reconciliation in Canada suggests. It is also validated in the sense that in the 'irreconcilable' nature of these two competing claims to reconciliation need not meet in a middle ground, because this would require a submission of the harmed to the worldviews of the traumatisers. What is needed is research that reflects the values of the Indigenous Peoples, articulates that framework and rationale for their resistance to previous reconciliation efforts, and only then a negotiation can occur into that contested space of reconciliation.

9.2 My Journey

This research was a journey. I reflected on my own growth, the way that this process affected me. I entered this project as an Indigenous person embedded in a research practice informed by my training at a western academic institution. My experience with Indigenous research was not much different that what Linda Smith had cautioned against, I was at risk of being an insider committing the sort of 'fraud' that hooks alludes to. This became problematic prior to me entering the field, looking at the literature on reconciliation and placing it within my own presented challenges when trying to understand my own personal history. I was mindful when I entered the field of my own agency but as my use of western methods and a need to maintain the objective frame became at odds with the research process and my own understanding of colonisation there was increasing tension.

This tension left me with two options, use the tools devised by a western-positivist research practice to 'overcome' barriers of agency and legitimacy, or find an embedded culturally relevant practice built upon my own Indigeneity. Choosing the second liberated me in a sense because it allowed me the ability to apply a contextualised frame to a question that was itself highly contextualised. By separating the influence from colonialism, or recognising the influence of colonialism, the need to justify in the face of 'adequate' western derived social science tools diminished. My rationalisation was less along the lines of critiquing one practice and advocating for another but rather about using the most relevant approach for the research.

By making the work relationally accountable I was able to move away from a negotiated space where I was articulating a definitive account and to a lived space where I was sharing my own experience. This was important because it allowed me to reflect deeper understandings and draw inspiration from my own feelings more readily.

9.3 Limitations of the Work

This thesis operates under several limitations. The obvious limitation to state upfront is that of my own positionality. I am an Indigenous researcher working within a research paradigm that arises from the Indigenous argument that knowledge is personal and subjective. As such it is part of a journey that accounts for the values of the researcher, reflects the expected role and values that the researcher operates in, and then negotiates the relationship with the knowledge. Furthermore, the reader should note my familial tie to the research topic of reconciliation as the child of a residential school survivor, as well my status as an Indigenous person who is also non-Indigenous from my maternal side. As suggested by Beckford, and building upon ideas of Foucault and hooks, I operate within an overarching culture that is as omnipresent and inescapable as it is invisible and unobservable. It would be naïve to suggest that my Indigenous research paradigm is able to articulate within its own frame outside of the influence of that dominant culture.

I also note the limitation of doing an Indigenous research paradigm within the western academy. This was discussed in *Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing* Chapter where I specifically chose to articulate ways to transpose non-Indigenous methods into an Indigenous research project.

From a contextual standpoint this thesis has two primary limitations. First, it is geographically fixed to Winnipeg, Canada due to the need to narrow the research scope. What I articulate in my findings is not a definitive account of all Indigenous Peoples across Canada. What was important for this thesis was to establish both the need and practice for doing research within Indigenous communities with an Indigenous worldview at its heart. This limitation acts as an opportunity for further study, something further examined later in this chapter and expressed upon in the implications section. The second limitation is the inclusion of participants who are again geographically or culturally centred within a narrow community outside of the totality of

the Indigenous Peoples and their experiences. I discussed this limitation in Chapter Six. What is important to note about this limitation is that many of the participants were keenly aware of their own agency to represent themselves, and seldom more than that. This was a common theme of the participants and I would suggest it is a theme I engaged in as a researcher. Knowledge is a personal experience, and a personal experience is of limited scope. This is a limitation made explicit in both the methodology as well as in the findings.

9.4 Contribution and Future Application

As noted in the Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing Chapter, Indigenous research values and worldviews are already being used in fields such as public health, social services, justice, law, and education. Methods have a firm place in social sciences, albeit often presented as a sub-set of critical epistemologies (Denzin, Lincoln and Smith) rather than a research paradigm of its own. There is a gap in application of Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing to the field of reconciliation, as indeed a broader gap to applying those lessons to other social, economic, and cultural challenges.

This thesis expanded upon other practitioners and academics who have stated the theoretical frame and imperative for Indigenous research. The focus of this study was to create an Indigenous research paradigm that could be applied to the often researched field of reconciliation in Canada, I will note in the next section how this field is increasingly filled with non-Indigenous voices, privileging a non-Indigenous worldview, and co-opting modes of inquiry by placing them solely within a non-Indigenous setting. This is not a critique of the work of allies and well-intentioned researchers nor a demand that this research stop, but there is a need for caution.

When doing work, many Indigenous Peoples will often start with a land acknowledgment. Before the activity, be it research, ceremony, public event, or other

activity, the first act is to acknowledge what is being done, but most importantly, where the work is being done. They will directly name the Peoples whose land this act is being done on, thank them for allowing this to take place, and pledge to honour their traditions. Research is being done on Indigenous Peoples; their physical places, bodies, and territories, and the cultural/metaphysical places; their ceremonies, cultures, identities, and practices. The research in this thesis seeks to expand that land acknowledgement to research, so that it moves beyond a public acknowledgement of the spatial, temporal, and cultural to an academic acknowledgement to honor those same values in research.

The research question asked, 'what is an Indigenous perspective on reconciliation in Canada'. But this same research prefix, 'what is an Indigenous perspective...' could serve as the basis of application of this thesis upon any field that Indigenous Peoples ask the question of their agency and inclusion in the overall discourse, especially when non-Indigenous society has been historically quick to suggest or question why Indigenous Peoples are over-served or represented in that field, such as contact with child and family services or the criminal justice system.

The process used here, establishing the need for an Indigenous frame, through a review of the literature, establishing context, and noting previous practice, building an Indigenous research paradigm that is relationally accountable and culturally relevant, and finding ways to collect, understand, and transmit data in a manner that reflects Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing, are all key tasks in moving this practice beyond this thesis into other fields and inquiry. The codification and application of a research version of the land acknowledgement is an important step in centering and tying the research to those it affects the most. Cree scholar Karyn Recollet stated that the land acknowledgement "reminds us we are accountable to these relationships and to remind us every day... of the accountability that everybody has to listen to the concerns of the community and how we can align to our [Indigenous] community"

(Shahzad 2017). A land acknowledgement is a social contract, it personal and binding and forces the one giving it to ask how they benefit from occupying the physical space of that acknowledgment. A research land acknowledgement would extend that concept to ideas, cultures, practices, worldviews, and identity and offer the same agreement, noting the relationship necessary to do research and the expectations of doing that research within a relationally accountable frame.

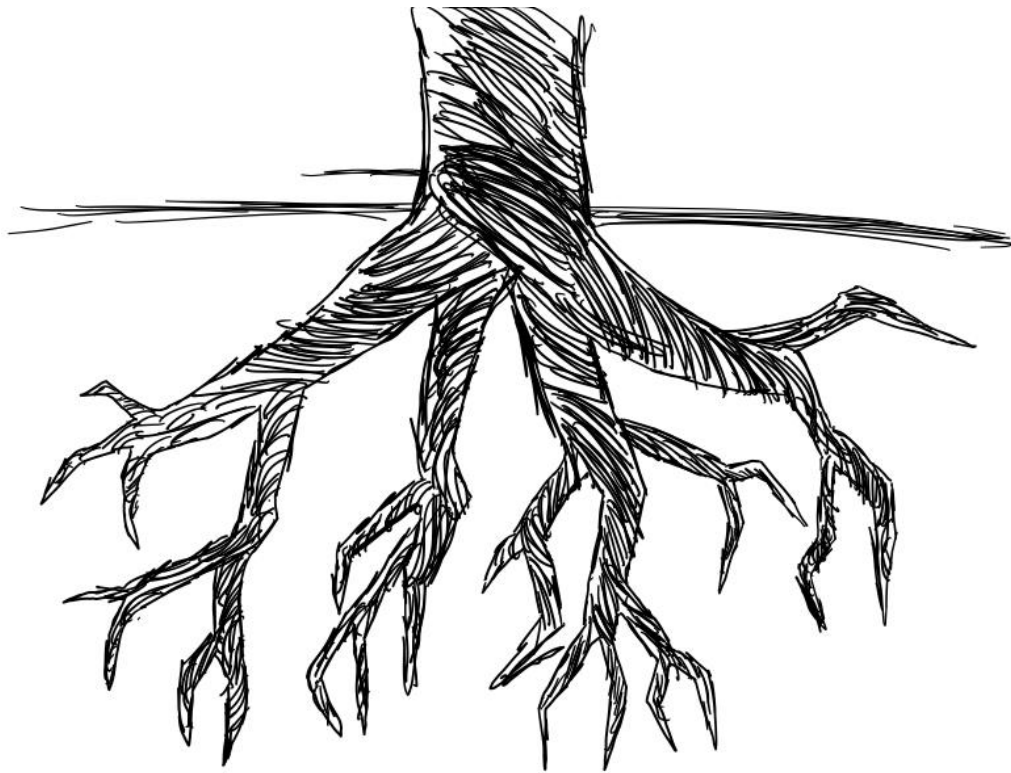
Two contributions that emerged from the application of an Indigenous knowledge paradigm to a reconciliation setting were the idea that Indigenous needs in reconciliation need to be firmly articulated. Specifically, reconciliation that does not include a discussion beyond the human connects, reconciliation that does not ask the bear, or beaver, or river, or tree, or rock, or mountain is not reconciliation. It is, to put it as harshly as McMahon stated in this thesis, just to make non-Indigenous people feel better (2017). This reconciliation is existential as it is environmental, Indigenous Peoples see the wholistic connection with the physical and metaphysical world as one and the same. This leads to the second suggestion, reconciliation is best represented as this living and breathing tree. To see one aspect is to isolate it from another. The research adage of 'relational accountability' and emphasis on contextualized understanding in an Indigenous research paradigm needs to be applied to our understanding of this social problem.

9.5 Closing the Circle

In order to close the circle, it is important to reflect on the need for Indigenous values in research to operate within the academy, their use on suggesting Indigenous knowledge as part of a design in providing clarity and analysis entrenched as legitimate and necessary. The thesis started by reflecting this need and will end by reflecting the need to do more. As some of the participants suggested, reconciliation is becoming an

industry (Spillett 2017; Deer 2017; McMahon 2017) and there is evidence that academia is playing a part in creating this industry of reconciliation. Earlier in this chapter I suggested that research on the field is increasing but representations of Indigenous worldviews in the discourse are lagging. A survey of the literature on reconciliation or its analogues in Canada suggests that the field grew by 1040.6% in the period of 1991-2008 compared with the period of 1950-1991. Though this increase is also attributed to increasing awareness surrounding the issue in the social and academic domain, it is well beyond the expected growth of literature in other fields, adjusted for inflation over time. What is troubling about this growth is that of the 64,900 results returned from a search of academic literature on Google Scholar, only a small fraction (889) referenced Indigenous knowledge (or some variance) and worldviews. An examination of some of these further results showed that most references were not generated by using an Indigenous research paradigm but were based on assumed cultural values and worldviews.

To revisit the hooks quote from earlier in this chapter, Indigenous stories are being captured, analyzed, and retransmitted in the colonizer's voice for their own gain, even if the outgoing agenda is one of assisting decolonization and emancipation. This further reinforces the need to address this culture in the academy, as well as counteracting these attitudes in the social, political, and cultural sphere. But it is also essential for Indigenous Peoples to tell their own research stories; to celebrate the telling of these stories, and to retell these stories as their ancestors would have. This process is the imperative for the next generation of Indigenous researchers, to take their place in the research culture with practices that have emerged from their worldviews. To celebrate not only the diversity of voices that are essential to reflecting the cosmopolitan of identities, but also the demand a recognition of identities and their imperative to be relationally accountable. No longer does the story of the hunt need to be told only by the hunter.



Chapter 10. Bibliography

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Appendices

Appendix 1. – Information Sheet



Participant Information Sheet

Panacea, Placebo, or Problem: An examination of prescribed transitional justice in Canada
Ian Calliou – Doctoral Researcher, CTPSR

What is the research about?

This project is hoping to understand how reconciliation efforts on behalf of the Canadian government has affected indigenous people in Canada. It will look at how effective they have been in achieving their stated goals, and how it has addressed unstated needs of indigenous peoples. It seeks to understand what some the successes have been, how needs have evolved, and what are some of the shortcomings.

Why have I been chosen to participate?

This project is seeking the participation of individuals who are uniquely situated to understand both perspectives. It is not looking for an impartial view, but rather one that is located between both worlds. It wants to understand both a government and indigenous perspective.

What do I have to do if I agree to participate?

By agreeing to participate you will be asked to participate in an interview and any follow-up for clarification. You will be free to withdraw participation at any time prior to final submission. After the project is submitted on September 1st, 2018, you will be able to withdraw from any subsequent publications of the doctoral thesis.

Some participants may contribute with other forms of expression as a means of conveying their thoughts and feelings about some of the questions. This might be in the form of art, music, dance, or other mediums of expression. There is no obligation for this to occur, all rights for any artistic contribution will remain solely in the copyright holder. The researcher will use this data only for the purpose of the doctoral dissertation.

How will what I say be used? What will the information be used for?

Your participation in interviews will be used to build an understanding of the research question. It will be combined with literature and additional interviews or commentary to construct a doctoral dissertation and contribute to subsequent articles that discuss the research question as it was understood at the point of the interview.

Will my anonymity be ensured?

This project will not be seeking anonymous participants unless requested. Given that many of the participants are public figures, their opinions may already be known. Any personal data will be protected as per Coventry University regulations. The data management plan includes strict conditions for ensuring the protection of the participant.

What are the risks associated with this project?

There are few risks anticipated with participating with this project. This does not include the possibility of emotional or psychological harm that might occur from participation. While the researcher designs the interviews to avoid these there are unanticipated outcomes. Should any risks be identified during the study the researcher will make amendments and reflect that to the participants. In addition, the researcher has contact information for counselling services locally should there be a need.

Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations, 5 Coventry Innovation Village, Coventry University Technology Park, Cheetah Road, Coventry, CV1 2TL.

Some regional counselling resources available should the participant not want to contact the researcher are:

First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line
Tel: 1-855-242-3310

Klinik Community Health Centre
Crisis Line: 204-786-8686 / Toll free 1-888-322-3019

Crisis Response Centre (CRC)
Mobile Crisis Unit Tel: 204-940-1781

Indian Residential School Survivors Support Line
Support Line: 1-866-925-4419
Indian Residential School Survivors: 1-800-721-0066

There are also various regional and national support groups. In addition, anonymous contact between the researcher and the participant can be facilitated through Coventry University. This can be by way of contacting the researcher's Director of Studies at: Matt Qvortrup - ac0951@coventry.ac.uk. Indicate that you wish to contact the researcher anonymously and they will facilitate it.

What are the benefits of participating?

There is no implied benefit for participating in this research. This research cannot, nor is it designed to, change public policy. There is no compensation for participating in this study.

What happens if I don't want to take part?

There is no expectation or obligation to take part within this study. No data will be collected or inferred from any discussion prior to consent being given.

What happens if I want to withdraw?

Should you choose at any time to withdraw from the study then the data collected will be destroyed and deleted. There will be no attempt to make you reconsider, your decision is understood as within your rights. The final report will include no data, nor mention, nor inference of your participation.

Withdrawal can be at any time prior to September 1st, 2018.

How can I get in contact with the researchers?

Content removed on data protection grounds

Appendix 2. Consent Form



Panacea, Placebo, or Problem: An examination of prescribed transitional justice in Canada

Consent Form

I voluntarily agree to participate in this doctoral research project. I understand that this research is being conducted by Ian Calliou from the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations at Coventry University in the UK to understand the effects of transitional justice in Canada within indigenous peoples.

I understand and confirm the following by initialling each that applies:

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the Participant Information Sheet for the above mentioned project and have had the opportunity to ask questions. _____
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time prior to submission to the examiners of Coventry University without giving a reason. This date is set at September 1, 2018. _____
3. I agree to the interview audio being recorded to reproduce an accurate and authentic statement on your behalf. _____
4. I know that I can request a copy of any written report or article prior to publication. _____
5. I agree to be quoted in publications. _____
6. I would like to be anonymized in this study (Yes/No). _____
7. I confirm that the research has the right to use any supplied artwork, music, social expression, or other medium supplied to them from myself for the purpose of this study. All rights remain solely with me, the copyright holder, usage in this study will be limited to the doctoral dissertation and other academic outputs directly related to this study. These will be subject to the same rights for withdrawal or anonymity as any other contribution. (Yes/No) _____

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher

Date

Signature

Content removed on data protection grounds

Appendix 3 – Draft Interview Protocol

Draft Interview Protocol

Project overview and consent

This section will re-introduce the project to the respondent. This would have been done in the pre-interview stage but it is good practice to revisit this as a means of focusing the tone of the questions and responses, especially in a semi-structured, time limited interview setting.

Now, the consent form will be discussed with the respondent. Participant consent, which includes the consent form, would have been introduced in the pre-interview stage, but going over the form itself and acquiring verbal consent in addition to the form serves to create a clear understanding of the expectations on the researcher, and the scope of the participant.

Introductory Questions

These first questions will be pseudo-biographical in nature. Depending on how the respondent feels like answering they may simply be about their role or title, what they do, and minor details to do with where their expertise and self is placed within the discourse.

More robust answers might have a deeper narrative, such as reflection on their own experience as an indigenous person. This might include anecdotes or perceptions about themes that intersect this project but are not dealt with directly. As many of the participants may have attended a residential school, or been an intergenerational survivor, in addition to other experiences shared by their cultural group, it is important to provide a safe space within the interview to deconstruct how their experiences inform their opinion and practice.

State of the Indigenous experience in Canada

This section will attempt to understand how contemporary populations navigate the current social, economic, political, and educational sphere in Canada. It will go beyond statistics that exist that identify gaps, or challenges, facing the First Nations in Canada. It will also look beyond the rhetorical frameworks that have emerged from: government, policy think-tanks, academic, and social discourse (news, social media, political expression). This is meant to identify lived experiences, unspoken challenges, and give a voice to sub-altern or non-traditional forms of narrative.

Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Efforts

This section will look at what has been done in Canada, since about 1991, to address past harm. It will look at questions discussing these efforts, their intended outcomes, and how they affected Indigenous Canadians. The emphasis will be to discuss the 'lived' experience as opposed to the traditional analysis that centers on measurables and indicators.

Some of the points on the timeline discussed would be:

- The first phases of church apologies in the early 1990s (and the impact of the churches being the first to officially recognized their role in harm)
- The 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal People (with an emphasis on the recommendations section and its legacy)
- The 1998 Gathering Strength Action Plan which coincided with the closing of the last residential school.
- 2001 to 2005: Early phase residential school settlement negotiations culminating with a Supreme Court decision absolving the federal government of total blame.
- 2007 Residential School Settlement Agreement (with a specific look at the limitations on claims for some survivors, a threshold clause, and challenges for intergenerational survivors.)
- 2008 Residential School Apology (with a focus on the wording, the timing, and the impact of a 2009 statement at the G20 Summit where Canada claimed it had no history of colonialism)

- 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report (this will look at comparing this report with some of the recommendations of the 1996 Royal Commission. It will also look at how the oral histories created from testimony have become an important outcome and how legal limitations placed by the commission might destroy those important legacies.)

This section will look at this timeline, not as an attempt to be critical, but as a means of addressing how stated aims were realized within their target populations. It will look at asking how these have built upon each successive mechanism, and track some of the original recommendations as they have evolved. It will also look at what have emerged as needs within the indigenous community that may not have existed early on. It will ask what is the legacy of harm, and how some of these efforts (especially the apology) could have contributed to further harm.

Looking Forward, Thinking Back

This section will address future challenges. It will look at identifying the state of the gap between the government, society, and First Nations. It will ask about trust, and how trust between these groups has evolved, and what some of the challenges that this relationship needs to overcome to build trust.

One of the big promises of this generation of mechanisms is the revisiting of the official narrative that is Canada. Many of the recent mechanisms have promoted an agenda that includes changes what is taught about Canada's colonial legacy. Asking what the desired outcome of these changes will help to identify what some of the impacts that could be anticipated. An increased awareness of Indigenous Canadians as primarily 'victims' could serve to further disempower their cultural and social identity. Has the indigenous community identified this as a potential side effect and how have they address this concern?

This section will also look at how the mechanisms used have been successful, even in unstated or underreported ways. One area of analysis is how the residential school apology and reparations sub-programs served to help with intergenerational survivors. It will also ask how cultural practice has recovered in contemporary society and what role it has in supporting recent transitional justice efforts. It will ask about the role of the international community, especially the UN declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. One area of inquiry will look at how the international community of indigenous peoples plays a role in further supporting healing and reconciliation despite lethargic efforts on behalf of states. Does this offer a grass-roots outlet for the promotion of recognizing and addressing harm?

Conclusion and making sense

This section of the interview will allow the participant to be introspective but also interrogate the process of the researcher. It will ask about how this research process can hinder or help reconciliation and healing. It will ask about some of the challenges that researchers must face when trying to help populations affected by harm.

Appendix 4 – Treaty Map of Manitoba

Some materials have been removed from this thesis due to Third Party Copyright. Pages where material has been removed are clearly marked in the electronic version. The unabridged version of the thesis can be viewed at the Lanchester Library, Coventry University.