A war between stories:

Leisure, colonialism and my struggles to reconcile my Indigeneity

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

This dissertation is concerned with oppression and "the reach of imperialism into our heads" (Smith, 2012, p. 63). It is concerned with the "war between stories" (Delgado, 2012, p.2419) between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples and thus the narrative character and the narrative space of such struggles. The purpose of this dissertation is two-fold. Firstly, to expose the tensions of oppression that surround leisure, sport and recreation in the Six Nations of the Grand River community through an Indigenous critique of the stories and narratives of three community leaders in the Six Nations community. The subsequent purpose is to convey the struggles I've experienced, as an Indigenous person, moving through this research process, struggling to understand my Indigeneity and the connection between notions of Indigeneity and leisure. Grande (2004) puts forward the critique that "unless the relationship between culture and the socioeconomic conditions within which it is produced is recognized, the so-called at-risk conditions common to peoples living under siege will persist" (p.19). She argues for an educational reform that must happen concurrently with an analysis of colonialism and the material reality that perpetuates it. To honour her call, it is thus imperative to gain an understanding of how leisure is connected to ongoing colonialism and the perpetuation of a material reality that has far-reaching consequences for how we perceive and understand the world. To do this, it is my contention that stories are central to understanding the connections between leisure and ongoing neo-colonialism as well as how we make sense of the role within Indigenous lives and struggles for decolonization, Indigenization, sovereignty, and self-determination.

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Introduction

Indigenous Peoples[1] are haunted by the insidiousness of imperialism and colonialism. Every waking moment we are confronted with the paradoxes and false dichotomies that accompany living within a colonized reality. Our lives are defined by struggle: struggle to exist with the subtle, practically imperceptible, ways in which imperialism is regulated and realized and struggles for freedom from normalized oppression and dehumanization. To this end, we've endured by doing what is necessary for survival from within the confines of the material realities in which we exist and the limits of our understandings and imaginations. In essence, we are suspended in a state of perpetual conflict as we live out our lives in the broader society but remain paralyzed to put into practice our understandings of our *Indigeneity*. While such a state is not unique to Indigenous peoples, there is a palpable sense that we, as Indigenous peoples, are living through an urgent moment in which the survival of our communities and resurgence of our cultures depends upon our ability to recognize and reconcile the dilemmas of compromise and contradictions that define our existence.

Imperialism, Smith (2012) states, "frames the Indigenous experience. It is part of our story, our version of modernity" (p.20). Imperialism's omnipresence is the subtext of our lives, simultaneously defining our present in relation to the past and situating our positionality for the future. Smith notes that initially historians used the term imperialism "as a way to explain a series of developments leading to the economic expansion of Europe…" and "in this sense could be tied to a chronology of events related to "discovery", conquest, exploitation, distribution and appropriation" (p.22). However, she explains further that European imperialism is multi-layered and can be understood in at least four different ways: "(1) imperialism as economic expansion; (2) imperialism as the subjugation of 'others'; (3) imperialism as an idea or spirit with many forms of realization and; (4) imperialism as a discursive field of knowledge" (p.22). *Colonialism*

was “but one expression of imperialism” (p.22) that allowed the practical realization and enforcement of imperial values and ideologies in the colonies. For Indigenous peoples, these understandings of imperialism and colonialism have operated simultaneously on multiple levels at multiple sites. However, the profound impact of imperialism as a discursive field of knowledge and the complex ways it was and continues to be reified cannot be ignored. Smith (2012) states,

> There is, for example, a greater and more immediate need to understand the complex ways in which people were brought within the imperial system, because its impact is still being felt, despite the apparent independence gained by former colonial territories. The reach of imperialism into ‘our heads’ challenges those who belong to colonized communities to understand how this occurred, partly because we perceive a need to decolonize our minds, to recover ourselves, to claim a space in which to develop a sense of authentic humanity. (p.24)

As we have struggled to reclaim, assert and put into practice our understandings of our Indigeneity, imperialism confronts us with *colonized* and *colonizing* narratives that dominate, contradict and deny the validity of our stories and in essence, our very existence. In so doing, the narrative character of our struggles and the narrative space in which these struggles are contested is revealed. In many respects, we are engaged in what Delgado (1989) argues is “a war between stories (p.2418); a conflict of narratives between dominant ingroups and minority outgroups conflated by individual internal struggles with stories and counter-stories that “contend for, tug at, our minds” (p.2418). In essence, our very consciousness has been colonized and we are thus challenged to find the right words and the right stories to construct realities that reconcile the past while allowing us to resist continued imperial domination in the present. Such a state of being thus raises a multitude of questions regarding the intimate relationship between

imperialism's discursive practices and the conflict of narratives that has become entrenched in Indigenous peoples' ways of knowing and of being in the world.

The ways in which imperialism and colonialism were realized are varied. War, the physical removal of Indigenous Peoples from their homelands and subsequent relocation to reservations are poignant examples of overt acts intended to supplant Indigenous Peoples with European settlers and interests. Additionally, European institutions, either brought with them or developed after their arrival, were critical in justifying imperial expansion and their quest to gain access to Indigenous lands and the resources therein. For example, Christianity, its missions and residential schools, precursors to the creation of the modern education system, the "new" democratic governance institutions and the burgeoning economic systems all had a role in the achievement of imperial domination (Grande, 2004). Underlying these acts of conquest were ways of being, ways of knowing and systems of knowledge that guided how Indigenous Peoples and their cultures were perceived and consequently how their stories were re-presented to the masses of European settlers. In essence, European imperial domination and colonization were made possible, not only through overt acts of violence, but through the systematic positioning of European knowledge as superior (Smith, 2012; Said, 1978) against Indigenous knowledge that was marginalized, subjugated or dismissed entirely.

As Indigenous Peoples, we understand what it is like to be considered inferior. Even if some of us haven't personally been confronted with overt racism, we know the stories and the rhetoric used to position us as "less than". We know how words like savage, primitive, un-civilized, undeveloped, unprogressive and hunter-gatherers were used to dehumanize us. While certainly we understand ourselves to be much more complex than such racist colonial depictions, it has been difficult to escape the words and stories that depict Indigenous Peoples as inferior in relation to supposed European superiority. In discussing the importance of stories and

storytelling in movements for racial reform in law, Delgado (1989) works from a premise that social and moral realities are constructed and that this happens through the stories we create and pass along to others. Within a pluralist society, he argues that dominant *ingroups* create and tell stories to reinforce the way they perceive the world to be; that stories are a way that ingroups construct identity in relation to minority *outgroups* or *others* (p.2412). He posits the solution for marginalized outgroups is in counter-storytelling, the creation of stories that can subvert the stories that dominant ingroups maintain to justify their position of superiority and to subjugate and oppress those who exist "outside". To illustrate this point, he describes how dominant ingroups may perceive inequality. For example, ingroups may reason that the inequality between blacks and whites is due to "cultural lag or inadequate enforcement of currently existing beneficial laws" (p.2413). However, he argues that minority outgroups would contend that such reasoning behind inequality is, in actuality, due to "the prevailing mindset by which members of the dominant groups justify the world as it is" (p.2413). Such mindset is thus created and reinforced by the stories that the dominant ingroup tells itself in relation to the marginalized "other". To illustrate how social and moral realities are open to interpretation, he coincidentally uses the example of how "American Indians" are perceived. He asks,

> What is the "correct" answer to the question, The American Indians are – (A) a colonized people; (B) tragic victims of technological progress; (C) subjects of a suffocating, misdirected federal beneficence; (D) a minority stubbornly resistant to assimilation; or (E) – ; or (F) – ? (Delgado, 1989, p.2416)

The multiple answers to his question speaks to the multiple ways that Indigenous Peoples are perceived but also the multiple realities that can be constructed. Delgado argues that such *narrative habits* and *patterns of seeing* become habitual, influencing how we perceive the world and convincing us that what we perceive is inevitable (p. 2416). To this point, it is thus important

to understand that such diversity in interpretation is the result of the influential power of words and stories that inform our perceptions and ultimately our mindset.

In his book, "Pedagogy of the oppressed", Paulo Freire (2009) writes about the concepts of oppression, humanization, and dehumanization; the resulting relationship between the oppressed and the oppressors; and the struggles of the oppressed for emancipation. He argues that in their quest for freedom, the oppressed,

> …tend themselves to become oppressors, or 'sub-oppressors'. The very structure of their thought has been conditioned by the contradictions of the concrete existential situation by which they were shaped. Their ideal is to be men; but for them, to be men is to be oppressors. This is their model of humanity (Freire, 2009, p. 44)

In other words, the oppressed, in striving for their liberation, very often equate freedom with what the oppressor *has*, with *whom* the oppressor is and the *reality* which the oppressor has created. They then strive to *have* what the oppressors have, *to be like* the oppressor and to *live* the same reality in which the oppressor inhabits. The oppressed strive for these things because this is their model of freedom and it lures them with the promise of the power to control their own lives and destiny. However, the oppressed, Freire states, "suffer from the duality which has established itself in their innermost being…They are at one and the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalized" (p.48). As a result, the oppressed must come to an understanding of *how* they've internalized such oppression if they are to then emancipate themselves. By Freire's reckoning, this can only be done through *conscientização (conscientization)* which is a process of coming to know; a development of a critical consciousness that is reflexive of the words one knows and utilizes to inform one's actions that, in turn, creates the reality that one inhabits. In other words, conscientization is a process of

recognizing one's internalized oppression and thus how normalized oppression is maintained through one's complicity with oppression.

This dissertation is thus concerned with oppression and "the reach of imperialism into our heads" (Smith, 2012, p.24). It is concerned with the "war between stories" (Delgado, 1989, p.2419) between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples and thus the narrative character and the narrative space of such struggles. It is concerned with the words and the stories that are used and have been internalized, hindering Indigenous Peoples' conscientization of being oppressed. It is also concerned with the "concrete existential situation" (Freire, 2009, p.44) in which we live and the ways that imperialism and colonialism continue to be reified. Indeed, from an Indigenous standpoint there are few stories and few sites in which claims of European superiority and Indigenous inferiority are not present. One of the sites that brought Indigenous Peoples within the imperial system, and of specific interest to this research, is leisure. Of the innumerable ways Indigenous Peoples were subjugated and oppressed, leisure was a major site for the reification of colonialism and imperialism. Fox (2007) states, "The rise of Euro-North American leisure practice and scholarship was and is interpolated with Euro-North American dominant ideologies, political forces, reform movements, and social practices that marginalized Aboriginal ways of life" (p. 220). She observes that given leisure's importance in the modern world, "the intersection between Euro-North American leisure and recreation with the cultures and practices of Aboriginal peoples in North America has received scant attention in academic literature about leisure" (p.218). This dissertation thus aims to make a contribution to this oversight.

Purpose

From an Indigenous perspective, the very word, leisure, is controversial in the simple fact that it is an English word with an etymology that derives from the Latin word *licere* and the Greek word *schole* (Fox & Klaiber, 2006; Heintzman, 2007). The definitions of the

words are deeply rooted in classical (read: Euro-centric) thought and speak to notions of individual freedom and time. There are also connections to Euro-centric notions of work-time and free-time and a separation between the two. As well, there are associations with the idea of contemplation and the ability to do so for its own sake in education (Heintzman, 2007). In the contemporary moment, Fox & Klaiber (2006) note schole's connection to modern concepts "of individual, freedom and democracy" (p.414). Rojek, Shaw and Veal (2006) suggest that Western models of leisure are intertwined with Western notions of modernity and "was assumed to constitute the destination for all societies bent upon progress" (p.4). They note that within western theories of modernity there is significance attached to "individualism, secularism, nationalism, rationalization, urbanization, science, technology, pluralism, the market and the development of a public sphere of debate" (p.4) and that the model of leisure situated within these theories

> presupposed that work is the central life interest, that rational individualism had replaced traditional society, that pluralism had succeeded tribal, courtly and colonial political structures, large-scale Fordist forms of industry had supplanted small, local businesses and that the nation-state was the primary unit of analysis in relation to social, economic, cultural and political processes (p.4)

While there are differences in how leisure is conceptualized between time periods, there is no escaping the ethnocentric roots that invoke European and Euro-North American values and ideologies that speak to notions of modernity, progress and how to be in the world (Fox, 2006, 2007; Fox & Klaiber, 2006; Iwasaki, Nishino, Onda, & Bowling, 2007). Yet, as Fox (2006) asserts, many Indigenous and non-Indigenous languages did not have a word for leisure and that it is highly problematic to use Euro-centric notions of leisure to understand Indigenous languages and the meanings of Indigenous cultural practices. Beyond the

challenges of language, leisure has also been used as a pedagogical tool and is implicated within the ways it was utilized to repress Indigenous culture. Yet, leisure simultaneously is purported to be a space of empowerment and resistance. In any case, it is a critical site of cultural contestation in Indigenous struggles for decolonization and emancipation.

Grande (2004) puts forward the critique that "unless the relationship between culture and the socioeconomic conditions within which it is produced is recognized, the so-called at-risk conditions common to peoples living under siege will persist" (p.19). She argues for an educational reform that must happen concurrently with an analysis of colonialism and the material reality that perpetuates it. To achieve this, she calls for the creation of a Red Pedagogy, an intellectual space that brings together Indigenous knowledge with Western knowledge and more specifically revolutionary critical pedagogy. Leisure, as a pedagogical tool and a site of cultural contestation, is situated as a site of imperial domination but also a space in resistance for Indigenous notions of self-determination and sovereignty. This dissertation is thusly concerned with three broad issues regarding leisure in the Indigenous context:

i) the relationship between leisure and the historical colonization of Indigenous Peoples,

ii) leisure's relationship to neo-colonialism and the ongoing oppression of Indigenous Peoples in the present, and

iii) leisure's relationship to the struggles of Indigenous Peoples to realize their understandings of sovereignty and self-determination.

In essence, this dissertation is concerned with leisure and its relationship to oppression and emancipation in the Indigenous context.

The impetus for this research is drawn from my experience as an Indigenous person

who was involved in sport in a number of capacities throughout my life. It is the continuation of a journey that started with my master's thesis (Henhawk, 2009) wherein I explored the role of race and racism within Indigenous experiences of sport. To that end, I engaged in an autoethnographic study of my experiences in sport and an ethnographic study of the experiences of my immediate family. That research resulted in the creation of a performance text that conveyed our experiences and forwarded *my* understanding of the links between race, culture and power in the context of sport. However, as I moved into my doctoral studies I was unprepared for the inner crisis that resulted from a heightened critical consciousness of my complicity in the perpetuation of colonial oppression. I still had many questions about the role of leisure within Indigenous struggles, but I also had a multitude of questions about my identity as an Indigenous person. From my perspective, the two threads of questions are not mutually exclusive, and I found myself caught in a state of confusion, frustration, and at times, despair. Nonetheless, I pushed forward with the belief that I could somehow distance my struggles of identity from the exploration of leisure and colonialism. I could not have been more wrong.

The purpose of this dissertation is, thusly, two-fold. Firstly, the purpose of the research project of this dissertation is to expose the tensions of oppression that surround leisure, sport and recreation in the Six Nations of the Grand River community through an Indigenous critique of the stories and narratives of three community leaders in the Six Nations community. I am guided by the premise that exposing these tensions will contribute to an understanding that moves beyond the hegemonic analysis of leisure and push forward an Indigenous critique of leisure that situates it within the discussions of oppression, colonialism, of sovereignty and self-determination that are central to Indigenous struggles for decolonization. In turn, it is a hope that this will provide insight into an alternative way

of being in keeping with Grande's (Grande, 2004; 2008) imperative of a Red Pedagogy that creates opportunities for an emancipatory praxis.

The subsequent purpose of this dissertation is to convey the struggles I've experienced moving through this research process, the struggles to understand my Indigeneity and the connection between Indigeneity and leisure. I've struggled immensely as I've searched for answers regarding what it means to be Indigenous. Further to this, I've also struggled with being an Indigenous person within the Western academy. These struggles have caused considerable conflict in my life to the point that I seriously questioned continuing my doctoral studies on several occasions. As I searched for a reconciliation of my identity I was confronted with frustrations that were, at times, overwhelming. I found myself disconnecting from the world, paralyzed by an inability to articulate the struggles I was experiencing and unable to find a purpose to my life.

Thus, this dissertation is primarily about me. While the original purpose to expose the tensions between leisure and colonialism still stands, the corollary purpose of this dissertation was realized after the stories from the talking circles were collected and my analyses began. Like my master's work previously, I was again faced with the realization that my research is, and has been, primarily concerned with my struggles as an Indigenous person sorting through the mess that colonialism has created in my life. It is through this process that I was thus reminded that Indigenous struggles for identity, for understanding leisure and its role within colonialism and struggles for self-determinations are all interconnected.

Situating Myself

Before moving forward, it is necessary that I provide a short discussion around where I am situated with regard to my identity and in relation to my understanding of Indigenous

research. It's important to note that although you are reading this near the beginning of this dissertation, I am writing this section at the end of this journey because it is only at the end that I've come to understand the importance of making this acknowledgement. The works of Indigenous scholars Kovach (2009), Simpson (2014) and Alfred (2005) have set some precedence and provided guidance for me in this regard. In her book, *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations and Context,* Kovach (2009), a person of Nehiyaw and Saulteaux heritage, wrote a prologue about locating herself and her identity at a time when she was struggling to understand why Indigenous methodologies were not provided as a legitimate mode of research within Western academic texts and to write her book. She argues that providing a background of oneself is important in that it serves to provide context for the non-Indigenous reader (and I would argue all readers) about who the person is and where they are coming from. Doing so signals to the reader that the story (or stories) of who we are matters when it comes Indigenous research. Similarly, Audra Simpson (2014), a Mohawk from Kahnawà:ke near Montreal, writes about the centrality of identity and membership within the Kahnawà:ke community that has sparked great debate within the community and is laden with contradictions about race and racism within the colonial settler state of Canada. She speaks about the conundrum that identity and membership has created within the Mohawk community and that in some ways, settler colonialism has forced the Mohawk people to take stances that may contradict their understandings of what it means to be Mohawk. However, locating oneself is central to understanding how Indigenous Peoples live and situate themselves within a colonial reality that is, in many ways, still bent on subjugating Indigenous (and Mohawk) identities. Both of these discussions have provided me with some semblance of relief, as I found my own struggles with identity to be similarly filled with enormous frustration that makes one question everything they know about what it means to be Indigenous, and in my case, what it means to be Mohawk. Such

struggles confront Indigenous Peoples with questions about the authenticity and authority of their own voice because the knowledge we have is so often fragmented and perceived to be unimportant or legitimate. This was my place of location at the beginning of this process and, in many ways, it is the place in which I still exist. However, as I've come to understand what has occurred to us, as Indigenous Peoples, I feel much more comfortable being in this space and armed with this knowledge even if I don't have much knowledge (yet) about my own culture. Kovach (2009) states, "we know what we know from where we stand" (p.7) and the place that I am standing now is on much firmer ground than when I began the PhD process.

In talking about struggle, Smith (2006) discusses the concept of struggle and the different ways it manifests itself in those struggling to survive, struggling to make sense of the world and struggling to seek social justice. She argues that although struggle has the ability to enable oppressed peoples to mobilize and create change, it often also manifests in ways that can be contradictory. For example, those in movements of resistance may privilege "patriarchy and sexism in indigenous activist groups" (p.153) or committed "groups to modes of operation that undermine the very values they espouse and expect of others" (p.153). Yet, in other circumstances, she notes Graham Smith's (2004) argument that "participation in struggle can, and often does, come before a raised consciousness" (p.153). To sort through this conundrum, it starts with asking the questions: *How* is it that Indigenous Peoples were colonized? *How* do Indigenous Peoples continue to be colonized? And if colonization and its effects are real, *how* is it that Indigenous Peoples can decolonize? The answers are immensely complex and go beyond the simplistic discussions of overt acts of racism that were used to subjugate, oppress and murder. As well, discussing decolonization involves more than disingenuously engaging in language or ceremony and to understand both colonization and decolonization is, in actuality, to

understand how we are bound to the ways in which we have come to know, think about and create knowledge.

As my understanding of the struggles associated with conducting Indigenous research became more clear, I also became aware of a profound problem of what it meant to be Indigenous, what it means to be Kanien'kehá:ka and what it means to be Haudenosaunee. Smith (2005) states,

> For indigenous peoples, research has a significance that is embedded in our history as natives under the gaze of Western science and colonialism. It is framed by indigenous attempts to escape the penetration and surveillance of that gaze while simultaneously reordering, reconstituting, and redefining ourselves as peoples and communities in a state of on-going crisis" (p.87)

Research and knowledge is thus at the heart of the discussion about Indigenous struggles for freedom and a starting point upon which to begin a discussion of *how* Indigenous Peoples came to be colonized and *how* they can begin to decolonize.

I was aware of how notions of race and issues or race were connected to my experiences in sport. However, I was only beginning to understand how the dynamics of power operated in the context of sport, recreation and leisure and also how power is conveyed through narratives and discourses. I understood how I had been affected by the stories of race and racism in my sport experiences and there were instances of the same within the experiences of my family members. It seemed logical to reason that stories and narratives were having similar effects in the way sport and recreation was developed in my home community. This made me wonder about the profound relationship between sport, recreation and leisure to the discussions about ongoing colonialism and oppression. What I was unprepared for was the profound disconnection between my sense of identity (as a Mohawk) and my understanding of sport and broader notions of

leisure. In discussing what is required of Haudenosaunee peoples to live again as Onkwehonwe (to live originally), Alfred (2009) argues that we can only transcend colonialism by embodying "the values of our cultures in our actions" (p.165) and that the healing of ourselves can only occur when there is a cultural reconnection. While I wholeheartedly agree with this argument, there are questions about how one goes about doing so when there is so much fragmentation and a lack of understanding of where to begin.

Thus, it was only in the final stages of this process, that I began to understand how it is that I can reconnect with my culture. However, there has to be an acknowledgement that each individual seeking the same thing will have to go through their own process that may be a struggle in which one cannot cope. It is at least my hope that this description of where I am situated will provide insight regarding where my thought process started and to contextualize the difficulties I then encountered as I moved through the research process. As well, it is also my hope that this description will give hope and courage to other Indigenous Peoples struggling with the same questions I have about what it means to be Indigenous as we move forward in this increasingly complex world.

The Six Nations of the Grand River

This research project was conducted at the Six Nations of the Grand River (Six Nations) community, an Indigenous community located in Ontario, Canada. Although the community is a rural community, it is situated in relatively close proximity to several urban centers (for example, the Cities of Brantford, Cambridge, Kitchener-Waterloo and Hamilton). The community is a Haudenosaunee[2] (Ho-di-no-sho-nee) community, comprising all six cultural groups, or "nations", that comprise the Six Nations Confederacy with the Kanien'kehá:ka (Ga-nee-gay-ha-ga or Mohawk Nation) peoples making up the majority of the population. Like most Indigenous communities, Six Nations exists within unique

circumstances that are the result of long historical struggles with imperialism and colonialism. For the Haudenosaunee, specifically, these struggles extend to well before the American Revolution, which occurred from 1776 to 1783. While the intimate details of these struggles are beyond the purview of this discussion, it is important to have a cursory understanding of this history in order to understand how the specific community of Six Nations came to be and the present circumstances in which it exists.

The aftermath of the American Revolution saw the mass fragmentation and displacement of the Haudenosaunee from their homelands in what is now New York State and it set the specific group of Haudenosaunee that relocated to settlements along the Grand River in Ontario on a unique trajectory. Originally, in part for their military support of the British Crown and in part for their loss of lands after the war, this group was granted six miles of land on both sides of the Grand River from the river's mouth to its source. The grant included a provision that any monies gained from the sale of these lands would then be held in trust for the community's benefit. As time moved forward, the original tract of land of approximately 950,000 acres was reduced to the current 46,000 acres that, today, is officially designated as Six Nations Reserve No. 40 by the Government of Canada. However, this history is contentious and has left the community embroiled in an ongoing land-claims dispute in which the community is seeking a return of lands or compensation from the government regarding the misappropriation of lands and monies.

In 1924, the Government of Canada and the Department of Indian Affairs deposed the Six Nations Confederacy that was the traditional government of the Haudenosaunee peoples. It was replaced with an elected band council that was modelled after Canadian municipal governments. This act caused considerable division within the community and has been the cause of several conflicts and struggles for power between those who support

the traditional government and those who support the elected band council. Without going into great detail, it is safe to say that Six Nations exists within a unique set of political and economic circumstances where political struggles within the community, as well as externally with the Canadian government, are the norm.

In 1980, the elected band council passed a motion to create the community's first department of recreation. This was a momentous decision for the community because it formalized the council's political and financial commitment to the provision and development of recreation, sport, and leisure that, in the previous decades, had been organized by a community recreation committee and a contingent of volunteers. Arguably, this decision served Six Nations well as the department added much-needed administrative capacity for the management of the community's existing facilities, as well as, leadership for the construction of new facilities and the expansion of services and programs.

A cursory overview of the Six Nations Parks and Recreation Department (SNPR) reveals that sport(s) is a central concern in the community. SNPR has developed many programs and facilities to this end. However, it is important to also note that prior to the establishment of the recreation department there did exist recreation facilities, events, and programs that were managed by the aforementioned community recreation committee and a community fair board. The current recreation and sport facilities are situated on land that was once an agricultural fairground upon which was located a community hall, a horseracing track with horse barns, as well as two ball diamonds. Over time, an arena was built to serve the community’s interest in hockey and a campground and trailer park was built along the Grand River near the historical homestead of Six Nations poet, E. Pauline Johnson. Eventually, SNPR would assume responsibility for the management of the arena, the camping facilities, as well as some of the existing annual community events and

recreation programs.

In the late nineties, a three-phase recreation facilities master plan was created and steady improvements to the facilities were made starting in 2001. The ball diamonds were modernized, new playground apparatuses were installed, and a concession booth was built. In 2005, the department finished the second phase of this plan with the completion of a new community hall with offices for SNPR staff and major renovations to the arena that included new dressing rooms, new concession facilities, and a new accessible foyer. By 2012, the department had also added a 5-lane, 400-metre rubberized-surface track, two field-lacrosse pitches and an outdoor rink for summer use. By 2017, a new gymnasium was opened, as well as space for a youth and elders centre, a community splashpad and a skateboard park. Additionally, the department's programming and services also increased since its inception. Currently, SNPR offers drop-in and developmental programs for sports such as basketball, soccer, volleyball and badminton. There is also extensive minor, junior and senior sports offerings in lacrosse, hockey, softball and figure skating that is predominantly organized by community sport associations and volunteers.

For non-Indigenous communities, the task of securing funds for the provision of public services is endless and daunting even for those communities that have access to modest pools of property tax revenue. In actuality, most communities utilize multiple financial mechanisms simultaneously to fund various public services. Yet, for Indigenous communities in Canada, basic modern services are often a luxury and the ability to secure funding is an ongoing challenge as access to municipal property taxes is non-existent and the opportunities to utilize alternative financial tools are limited. In essence, the reserve system, in conjunction with Indigenous peoples' resistance to private property and taxation, has effectively rendered Indigenous communities dependent upon monies from historical

treaties and government transfers. For Six Nations, specifically, the challenge of securing funds is somewhat mitigated through the existence of the community's trust fund. However, this dependence upon the trust fund, the ongoing land-claims conflict with the Canadian Government and the community's resistance to the system of private property ownership and taxation begs the question of how sustainable this arrangement is while the community's population and subsequent demand for services increases.

For SNPR, the provision of recreation, sport, and leisure in the community with a view towards long-term planning is thus a challenging task. While the department has gained access to federal and provincial government grants for capital developments and various leisure programming, the majority of the department's operational funds come from a combination of facility rental fees, profits from concessions and monies from the community's trust fund which is allocated by the Six Nations Elected Council. As a result, the department consistently operates in a financial deficit. The challenge of funding SNPR is thus more than a discussion about the community's ability (or lack thereof) to access, utilize, or adapt the many funding tools available. When contextualized through an Indigenous decolonizing lens, the challenges of providing sport, recreation and leisure in the Six Nations community is situated in a much broader discussion related to the community's ongoing struggles with neo-colonialism and imperialism.

Of all the ways that Indigenous Peoples were "brought within the imperial system" (Smith, 2012, p.24), leisure, is perhaps the most profound. It has been used as a tool of colonization, from the use of sports and games within the residential schools system to "bring about fundamental changes in the values and behaviours of its students" (Forsyth, 2007, p.159), to the development of policies and programs such as the Native Sport and Recreation Program (Paraschak, 1989), an initiative to increase Indigenous Peoples'

participation in elite sport but in actuality a veiled (some would argue not so veiled) attempt to assimilate Indigenous Peoples into the mainstream of Canadian society. In fact, there are countless historical examples of leisure used overtly to suppress and supplant Indigenous culture with Euro-centric practices. Indeed, as a colonial tool, leisure has been wielded with such impunity that it is of little wonder that Euro-North American leisure practices are still employed in continual attempts to assimilate Indigenous Peoples into "modern" Western society. Thus, as can be imagined, there are still many issues and questions that surround Euro-North American leisure in view of its role in the historical colonization of Indigenous Peoples. My questions have revolved around how sport, recreation and leisure in the Six Nations community is related to, or embedded with, imperial values and ideologies?; and how the provision of sport, recreation and leisure in the community is entangled with neo-colonialism that continues to oppress and subjugate Indigenous peoples?; And what does the relationship between leisure and colonialism mean for Indigenous desires to decolonize and Indigenize our lives?

Literature Review

Leisure, Research and Indigenous Peoples

Scholarship in the area of Indigenous Peoples and leisure is, in relative terms, very limited. As Fox (2007) notes the lack of attention to the intersection between Euro-North American leisure and Indigenous Peoples is concerning, "given the importance of leisure in the modern world, the numerous declarations and propositions that leisure is important to the health and well-being of Aboriginal peoples in North America…and the potential for commodification, appropriation, and reproduction of colonialistic and imperialistic forces" (p.218). However, the current scholarship brings to light a number of issues regarding leisure as a site of cultural contestation (Paraschak, 1998) and as a space in which colonial

power was, and still is, exerted. This scholarship highlights important debates about hegemony and agency with regard to Indigenous Peoples struggles for cultural renewal and self-determination. There are also a number of discussions that frame Indigenous participation through the lenses of race and gender. As well, there are critiques related to leisure scholarship's examination and treatment of Indigenous physical cultural practices (Fox 2006, Paraschak 1989) that bring to the forefront questions of ethnocentrism and embedded colonialism within academia.

In terms of the historical scholarship related to leisure and Indigenous Peoples, Paraschak (1989) noted that research focused mostly on the time before contact or the early period after contact with European colonists. She explains how historians tainted the historical record of Indigenous physical culture with racism and ethno-centric (read: Euro-centric) distortions as many did not adhere to a position of cultural relativism. For example, historical accounts of Indigenous Peoples' exclusion from the National Amateur Lacrosse Association in the late 1800s ignored racism as a reason for such exclusion and instead framed the exclusion as necessary to rid the league of professionalism and therefore undesirable behaviour. She also notes that Indigenous Peoples physical cultural practices were also recorded with ethnocentric distortions. For example, ethnocentric distortions of the traditional practice of lacrosse lead to its appropriation and transformation. Europeans created rules, standardized the playing area and imposed their notions and meanings so sport. Similarly, Fox (2007) notes how the definition of "game" was often left as self-evident within European's anthropological studies of their encounters with Indigenous physical cultural practices. Often, these accounts categorized Indigenous practices into "games of chance and skill or dexterity" (p.219) and ignored the ceremonial aspects and cultural meanings attached to such practices.

In contemporary leisure research in the Indigenous context, Forsyth (2007) states that there are two broad themes: "(1) how Aboriginal leisure preferences either enhance traditional values and beliefs or facilitate Aboriginal integration into mainstream society and (2) issues in tourism, especially as they relate to Aboriginal festivals as well as access to, and management of, provincial and national parks" (p.157). She suggests such a narrow scope limits our understanding of the diverse leisure practices of Indigenous Peoples and the issues that affect their participation. Fox (2007) also takes issue with the extant leisure literature and notes that many studies begin with the "assumed 'goodness' of leisure and associated benefits for Indigenous *and* non-Indigenous people. In an earlier article, Fox (2006) argues that the use of Eurocentric conceptualizations of leisure limits the ability of leisure scholars to address the concerns and criticisms of Indigenous Peoples and risks "appropriating and deforming Indigenous knowledges and practices" (p.404) She calls for the field of leisure studies to develop more polythetic approaches and descriptive methodologies that may address the issues related to translation of nuanced differences in cultural meanings and approaches to leisure that Indigenous Peoples have. Ultimately these are calls for greater complexity in leisure research, to challenge the field's normalized Euro-centric assumptions of leisure. I argue that Indigenous challenges to Euro-centric leisure also challenge the ontological and epistemological frameworks, methodologies and methods that are deeply entrenched within Western knowledge.

Leisure Research

Fox (2007) calls on leisure scholars to rethink their approaches to how leisure is studied in order to better address the critiques of Indigenous Peoples. To meet these challenges, she suggests that leisure studies needs to develop polythetic comparative approaches to "leisures" (Fox, 2006, 2007; Fox & Klaiber, 2006), "that is, changing language, description,

and analytical format to acknowledge a reciprocal and equal standing of differing approaches to leisure" (Fox, 2007, p.229). Fox (2007) argues that such an approach has to adequately work across historical eras and avoid privileging one culture over another. However, while development of such an approach is needed, there are also issues surrounding the term, leisure. Fox & Klaiber (2006) clarify their usage of the term leisures by stating,

> We use (a) "leisure" in quotation marks (unless delimited by adjectives) to indicate the constructed meta-narrative of leisure representing a dominant Eurocentric perspective; (b) leisure to indicate non-metanarrative and singular practices of leisure within particular cultures or settings; and (c) leisures (even with its inelegant appearance) to represent multiple ways to categorize, represent and perform leisure as a foundation for polythetic comparison across differences (p.413)

The usage of the term leisures is needed to ensure there is a measure of agreement in the leisure studies field about how and when to distinguish between the terms. However, it is problematic considering Fox's (2006) discussion around the term leisure in the Indigenous context. She notes that in many languages, the term leisure does not exist. This begs the question of whether the use of the term leisures is still the most appropriate word for working across cultures given its Latin and Greek origins and its connections to colonialism. While Fox and Klaiber (2006) address this issue by explaining that the development of such a polythetic classification "implies self-conscious and critical methodological processes" (p.413), a central concern of this dissertation is the usage of words and the implications of words and stories with regard to the experience and perpetuation of internalized oppression. The importance of words and terminology is acknowledged by Stewart, Parry and Glover (2008) in their discussion of how the "language of neo-liberalism has infiltrated the lexicon" of recreation policy discourse. They argue that leisure scholars must be aware of the discourse that they are perpetuating through their writing of leisure

scholarship. As such, there are serious questions from an Indigenous standpoint that calls into question the usage of the term leisures, along with other language that could be connected to a perpetuation of Euro-centric values and ideologies that maintain Indigenous oppression. The potential for the word leisure to subjugate Indigenous ways of knowing and being is troubling in that it perpetuates an assumption that all human cultures and their physical cultural practices can be understood with a word. In order to mitigate this dilemma, there would need to be widespread agreement on the usage of the terms as laid out by Fox and Klaiber, as well as, an understanding of how it would not contribute to the perpetuation of Euro-centric notions of leisure, which could also be extended to the equally problematic notions of work, productivity, and progress.

How leisure is defined is an obvious driving force behind leisure scholarship. It is also the source of much contention in leisure studies. As Mair (2006a) states, "As a field of social inquiry, leisure has been investigated from a variety of approaches…Although these approaches have contributed to a more sophisticated understanding of leisure, they have generally been either discipline-based or multidisciplinary" (p. 197). Fox, Klaiber, Ryan & Lashua, (2006) argue,

> the experience of leisure is not simply subjective…We experience leisure in the way we do because we think as Euro-North American selves. Likewise, the Greeks experienced leisure as they did because it was embedded within the discourses of the time and place. Placing experience within discourse and language makes it polyphonic, plural, and non-subjective as well as non-objective. It makes it discursive, that is, subject to and a product of power-knowledge (p.458)

In the present moment, as leisure scholarship ventures farther into the leisure meanings and practices of minority and marginalized cultures, the continuing practice of examining leisure through a Eurocentric lens without critically examining the discursive power-knowledge

relationship will become increasingly problematic and could lead to leisure studies becoming irrelevant to a society of increasing plurality. However, as Fox (2007) reminds us, "regardless of definitions or characterizations of leisure, the concepts of activity and time are always implicated" (p.228). While this is certainly true, there would then be a further discussion of how activity and time are conceptualized through an Indigenous ontological and epistemological orientation. In any case, *leisures* will continue to be highly contested within the realm of Indigenous Inquiry, especially with regard to the continual challenge to Eurocentric ontological, epistemological and methodological modes of understanding and being in the world.

Leisure scholars are thus faced with the challenge of reflexively looking at current understandings of leisure from the vantage point of the colonized and marginalized that allows a critique of multiple perspectives and Eurocentric ideas simultaneously. As Grande (2004) states,

> In a time when the dominant patterns of belief and practice are being widely recognized as integrally related to the cultural and ecological crises, the need for understanding other cultural patterns as legitimate and competing sources of knowledge is critical. In this context, the voices of indigenous and other non-Western peoples become increasingly vital, not because such peoples categorically possess any kind of magical, mystical power to fix countless generations of abuse and neglect, but because non-Western peoples and nations exist as living critiques of the dominant culture, providing critique-al knowledge and potentially transformative paradigms (p.65)

To do this, Hemingway (1999) argues there is a need to create a study of leisure that is *transdisciplinary*. He believes that leisure is a multidimensional phenomenon and he argues that leisure studies must become transdisciplinary if it is "to address leisure's multidimensional nature" (p.488). He further suggests, "theory may be the link joining the several perspectives

operating within leisure studies, a way past the isolating tendencies of disciplinarity and specialization" (p.488). He wonders if theory can then be used to raise questions about leisure and at the same time unite leisure scholars of differing epistemological and methodological perspectives.

Russell, Wickson and Carew (2008) suggest that one of the keys to ensuring transdisciplinarity is the movement away from focusing on knowledge as a commodity to an environment that respects mutual learning for the betterment of society and solving problems of practice. For Russell et al. (2008) this is achieved through developing transdisciplinary and intellectual capacity that is marked by a "shift towards the intrinsic valuing of collaboration and teamwork, a culture of reward sharing, a spirit of mutual responsibility and learning and more idealism and outcome (not output) focus in the generation and use of knowledge" (p.470). They suggest that transdisciplinarity has specific characteristics such as the ability to be: problem focused, flexible in terms of which methodology, and collaborative. Such characteristics, they argue, have the potential to re-position universities that are currently mired by a culture that

> is characterized by individuality, elitism, the accumulation of advantage and academic territorialism associated with disciplines and specializations. These cultural features are enhanced by, and in turn reinforce, the competitiveness, the striving for financial gain and the commodification of knowledge that threaten to characterize universities in the global knowledge economy (p.469)

Although not explicitly stated in the Russell et al (2008) article, their point parallels an Indigenous perspective with regard to their discussions of consolidation and interconnection, knowledge commodification, and mutual learning. Russell et al. (2008) argue that institutionalization and commodification of disciplines and knowledge run the risk of limiting the flexibility of disciplines to react to change and entertain alternative ideas that challenge the status

quo. Consolidation and commodification of disciplines and knowledge not only challenges the ability of disciplines to be transdisciplinary, it also perpetuates a cycle of colonization that Indigenous researchers are advocating against.

Hemingway (1999) calls for a critical theory of leisure. He states,

> critical theory aims to steer a course between the reification of human action (that is, treating human action as a thing or object) in positivism and postpositivism, and the relativism inherent in constructivism, all the while seeking contact between theory and practice aimed at the emancipation of human capacities (Hemingway, 1999, p.491)

He suggests that critical theory offers this emancipatory potential because of its orientation to deal with: "(a) historical specificity and the nature of critique; (b) difference, defined as plurivocity and polyphony; and (c) the emancipation of human capacities" (p. 491). More specifically, he argues,

> The historically specific conditions in which human action occurs are the bases of critical theory's empirical analysis of social roles, practices, and institutions; the concept of emancipation is the normative horizon for their critique. It is any contradiction between these – social roles, practices, and institution on the one hand; and emancipation on the other that critical theory challenges (Hemingway, 1999, p.492)

In essence, such an orientation allows an analysis of social roles, practices and institutions that situates knowledge claims in "identifiable material and social conditions" (Hemingway, 1999, p.499). Hemingway (1999) argues, "the knower and known are joined together by their historical specificity" (p. 492) thus precluding universalizable truths. Self-reflexivity thus becomes a crucial component to this orientation because it demands that the researcher and the researched confront the material and social conditions of their situation. The emancipatory potential of critical theory is then situated in its ability to open up space that allows an analysis of the social

world across historical social and material contexts and for the self-reflexive acknowledgements of researcher and researched.

Hemingway (1999) acknowledges that critical theory is inherently political because it rejects the "conservatism of positivist research" (p.500) and the "relativism (some would say nihilism) of constructivism" (p.500). He suggests that critical theory's focus on the emancipatory potential of human capacities through the bringing together of different epistemologies and methodologies necessitates that it move towards transdisciplinarity. For Hemingway the current political system does not offer an opportunity to realize the emancipatory potential of human capacities through critical theory or a critical theory of leisure. He suggests that the only way to realize this potential is through the development of "*radical democracy* and with it radically expanded conceptions of human capacities" (p.500). He argues that leisure has a "central place" in the quest for radical democracy because it "connects the private and the public spheres" (p.501) and is inherently political. He states, "As a major arena in which multiple social roles are enacted, it contributes to the creation of the social space necessary for radical democracy. Indeed, radical democracy requires a radicalized conception of leisure, one focusing on the actualization of leisure's emancipatory potential" (p.501). For Hemingway, critical theory is thus a means to move leisure studies beyond the trappings of disciplinarity and into a space that allows the opportunity for emancipation.

A common theme throughout this discussion has been the emancipatory potential of transdisciplinarity to transform leisure studies (and for that matter every academic field) with the notion of moving beyond epistemological and methodological boundaries and constraints. For Fox (2007), Hemingway (1999) and Mair (2006b), it would appear that a critical orientation to leisure is the theoretical approach that can transform the study of leisure even if there are subtle disagreements regarding the terms polythetic, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary.

To reiterate, Fox's (2007) call for a polythetic comparative approach to leisure studies entailed, "changing language, description, and analytical format to acknowledge a reciprocal and equal standing of differing approaches to leisure" (p.229). She argues, "such an examination would begin with *thick descriptions*" (p.229). For Mair's (2006b) an interdisciplinary approach to leisure studies, "represents an effort to undertake inquiry through the systematic and deliberate integration of more than one discipline to develop new paradigmatic, epistemological, ontological, and methodological approaches (p.198). And Hemingway (1999) argues,

> Given leisure's multidimensionality, there could be no one substantive theory adequate to the whole of it. To bring together the resources necessary for the trandisciplinary study of leisure requires room for a considerable number of alternative research frameworks which might not always be completely epistemologically or methodologically congruent (p.503)

For all three scholars, their respective orientations seem to be quite similar in that they all call for leisure studies to construct forms of inquiry that transcend the ontological, epistemological and methodological frameworks that inform leisure studies and also to transcend the disciplinary constraints that maintains the different silos of leisure inquiry. For Mair (2006b) and Hemingway (1999) this orientation is developed through a critical theoretical approach to leisure, while for Fox (2007), her discussions stem from a post-colonial orientation.

In Fox's (2007) discussion of a polythetic comparative approach to the study of leisures, she calls for a re-weaving of leisure. She describes the story of the Dine weaver and how, after a long period of apprenticeship, the Dine weaver spends months weaving and constructing patterns "carefully ensuring a creation respectful of the gods" (Fox, 2007, p.218). She talks about how in Euro-North American terms, Dine weaving "merges structure, process, product, and ongoing cycles" (p.218). The difference between Fox's (2007) call for a polythetic comparative approach

in comparison to Hemingway (1999) and Mair (2006b) is that Fox clearly situates her discussion within Indigenous critiques of the Eurocentrism of leisure and leisure studies. As such, Fox (2007) maintains that "research praxis that attends to Aboriginal critiques and propositions for collaboration and ownership will need to be developed and refined" (p. 236). Within a leisure studies context, this means developing an approach to the study of leisure that allows multiple perspectives to operate simultaneously. This is an idea of great complexity but paramount if the field of leisure studies is to remain relevant and reach the emancipatory potential that underlies much of its scholarly discourse.

Leisure and Colonization

The ways Indigenous Peoples were brought within the imperial system are many and vary from the overt to the insidious. Like so many Indigenous communities, the Six Nations community has many stories that tell of our experiences of colonization. We have stories of overt violence and hostility towards us; stories of war and of being displaced from our homelands. However, as part of that history, we also have stories of European sports and games and of the Indian agents, clergymen, law enforcement officers and educators who were involved, in one way or another, in their introduction. At Six Nations, specifically, we also have stories about our game of lacrosse, its appropriation and transformation into a game that fit European sensibilities. Put into the context of colonization there are certainly a number of questions regarding the intent behind the introduction of sports and games to our communities. Fox (2007) states,

> Eurocentric leisure, perspectives and moral judgements have led to death and disease for Indigenous peoples, to attempts to assimilate or decimate Indigenous cultures, to repression of Indigenous practices and governance structures, to forced-labour in the service of Eurocentric leisure practices, and to commodification and objectification

of Indigenous Peoples and practices (p. 219)

As examples, she mentions the introduction of alcohol, the sex trade and the creation of games where Indigenous Peoples "were treated as objects or balls, and coerced participation in Eurocentric leisure activities" (p.219). Similarly, Paraschak (1989) notes how Indigenous Peoples were exploited and put on display, literally, so that Europeans could profit from their skills during the Canadian Lacrosse Tours of 1876 to 1883. There are also other stories, for example, of fairs being used as venues to promote Euro-Canadian sports and "sport-days" held in conjunction with national celebrations to promote Euro-Canadian values (Paraschak, 1998). A significant example of this continues in the present day, as the Six Nations community has a "sport-day" held annually in conjunction with Canada's federal holiday celebrating Queen Victoria's birthday. On this day, children from the various schools in the community gather at the Six Nations Parks and Recreation facilities to compete in Euro-North American sports. Six Nations refers to the day as "Bread and Cheese Day" and the elected council also gives a gift of bread and cheese to anyone interested in receiving it. This giving of bread and cheese is symbolic of Queen Victoria's historic gesture of annually giving the Six Nations blankets in thanks for their allegiance to the British Crown during the American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. The practice stopped with her death in 1901. However, it was revived in 1924 with the current practice of giving bread and cheese to the community. Of note, this occurred the same year the Six Nations Confederacy was deposed, and the elected band council was installed.

Additionally, Europeans utilized legislation from within their burgeoning governments to control or subjugate Indigenous cultural practices. In the United States of America, Paraschak (1989) notes that the American government "operated under a philosophy that Native peoples could be legislated into becoming white Americans" (p.122).

As a result, dances and ceremonies were banned through legislation because they were labeled as “pagan and immoral” (p.123). In the Canadian context, the Canadian government acted similarly with the introduction of the Canadian Indian Act of 1876 and the creation of the Department of Indian Affairs in 1880. (Paraschak, 1989). Within the Indian Act, the Canadian government outlawed practices like the Potlatch, a gift giving ceremony that was part of the governance practices for the Indigenous Peoples on the west coast of Canada. Paraschak (1989) also notes that “Because many indigenous forms of religious expression were viewed as recreational activities, Indian agents in some cases replaced these ceremonies with Euro-Canadian versions of recreation” (p.123). She notes that, in Canada, the Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Duncan Scott, approved of any “endeavor to substitute reasonable amusements for this senseless drumming dancing” (p.123). Indeed, the creation of such legislation in Canada and the United States plus the words of a man in charge of “Indian affairs”, offers a glimpse into the mindset of those in positions of power with the added complexity of how laws were created specifically with the intent to colonize “the Indian”. Such links raise a number of questions about leisure and its relationship to the democratization of North America.

There are additional questions about power relations between Indigenous People and the Government, about the hegemony of positioning Euro-centric leisure as natural and legitimate and about the agency of individuals and communities. Paraschak (1989) states, “Histories of Native involvement in sporting practices, traditional games, ceremonials, powwows, and rodeos all help illuminate an ongoing process wherein Euro-Americans have largely determined which physical leisure practices will be considered ‘legitimate’ for Native participants” (p.122). However, Paraschak adds, “These histories also demonstrate the contested nature of such practices, as Native participants have at times acquiesced to,

resisted, or accommodated the imposed expectations" (p.122). For example, Paraschak (1995) explains how in 1970, the Government of Canada through the Department of National Health and Welfare, released "A Proposed Sports Policy for Canadians". In 1972, this policy lead to the development of the Native Sport and Recreation program (NSRP) that was "aimed at raising performance levels to the point where Native athletes could compete alongside other Canadians in elite competitions, while also providing services to a disadvantaged population" (p.1). This was a funding program administered by Fitness and Amateur Sport, the unit responsible for sport, physical fitness and recreation at the federal level. Throughout its existence, it supported various sport and recreation projects in the Indigenous community, but as Paraschak notes, government officials maintained ethnocentric assumptions about the "'legitimate' nature of sport, the rationale for providing government-funded sport opportunities and the relationship between sport and Native politics" (p. 4). Government officials assumed that Euro-Canadian sports were the legitimate form of physical activity; they also assumed that competitive sports are the desired goal of physical activity participation; and that Indigenous Peoples aspire to participate in the Euro-Canadian sport system. However, a challenge occurred as various Indigenous leaders within the NSRP utilized their programs to create All-Native sport competitions. These competitions reflected one stance within the Native community that the All-Indian system was a "legitimate expression of national and international competition" (Paraschak, 1995, p. 6). However, as Paraschak noted, sport as a site of cultural contestation brings forth questions about whether Indigenous Peoples are resisting or reproducing cultural norms in the participation in all-Native sport competitions where the sports are Euro-Canadian sports and based upon the Euro-Canadian sport system.

There have been some positive outcomes of Indigenous peoples' participation in

sport through the colonization project that also bring attention to the contradictory and contested nature. Paraschak (1990b), for example, explored the participation of women in sport from the Six Nations community and documented how women had access to opportunities that allowed them to participate in both the "mainstream" sport system and an "All-Indian" sport system organized by the National Indian Activities Association that was based out of the United States. However, while their participation in sport could be characterized as empowering, Paraschak (1990b) raises the following concern,

> It seems therefore, that the emergent All-Indian sport system has provided Indian women with a viable opportunity for physical activity, and they have responded to this system positively, both by playing in and hosting these tournaments. But how different a system are they legitimating by their participation? An emergent sport system can both challenge, and reproduce elements within the dominant culture…it should become evident that the All-Indian sport system provides opportunities for native peoples to compete with other natives in euroamerican sport forms, but does not provide for a radically different vision of sport (p.75)

This led Paraschak to question the nature of power within Indigenous sporting events and to wonder how such practices "reflect the routinized social patterns evident in their daily lives" (Paraschak, 1997). She suggests that Indigenous Peoples create sporting practices that are based upon their geographic location, their lifestyle and "their lived practical consciousness" (p.16). To be clear it is worth quoting her at length,

> Native peoples in the Northwest Territories, who live a life isolated in many ways from eurocanadians and more in touch with a customary native derived life style, reproduce a sporting context in keeping with that reality. This includes the expectation that native participants have a right to participate in sporting

> competitions sponsored by their government and that they have a right to festivals, which are structured according to customary Inuit/Dene values and activities. Meanwhile, southern Canadian native peoples, who have interfaced with eurocanadians for much of this century and have increasingly adopted a customary eurocanadian way of life, have been unsuccessful in maintaining a federal government-supported sports program for native participants. They have, however, developed a self-funded All-Indian sport system, largely comparable to mainstream eurocanadian-derived sporting practices, in which they define legitimate participants with government-created definitions of race (p.16)

As such, Parachak's discussions of Indigenous Peoples' engagement in the present mainstream and "All-Indian" sport systems raises significant questions about the effect of such systems on power relations, agency and hegemony.

One obvious question revolves around why Euro-North American leisure practices persist in Indigenous communities given the historical intent of many practices to inculcate Indigenous Peoples with European values and ideologies. Forsyth and Wamsley (2006) put forth that sport and games had significance to Indigenous Peoples prior to colonization. They argue that sport and games, as a social practice and a contested site of cultural struggle in the present, provide Indigenous Peoples with the space to realize a measure of self-determination and cultural renewal. They suggest that cultural hegemony does not adequately explain the Indigenous experience in Canada given that the drastic change in Indigenous way of life was affected through force and coercion. Thus, their argument is that Indigenous Peoples have the ability to resist ongoing colonialism and realize self-determination through their own agency.

In their historical analysis of the development of the North American Indigenous

(NAI) Games, Forsyth and Wamsley (2006) discuss how, during the 1970s, Indigenous leaders "expressed their right to self-determined sport and recreation activities by establishing a successful all-native sport system apart from the Euro-Canadian sport system" (p. 300). They note that Indigenous leaders perceived sport as a means to bolster social development and that an all-native sport system was a space for Indigenous Peoples to demonstrate their distinctiveness. However, conflict arose with the Government of Canada with regard to the structure and purpose of the all-native sport programs. The government felt that the all-native sport system did not fit with their idea of elite sport. As a result, funding through the government's Native Sport and Recreation Program, was cancelled. After this decision, Indigenous leaders, led by L. Wilton Littlechild, "a sport visionary and champion of indigenous rights" (p. 302), continued their pursuit of an Indigenous vision for sport that eventually resulted in the establishment of the NAI Games. According to Forsyth and Wamsley, Littlechild viewed elite-level sport as an opportunity to demonstrate Indigenous "social, cultural and political distinctiveness from Canadian society" (p.309) These games thus had a goal of incorporating cultural activities to "highlight the great diversity among North American indigenous peoples, to create a sense of unity from this diversity and to promote the resurgence of indigenous cultures and cultural identities in non-indigenous society" (p. 304). They also argue that the NAI Games were a space that demonstrated Indigenous Peoples' resistance to assimilation and that Indigenous control over all aspects of the NAI (Games) was indicative of "aboriginal self-determination in matters of culture" (p.295). There are, however, several questions related to the idea of self-determination and what is meant by the resurgence of culture and cultural identity? There are also questions about what characteristics make Indigenous Peoples socially, culturally and political distinct. These ideas need to be more specific so that a critical analysis of

colonialism can occur.

Curiously, Forsyth and Wamsley (2006) note that the notion of self-determination is "largely undefined" (p.308) and instead, "what exists is uncertainty and ambiguity about the place and position aboriginal people occupy in contemporary Canadian society" (p.308). In their article, self-determination appears to be equated with agency with regard to Indigenous People's power to control their participation in the elite sport context and their prerogative to include elements of Indigenous culture and identity. However, this notion of self-determination appears to ignore sport's broader connections to Euro-centric theories and conceptualizations of leisure and, in turn, broader discussions situating leisure within existential debates about ways of being in the world. There are also several questions about whether sport activities, as they are currently constructed, can be sites for self-determination, resistance and cultural resurgence given that there is ambiguity around what is meant by Indigenous culture or Indigenous identity. In other words, can self-determination be achieved through participation in the same sports in the same way with the addition of an Indigenous cultural component? Are leisure and sport practices malleable to other cultural norms and values? Is sport and leisure part of the much broader ontological and epistemological debate between a European and Indigenous knowledge?

In an exploration of Indigenous women's participation in sport in the Six Nations community between 1968 and 1980, Paraschak (1990) notes that women in the community had success in both the dominant "Euroamerican sport system" (p.70) and the "All-Indian sport system" (p.70). She explains that Six Nations women participated in similar sports in both systems. However, she wonders how different the All-Indian sport system is. She states,

It should become evident that the All-Indian sport system provides opportunities for

> native people to compete with other natives in Euroamerican sport forms but does not provide a radically different vision of sport. Thus, this emergent system contributes toward a collective native identity, but falls short of asserting unique cultural forms which resist current definitions of sport in mainstream Canada (p.75)

Paraschak notes that while control of sport and the regulation of who is eligible to participate, defines the difference presented by the All-Indian sport system, there is a possibility of reproducing the undesirable aspects of the dominant sport system. For example, the All-Indian sport system was observed to reproduce patriarchy, notions of race, biases regarding the superiority of Euro-American sport competitions, as well as, notions of essentialized identity that have been defined by the Indian Act. (Notably, the Indian Act disenfranchised Indigenous women from a legal standpoint until it was repealed in 1985) Indeed, questions abound about the All-Indian sport system's role in reproducing dominant colonial norms and thus perpetuating ongoing colonialism.

In a paper examining the responses of subordinate groups to the dominant society in the context of sporting events, Paraschak (1997) wonders why the activities of subordinate groups do not always reflect a resistance to the power of the dominant group. She asks,

> What factor(s) lead native athletes to adopt – even welcome – eurocanadian sporting practices in one situation, and yet challenge and/or modify them on another occasion? When marginalized groups find themselves in control of the construction of social practices, why do some continue to reproduce structures and/or activities of the dominant group, while others construct social practices which look quite different? In other words, why does an increase in power by the "marginalized" sometimes, but not always, translate into a continuation of the social practices of the "dominant"?

Paraschak (1997) argues that to make sense of these differences, an examination of the lived experience with regard to "routinized social practices" (p.3) is needed. She draws upon Gidden's (1984) concept of "practical consciousness" which suggests that day-to-day practices, "lead to naturalized beliefs about reality which differentially 'structure' the possibilities those groups imagine for sport (i.e. their agency)" (p.2). Paraschak makes an important observation that speaks to how humans create the realities that they inhabit. If one starts from the positon that social and moral realities are socially constructed as Delgado (1989) suggests, then it stands to reason that the limits of these realities depend, somewhat, on the limits of what is known and understood. These ideas speak to Freire's (2009) notion of praxis, which Freire posits as "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (p.51). Thus, if leisure is a form of praxis, it then has the potential to be a site of oppression and self-determination, depending on one's critical awareness of the world and consciousness of how one's understandings affect one's actions. Indeed, leisure in the context of imperialism and colonialism is profoundly, and paradoxically, positioned within Indigenous people's struggles with imperialism and colonialism.

Forsyth (2013) furthers this discussion through her exploration of the experiences of Indigenous Peoples who survived the residential school system in Canada. She found for some, sport and games played a crucial role in their ability to cope with the devastation of being ripped from their families and experiencing the atrocities of abuse and assimilation that permeate the residential school experience. However, she notes that while sports provided Indigenous Peoples with "avenues for positive self-expression and identification…the techniques used to monitor and control their bodies also transformed Aboriginal physical practices" (p.32). Using Foucault's notion of diffuse power, discipline, and the internalization of techniques of self-discipline and self-control, Forsyth posits that

sport and games within the residential school system "can be understood as forms of discipline because they provided a clear set of methods and principles to inculcate a new docility into the pupils – a docility that would presumably facilitate their integration into mainstream society" (p.21). As such, systems of sport and the disciplining of the body raise significant questions about systems of control, power, (as well as hegemony) and the effect on Indigenous peoples' agency and autonomy over their participation in sport and other forms of leisure activity.

Leisure, Work and Time

The Haudenosaunee were, for lack of a better word, farmers. We grew a variety of corn, beans and squash, three main foods which we refer to as *The Three Sisters*. They are central in our creation stories and to our philosophies and ideologies regarding how to live as human beings. We also hunted, fished and gathered foods. As a result, many of our celebrations were, and still are, centered around the different foods that the earth provided and, as we say, *whose sustenance sustains us*. We were a complex society that also developed complex physical cultural activities that were reflective of our belief in our relationship with the land and everything in it. As mentioned, we have many stories of colonization. We have stories of being attacked by European invaders, of being removed from our homelands. One such story related by Cornelius (1999) describes an attack on a Seneca community by a French Commander named Jacques-Rene de Brisay de Denonville in 1687. In the story, the colonizers attempted to murder us but when they failed to do so, they decided to decimate our means to survival. Cornelius (1999) relates that the French army spent 10 days destroying fields of corn, orchards and stores of vegetables, berries and meats. Indeed, in Denonville's journal, he estimated that his army destroyed "1.2 million bushels of corn as well as beans and other vegetables" (p.143). Cornelius notes that there is also some documentation that reveals this type of practice was used nearly one

hundred years prior in 1585. Additionally, nearly one hundred years after the start of Denonville's first attacks, it is clear these practices were still employed by the British as can be seen in the journal entries below,

> Our Brigade Destroyed about 150 acres of the best corn that I Ever saw (some of the Stalks grew 16 feet high) besides great Quantities of Beans, Potatoes, Pumpkins, Cucumbers, Squash and Watermelons, and the Enemy looking at us from the hills did not fire on us" – Journal of Lieutenant Beatty, August 30th, 1779: (Cornelius, 1999, p. 147)

> The whole army employed till 11 o'clock destroying corn, there being the greatest quantity destroyed at this town than any of the former. It is judged that we have burnt and destroyed about sixty thousand bushels of corn and two or three thousand of beans on this expedition – Journal of Major Burrowes, September 15th, 1779: (Cornelius, 1999, p.147)

Historically, European racism and colonial discourses that maintained Indigenous Peoples as primitive hunter-gatherers, is also deeply entrenched in the narrative traditions of American Law and education. In his analysis of American Federal Indian Law, Williams Jr. (2000) sheds light on the narratives that were employed to justify the removal of Indigenous Peoples from their homelands. He cites Georgia Governor Wilson Lumpkin's speech in support of the 1830 Removal Act, President John Quincy Adams speech in support of the Removal Act, Michigan Governor Lewis Cass' speech in support of the Removal Act and John Locke's book chapter on *Property* that was part of his *Second Treatise of Government.* I believe it to be vitally important to provide the quotes that Williams Jr. uses in his analyses for you, the reader, to fully grasp the extent to which European racism was entrenched in narratives that expressed Indigenous peoples' inferiority.

The practice of buying Indian lands is nothing more than the substitute of humanity and benevolence, and has been resorted to in preference to the sword, as the best means for agricultural and civilized communities entering into the enjoyment of their natural and just right to the benefits of the earth, evidently designed by Him who formed it for the purposes more useful than Indian hunting grounds – Wilson Lumkin (cited in Williams Jr., 2000, p.97)

[I]n appropriating to ourselves their hunting grounds we have brought upon ourselves the obligation of providing them with subsistence; and when we have had the same good fortune of teaching them the arts of civilization and the doctrines of Christianity we have unexpectedly found them forming in the midst of ourselves communities claiming to be independent of ours and rivals of sovereignty within the territories of the members of our Union. This state of things requires that a remedy should be provided – a remedy which, while it shall do justice to those unfortunate children of nature, may secure to the members of our confederates their right of sovereignty and soil – John Quincy Adams (cited in Williams Jr., 2000, p.98)

A barbarous people, depending for subsistence upon the scanty and precarious supplies furnished by the chase, cannot live in contact with a civilized community. As the cultivated border approaches the haunts of the animals, which are valuable for food or furs, they recede and seek shelter in less accessible situations. …[W]hen the people, whom they supply with the means of subsistence, have become sufficiently numerous to consume the excess annually added to the stock, it is evident, that the population must become stationary, or, resorting to the principle instead of the interest, must, like other

> prodigals, satisfy the wants of to-day at the expense of to-morrow – Lewis Cass (Cited in Williams Jr., 2000, p.98)

> There cannot be a clearer demonstration of any thing, than several Nations of the Americans are of this [the value added to land by labor] who are rich in Land, and poor in all Comforts of Life; who nature having furnished as liberally as any other people, with the materials of Plenty, i.e., a fruitful soil, apt to produce in abundance, what might serve for food, raiment, and delight; yet for want of improving it by labour, have not one hundredth part of the Conveniences we enjoy; and the king of a large fruitful territory there feeds, lodges, and is clad worse than a day labourer in the England. Yet there are still great tracts of ground to be found, which (the inhabitants thereof not having joined with the rest of mankind, in the consent of the use of their common money) lie waste, and are more than the people, who dwell on it, do, or can make use of, and so still be in common. Tho' this can scarce happen amongst that part of mankind that have consented to the use of money – John Locke (cited in Williams Jr., 2000, p.99 & p.100)

These narratives of prominent Europeans contextualize the discourse of Indigenous People's primitiveness and inferiority within the climate of hostile relations with Indigenous Peoples and a desire of Europeans to gain control of Indigenous lands. Europeans who used their racist perspectives to claim that Indigenous Peoples only subsisted on the "furnishings of the chase" essentially reasoned that Indigenous Peoples' hunter-gatherer lifestyle and supposed lack of agricultural use of the land justified the claim of legal title over Indigenous lands. Indeed, as Williams (2000) states,

> Since its invasion of America, white society has sought to justify, through law and legal discourse, its privileges of aggression against Indian people by stressing tribalism's incompatibility with the superior values and norms of white civilization. For half a millennium, the white man's Rule of Law has most often served as the fundamental mechanism by which white society has absolved itself for any injustices arising from its assumed right of domination over Indian people (p.103)

Such quotes are thus informative because they demonstrate the delusion of European racism but also raise some serious questions; Did European colonists deliberately contrive the claim that Indigenous Peoples were hunter-gathers (i.e. primitive and thus inferior) to build support for the removal of Indigenous Peoples from their lands? Or was their racism so entrenched as to literally blind them from seeing the actual agricultural practices that Indigenous Peoples were engaged in? There is some truth to be found in both of these questions. In comparing the previous journal entries of the French and British soldiers, it is clear that Europeans (or at the very least European soldiers) recognized that Indigenous Peoples were engaged in complex agriculture. While in the legal writing of such prominent American statesmen, it appears that racism blinded European perceptions of Indigenous Peoples' agricultural practices while being simultaneously utilized to deliberately justify European expansion and appropriation of Indigenous Lands.

In addition to the use of democracy to justify European colonization, Grande (2004) discusses how the church and the state conspired in the development of the "manual labor schools" (p.13), which were used to provide vocational training in the name of "civilizing" Indigenous children. She discusses how "churches were endowed with hundreds of acres of land for Indian children to plow, maintain and harvest" (p.13) and to teach Indigenous children the so-called proper way to use the land. However, little known is that the Diocese controlled these schools and yielded the profit from the labour of Indigenous children. As Grande (2004) notes,

using forced labour as part of Indian education transformed "the ostensibly "moral" project of civilizing the Indians into a for-profit enterprise" (p.13). Another bizarre demonstration of European oppression was in the naturalization ceremonies that resulted from the General Allotment Act (Dawes Act) in the United States of 1887. Grande (2004) notes that the General Allotment Act was created to allow the President the power to break up and distribute the communal land holdings of Indigenous Peoples into individual allotments. Indigenous people were then allotted land size according to their status as either "full-bloods", "mixed-bloods," "traditional" or "assimilated" with "mixed-bloods" being granted the larger plots of land. However, Grande (2004) states,

> Arguably more devastating than the direct implications of allotment was the ensuing conflation of dispossession with citizenship. The decimation of collective land holdings and renouncement of tribal membership were explicit preconditions for citizenship. Indeed, at the zenith of allotment, naturalization ceremonies involving the explicit repudiation of tribal ways and acceptance of the "civilized" life were commonplace. For example, some ceremonies required the Indian-citizen-to be to take a final symbolic shot of his bow and arrow and to then place his hands on a farmer's plow. (p.42)

These examples serve to illustrate that the delusion of European superiority was constituted in more than overt acts of violence against Indigenous Peoples but were also hidden within the narratives of European notions of civility, labour, agriculture, property and citizenship. However, a question that may be asked is how is this history relevant to the discussion of leisure and the colonization of Indigenous Peoples?

The connections between leisure and colonization are, in my opinion, intertwined with discussions surrounding the aforementioned notions of civility, labour, agriculture, property and citizenship. It is a discussion that speaks to Euro-centric ways of being that

includes notions about work, leisure and time. In discussing the challenges that Euro-centric leisure presents when contrasted with Indigenous ways of being (and knowing) Fox (2007) states, “Given Aboriginal peoples’ suspicions of the Euro-North American quest for universal definitions and a desire not to be assimilated into Euro-North American categories, the concept of leisure itself is problematic” (p.228). Leisure is problematic because, as Fox (2006) states in an earlier article about the challenges that Indigenous knowledge presents to leisure scholarship, “The very word ‘leisure’ is not present in many languages (including many Indigenous languages. However, even when the word leisure is present, the connection between an Indigenous concept and a Eurocentric leisure system is far from clear” (p.404).

In a discussion about the history of western leisure, Hunnicutt (2006) states, “The major texts in leisure studies have long agreed that leisure is an historical product; that there was a time (for example, among hunter-gatherer peoples) when leisure was unknown, and that at some point leisure emerged as a cultural category, initially identified by new words and in institutions, rituals, myths, and so on” (p.55). Hunnicutt obviously situates his discussion within the context of ancient human history. However, while the statement itself is innocuous, it does create some questions given the previous discussion about narratives of Indigenous primitiveness and inferiority. Additionally, Hunnicutt states, “Whereas scholars have agreed for decades that hunter-gatherers living today have no word for or concept of leisure (or idleness, or laziness) perhaps even more surprising is their finding that most ancient peoples have no one word for or general concept of work as we moderns understand it” (p.56). Again, given the previous discussions there is a question of whether such narratives of leisure scholarship have been used in historical analyses of Indigenous Peoples in North America? Or whether such narratives were connected with European notions of

civility, labour, agriculture, property and citizenship. Very often, our histories are frozen in time by the colonial narratives that perceive and maintain Indigenous Peoples as primitive and inferior. It doesn't seem like a stretch to ponder whether historical understandings of leisure are wrapped up in the discourse of Indigenous inferiority and primitiveness.

Perhaps, just as important, is a brief discussion of time. It is important to contextualize leisure and colonialism with the historical eras in which colonization took place and to briefly discuss the connections between leisure, work and time as concepts that had important roles in the colonial mindset. Smith (2012) discusses time as being associated with social activity and that European conceptualizations of time and of time usage played important roles in how Indigenous Peoples were viewed. She states, "The links between the industrial revolution, the Protestant work ethic, imperialism and science can be discussed in terms of time and the organization of social life" (p.56) and that changes to the modes of production and increases in wealth colluded to change life so distinctions could be made between "work, leisure, education and religion, and a working-class evangelical movement which linked work to salvation" (p.56). She discusses how Euro-centric conceptualizations of time and notions of how social life should be organized impacted how Indigenous Peoples were perceived. She states, "Western observers were struck by the contrast in the way time was used (or rather, not used or organized) by Indigenous peoples. Representations of 'native life' as being devoid of work habits, and of native people being lazy, indolent, with low attention spans, is part of a colonial discourse that continues to this day" (Smith, 2012) It is thus important to consider the connections between, work, leisure and time in relation to leisure's role in colonization. European characterizations of work and leisure have often been characterized as a dichotomy to distinguish one from the other. This is not to say that the work-leisure dichotomy is absolute in our society. However, the European conceptualization of work and leisure and their

connection to European perceptions of time has a significance that serves to disrupt the dominant colonial discourse of justified European expansion and the discourse that maintains Indigenous Peoples as primitive and our cultures as relics of a primitive, and therefore undesirable, past. It is thus important to discuss how theories of leisure in conjunction with conceptualizations of work and time connect in order to contextualize the important role leisure had in the colonization of Indigenous Peoples. For the Haudenosaunee people, these stories serve as proof that we were more than simply hunter-gatherers and that we have a past that is important and relevant for *all* to understand.

Indigenous Self-Determination and Sovereignty

Indigenous notions of self-determination and sovereignty are at the heart of any discussion regarding Indigenous struggles to overcome imperialism and colonialism. As Grande (2008) argues, any liberatory project involving Indigenous Peoples must begin with a clear understanding of self-determination and sovereignty so as to not undermine Indigenous knowledge or acts of resistance. This understanding begins with a recognition that Indigenous knowledge, our ways of knowing, our ways of being and our understandings of history stand in fundamental tension with the ontological and epistemological perspectives that underpin Western knowledge. As such Indigenous scholarship is positioned to provide what Grande (2004) refers to as a "critique-al" [3] (p.2); an application of Indigenous oppositional knowledge that disrupts the dominant and normalized assumptions, knowledges, and structures of Western society. Such critique-al knowledge is built upon an Indigenous notion of decolonization – "a totality that places capitalism, patriarchy, White supremacy, and Western Christianity in radical contingency" (Grande, 2004, p. 51). It is thus imperative that the tensions between Indigenous and Western knowledges be addressed in order for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples/scholars to jointly theorize pathways for

an emancipatory praxis.

Grande (2008) proposes a pathway forward as being Indigenous scholarship's engagement with critical theories of education, specifically *revolutionary critical pedagogy*, "a form of critical pedagogy with a strong anticapitalist and emancipatory agenda" (p.237). However, a coalition and solidarity can only occur with the recognition of the inherent tensions that exists within revolutionary critical pedagogy. Grande (2008) states,

> While it is evident that revolutionary critical pedagogy holds great promise, because it also retains core Western assumptions, it also stands in tension with those central to Indigenous pedagogies. Specifically, the radical notion of "democratization" does not theorize the difference of Indigenous sovereignty; revolutionary constructs of subjectivity remain tied to Western notions of citizenship, and insofar as the discourse of revolutionary critical pedagogy is informed by Marxist theory, it retains a measure of anthropocentrism that belies Indigenous views of land and "nature" (p.234)

Thus, it is crucial that critiques of Western knowledge be grounded in Indigenous notions of sovereignty and self-determination that Grande (2008) argues are removed from Western notions of power and based upon Indigenous notions of *relationship* (p.244), an ideology of "respect, balance, reciprocity, and peaceful coexistence" (p.252). She further argues that the struggle for sovereignty and self-determination is a restorative process rooted in Indigenous understandings of connections to the land.

Indigenous Identity and Democracy

Democracy and "the radical notion of 'democratization'" (Grande, 2008, p.234), like so many Western concepts, is a contested concept that Indigenous Peoples have struggled against for centuries. American and Canadian democracies, indeed, the nation-states of Canada and the

United States of America, were built upon the genocide of the Indigenous Peoples of the North American continent. As such, Sandy Grande (2004) asks the question, "What is more destabilizing for the United States – full recognition of American Indian nations as internal sovereigns or the continued denial of this status?" (p. 32). She is referring to the contradiction that belies the American and Canadian nation-states and its democratic principles; that democracies in both countries were founded upon the exercising of power instead laws and guided by faith instead of reason. Understanding these contradictions reveals that Canadian and American democracies thrived because of the dispossession of Indigenous Peoples from their homes and the oppression of their sovereignty.

The implication of this knowledge is quite profound. Grande (2004) argues that the history of North American colonization is ultimately about democratically induced oppression; European notions of democracy are central in the history of colonization starting with project to create modern education. She argues that the education project was created with the sole purpose of transferring the philosophies of democracy to the masses of colonial settlers and Indigenous Peoples with the expressed intent of controlling land. Grande (2004) states, "The miseducation of American Indians precedes the "birth" of this nation. From the time of invasion to the present day, the church and the state have acted as coconspirators in the theft of Native America, robbing Indigenous Peoples of their very right to be Indigenous" (p.11). She writes about the history of schooling, the connection of schools to the American democratic project and the use of education as one of the key colonizing agents of European imperialism. She discusses how the early establishment of French Jesuit, Spanish and British missions acted to "de-Indianize" Indigenous children and how some of the earliest and most prestigious of American universities, Harvard University, the College of William and Mary, and Dartmouth College, all participated in colonization

with mandates to “civilize” and “Christianize” the “Indians” (p.11). She discusses how Indian boarding schools were “first and foremost, to serve the purposes of the federal government and only secondarily the needs of American Indian students” (p.13). And she establishes how education served to indoctrinate Indigenous Peoples with the tenants of the Protestant work ethic and the new industrial society. As such, the introduction of the Protestant work ethic served to institutionalize and normalize notions of labour, of property ownership and beliefs in individuality and individual rights that forwarded the burgeoning capitalist project (Grande, 2004). Education, from its outset, is thus undeniably implicated in the forwarding of democracy, Christian values, patriarchy and capitalism.

Democracy, like so many other normalized European ideas, is a system that was imposed with the intent to achieve the colonizer’s domination and justify the dispossession of Indigenous peoples’ lands. As Grande (2004) argues, the current praise for Canadian and American democracies being underpinned by “the rule of law” clouds the colonial history of democracy. Grande (2004) highlights the works of Robert A. Williams (1986) who argues that the laws of democracy are based in the “Christian organizing myths of unity and hierarchy” (Grande, 2004, p.37) and in the basic belief of Christian supremacy. Even though, at the outset, it appears that democracy has moved towards secularization, the laws that organize democracy maintains Christian roots in its language and underlying ideology.

When forced to confront the “problem” of Indigenous Peoples occupying lands that the colonizers desired, the colonizers used their newly created courts to try cases regarding the rights of “Indians” to stay in their homelands. Grande (2004) cites the case of Johnson v. McIntosh[4] to illustrate how the deliberations and the subsequent rulings of early court cases exemplified entrenched Christian ideologies about notions of discovery, labour and productivity, the “right” use of land and the colonizer’s “rights” to occupy such land.

Suffice it to say, the belief in the superiority of European civilization and Christianity won out over Indigenous peoples' pleas for their rights to their homelands and to their own sovereignty.

Through the enactment of countless "democratic" laws and acts, the colonizers found ways to justify their presence and subdue Indigenous peoples. Grande (2004) provides a brief list: The Civilization Act of 1819, the Indian Removal Act of 1830, the General Allotment Act of 1887, the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, and the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 are just a sample of the myriad of legal mechanisms imposed on American Indians in the name of "democracy" (p.94). While Grande (2004) offers American examples, the British colonies and fledgling Canadian nation state followed similar legal and "democratic" paths with the Royal Proclamation of 1763, the Indian Lands Act of 1860, the Constitution Act of 1867, the Compulsory Enfranchisement Act of 1869, the Indian Act of 1876, and all the subsequent revisions of the Indian Act from 1876 to the present day.[5] It is important to note that the group of Haudenosaunee living at the Six Nations of the Grand River were relocated to their present day home of the Six Nations of the Grand River in 1784. However, there were many Haudenosaunee peoples living in the United States through these time periods that have direct links to the Six Nations community. Thus, American and Canadian history is intertwined with the colonization history of the Haudenosaunee and thus has direct relevance for the Haudenosaunee in the present.

Reid and Welke (1998) suggest that while Canada positions itself as a multicultural society the fact that is generally dismissed is that Canada was founded upon a dominant Eurocentric culture that is still operationally dominant in Canadian society today. They state,

> Without a healthy perspective of one's own culture and traditions, some members of a minority culture may attempt assimilation into the dominant tradition, to escape this schizophrenic existence. This is particularly problematic for Canadian First Nations people, many of whom continue to suffer from the cultural genocidal practices of earlier governments and missionaries (p.1)

A main issue in this statement is the notion of identity being contingent upon an understanding and acceptance of cultural values and ideologies. Reid and Welke's (1998) notion of a metaphorical schizophrenic existence resonates with Indigenous struggles with identity within the dominant Euro-centric society. Living as an Indigenous person in a society dominated by Eurocentric underpinnings can lead to confusion over which life to lead and whose values to live by. Such struggles, in my opinion, could be conceptualized, quite literally, as conflicts between different internal voices. In my opinion also, such an existence could lead to a multitude of internal psychological conflicts. This is quite salient when contrasted to Ladson-Billings and Donner's (2008) discussion of W.E.B. DuBois' (1903/1905) notion of double consciousness, a condition in which a person may define themselves in two separate ways. This notion of double consciousness supposes that one can have a divided self that is the result of living essentially two lives within one dominant culture.[6] They state, "we know that our sense of identity can evoke multiple consciousness" (p.64) and that this complex phenomena does "impose essentialized concepts of "blackness," "Latina/o-ness," "Asian American-ness," or "Native American-ness" onto specific individuals or groups" (p.64). Essentialism thus becomes a critical issue in framing Indigenous identity dilemmas. However, while notions of double and multiple consciousness may help explain the lived everyday struggles that Indigenous Peoples experience, the concept of an Indigenous identity becomes even more complicated with the challenges produced by notions of authenticity.

Grande (2004) argues that essentialist theories of identity are a product of the western academy that continues to ignore the paradoxes within Indigenous identity struggles. She states,

> the current obsession with questions of identity and authenticity obscures the sociopolitical and material conditions of American Indian communities. Indeed, questions of who or what is an American Indian, who should be allowed to speak from an authority of that voice, who can conduct research on behalf of American Indian communities, and what counts as the "real" Indian history dominate the discourse in a manner that suggests to the non-Indian world that the primary struggle of American Indians is the problem of forging a "comfortable modern identity." By displacing the real sites of struggle (sovereignty and self-determination), the discourse of identity politics ultimately obfuscates the real sources of oppression – colonialism and global capitalism. (p.92)

In one sense, Reid and Welke (1998) were correct in their suggestion that Indigenous struggles are one of cultural reconciliation. Oscillating between cultures means that one has to adjust one's identity constantly to successfully negotiate the obstacles of cultural associations that force people to choose one identity over the other at any given moment. However, Indigenous peoples' struggles for cultural reconciliation to forge "a comfortable modern identity" serves to highlight the critical issue of identity being dependent upon notions of authenticity which is highly problematic because of the fragmentation that has beset Indigenous Peoples. Questions of authenticity thus bring attention to the paradoxes between Indigenous peoples' "need to forge and maintain integral connections to both land and place" (Grande, 2008, p.239) and the essentialist notions of Indigenous identity that help Indigenous Peoples navigate contemporary society.

Grande (2004) notes the crisis of identity from the perspective of an Indigenous critique raises significant concerns about the notion of identity and its conceptualization within the academy through different epistemic lenses. For example, she notes that critical theorists base their understanding of identity on postmodern notions of subjectivity. Postmodernism challenges essentialist theories of identity with the idea that identities are continually shifting along axes of "race, class, gender, and sexuality" (p.93). It also posits that identity is located in the spaces between binary oppositions of "self/other, male/female, black/white, heterosexual/homosexual, and organism/machine" (p.93). Thus, critical theorists reject the notion that "group membership can be reduced to lists of essential characteristics" (Grande, 2004, p.93) and they contend that essentialization of identity is fraught with inaccuracies and is inherently racist. Instead, Grande (2004) argues, "critical scholars advocate theories of difference firmly rooted in the discourses of power, democracy, social justice and historical memory, thus liberating "identity" from the specious discourse of "authenticity" and re-centering it in the context of power" (p.93). Further to this, postmodern perspectives of identity suggests that the only "normative standard is hybridity"(p.93), a state in which identities are created at the intersecting points between binaries. Spaces for new identities are then created that are not bound by the boundaries of essentialist discourse and are constantly changing.

Jaramillo and McLaren (2008) add to the discussion by suggesting that Indigenous identities that form within the postmodern notion of hybridity are best articulated by Gloria Anzaldua's theory of nepantla. Nepantla is the expression of identity in the intermediary space between binaries. In Jaramillo and McLaren's (2008) discussion of nepantla pedagogy, they note how in Mexico under Spanish and Christian rule, "las Indigenas shifted their cultural and spiritual practices to accommodate the Christian doctrines being imposed

upon them" (p.197). For these Indigenous peoples, the struggle to maintain their Indigenous identity was through "remaining faithful to their hearts and in honor of their spirits" (p.197). Out of this came Anzaldua's theory of "mestizos" living in between overlapping and layered spaces of different culture and social and geographic locations" (Jaramillo & McLaren, 2008, p.197). The result of which is a space where Indigenous Peoples develop an identity that can resist the dominant culture and create the "material-spiritual-psychic conditions" (Jaramillo & McLaren, 2008, p. 198) for being in the world and balancing the identity dilemma.

However, Grande (2004) argues that critical scholars' embrace of postmodernism's notions of a hybrid identity are highly problematic for Indigenous peoples. She states,

> For critical scholars, the development of more complex and inclusive understandings of identity is crucial to the democratic project. Through rupturing the concretized categories of identity, critical theorists imagine a new social order wherein transgression and mestizaje dismantle the old social order and therefore the existing relations of exploitation. In short, transgression is linked to the creation of greater possibilities for political solidarity and solidarity to the hope of democracy (p.93)

Postmodern and critical scholars thus position their notions of identity within the discourse of subjectivity that challenges the essentialization of the dialectic boundaries and borders of identity. As such, there is the keen desire to advance democracy as a means to emancipation for those who identities have been subjugated and oppressed. However, for Grande (2008), postmodern and critical notions of identity rooted in a democratic project, nepantla, and its related notions of mestiza/mestizaje maintain the "same core assumption of Western pedagogies" (p.239) in that "in a democratic society, the articulation of human subjectivity is rooted in the intangible notion of rights as opposed to the tangible reality of land"

(Grande, 2008, p.239). Such an oversight, Grande (2008) suggests, reinforces the notion that identity politics will continue to obfuscate Indigenous struggles for sovereignty and self-determination because these concepts are ultimately connected to the Indigenous notion of relationship that is, as mentioned, based upon "respect, balance, reciprocity, and peaceful coexistence" (Grande, 2008, p.252) with the land.

The democratic project advocated by critical scholars is thusly troubling to Indigenous scholarship. Grande (2004) states,

> The persistent belief in the superiority and emancipatory powers of democracy, even among radical scholars, indicates the degree to which whitestream America has never really understood what it means to be Indian and even less about what it means to be tribal…the uncompromising belief in the superiority of Western social and political structures – that is, democracy and citizenship – was the motivating force behind the numerous expurgatory campaigns exacted against Indigenous Peoples (p.94)

Thus, the link between identity and democracy must be understood within the colonial history of how democracy came into existence. To frame another Indigenous perspective on this issue, Smith (2005) reminds us that prior to European colonization and the development of democracy, "the native did exist before the "gaze" of the settler and before the image of "native" came to be constituted by imperialism, and that the native does have an existence outside and predating the settler/native identity" (p.86). Indigenous Peoples prior to colonization had forms of governance and social systems that were not, as ordained by the colonizer's gaze, primitive, slower to develop, or "naturally" behind European societies. The notion that Indigenous societies were some logical pre-modern precursor to the development of modern democratic societies is, in actuality, an atrocious, racist fallacy that can be discredited with the understanding that the notion of linear human social and societal

development is a Euro-centric concept used to justify the imposition of their ways of knowing and their ways being in the world.

Engaging an Indigenous Research Paradigm

Smith (2012) is often cited for her statement that, "research is probably one of the dirtiest words in the Indigenous world's vocabulary" (p.1). This statement has been impactful with many Indigenous scholars because it captures the sentiment of Indigenous Peoples regarding how we view ourselves and our cultures in relation to the colonial gaze and the West's notions of research. There is a shared understanding of how our lives, our cultures and our knowledge were studied, appropriated and subsequently represented back to settlers (and Indigenous Peoples) in ways that subjugated and made us "less than" what was determined to be human by the West. Consequently, Indigenous Peoples are often distrustful of research processes and pessimistic about the benefits of research other than the rewards reaped by academics and their institutions. As a result, Indigenous Peoples are cautious about the information they share with researchers (if they participate at all). Thus, a challenge for research conducted with Indigenous Peoples is a concern for what knowledge is acceptable to share so as to not continue the cycle of misrepresentation and appropriation that has characterized much of the research conducted on Indigenous Peoples. Being mindful of this concern moves research with Indigenous Peoples into a space where Indigenous forms of inquiry take precedent so as to maintain accountability (Wilson, 2008) and mindfulness of ongoing colonialism through research.

Indigenous inquiry in the academy, like Indigenous Peoples, exists within a contested space where Western knowledge has been normalized and Indigenous knowledge has been marginalized or unequivocally dismissed. Additionally, Indigenous inquiry is confronted

with fragmented knowledge that raises questions about its value and empirical validity within the Western academy. These are the circumstances Indigenous inquiry must negotiate in order give voice to Indigenous ways of knowing that are oppositional and disruptive to the West. As such, Indigenous inquiry is research that is messy in that it requires researchers to exist in a space of ambiguity and conflict. It is research that must constantly prove its worth because it fundamentally challenges Western ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies. In other words, it is research that is perpetually fighting to be free of neocolonial domination (Bishop, 2005). To survive, Indigenous research must navigate a pathway through a colonized system by valuing and privileging Indigenous ways of knowing and ways of being. This research project is thus clearly situated within Indigenous notions of research and inquiry and this chapter is a discussion of the Indigenous research paradigm in which I've situated this work. It is not a discussion of method but an explication of the ontological, epistemological and methodological theorization that guides the processes of Indigenous inquiry as I've come to understand it.

This research project draws upon the work of Indigenous scholars who are carving out space for Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous voices within the Western academy. It also draws upon the work of those Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars who are working to bridge the gap between Indigenous and Western knowledge. More specifically, I've grounded much of my understanding of Indigenous inquiry through my interpretation of Smith's (2012) seminal text, "Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples" and Wilson's (2008) "Research is Ceremony: Indigenous research methods". I've drawn heavily upon Grande's (2004) "Red Pedagogy: Native American social and political thought" to provide much of the theoretical basis of self-determination and sovereignty. I've also drawn upon Denzin, Smith and Lincoln's (2008) edited "Handbook of Critical and

Indigenous Methodologies" which provided crucial theorization around the ways critical scholarship and Indigenous knowledge need to converge in order to survive, thrive and push forward radical, emancipatory agendas for Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. As well, I utilized Denzin's (2003) "Performance Ethnography: Critical pedagogy and the politics of culture" to make connections between radical performative inquiry and Indigenous ways of knowing and provide a basis for how I was going to attempt to represent the method or process of research and my analyses of the narratives from the talking circles. I introduce these titles to make clear that this research is guided by the ideas and principles for an Indigenous research agenda that is articulated by the aforementioned scholars; that this research is not adherent to one overarching or prescriptive methodology but rather guided by the conceptualizations of an Indigenous research paradigm that offers the hope that Indigenous research can be transformative, healing, mobilizing and decolonizing (Smith, 2012). It was thus my hope that this research project would offer an opportunity to realize a measure of emancipation for myself and for those I've engaged with this research. In essence, I've endeavoured to enact an Indigenous research paradigm as articulated by Wilson (2008) that is ceremonial and in keeping with Indigenous notions of relationship. What follows is a discussion of the major points of discussion from these scholars that grounded this project.

An agenda for Indigenous Inquiry

In her discussions of the relationship between Western knowledge and research in the processes of colonization, Smith (2012) argues that research is a "significant site of struggle between the interests and ways of knowing of the West and the interests and ways of resisting of the Other" (p.2). As a site of struggle, she notes that it is impossible to discuss research

methodologies within the Indigenous context without discussing the ways that Western research is connected to imperialism and colonial practices. She writes,

> Research is one of the ways in which the underlying code of imperialism and colonialism is both regulated and realized. It is regulated through the formal rules of individual scholarly disciplines and scientific paradigms, and the institutions that support them (including the state). It is realized in the myriad of representations and ideological constructions of the Other in scholarly and "popular" works, and in the principles, which help to select and recontextualize those constructions in such things as the media, official histories and school curricula (p.8)

As such, Indigenous inquiry is uniquely positioned to critique and deconstruct Western scholarship and its ongoing role in the subjugation and oppression of Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous knowledge. However, she notes that within the broader discussions of decolonization, deconstructing Western knowledge and revealing its connections to imperialism and colonialism is not enough. Indigenous inquiry must offer a pedagogy that opens up opportunities to develop praxis. Praxis, in this regard, resides in Indigenous knowledge and the elements of Indigenous cultures that provide those oppositional understandings to Western knowledge and, in turn, ways of knowing and ways of being that are critical for Indigenous cultural survival. However, such praxis is currently confined to the margins of society (and academia) exactly because of the opposition and disruptiveness to that knowledge which has been normalized. For Indigenous Peoples wanting to subvert this reality, Smith (2012) states,

> To resist is to retrench in the margins, retrieve what we were and remake ourselves. The past, our stories local and global, the present, our communities, cultures, languages and social practices – all may be spaces of marginalization, but they have

also become spaces of resistance and hope (p.4)

It is in these spaces of marginality that offers opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to realize some measure of praxis where sovereignty and self-determination are built upon the hope that our ways of being and ways of knowing will cease to remain in the margins and open up space for the dismantling of imperialism and colonialism.

To carve out space for Indigenous inquiry, Smith (2012) puts forward an Indigenous research agenda that she conceptualizes "as a programme and set of approaches that are situated within the decolonization politics of the Indigenous Peoples' movement" (p.120). She argues that such an agenda should be focused on self-determination that is more than a political outcome but a "goal of social justice which is expressed through and across a wide range of psychological, social, cultural and economic terrains" (p.120). As such, she posits that an Indigenous research agenda involves "processes of transformation, of decolonization, of healing and of mobilization as peoples" (p.120) and that these processes "while dynamic and open to different influences and possibilities – are critical elements of a strategic research agenda" (p.120). Within this agenda, Smith (2012) also suggests the conditions and states of being that Indigenous communities and individuals may experience while moving through the processes of the research. She suggests that communities and individuals may move through states of struggle for survival, for recovery, development and self-determination. She notes that these states are not sequential or linear but related to where people may find themselves within the different processes of an Indigenous research agenda. It is with this agenda in mind that I focused this research project on self-determination with the underlying hope of engaging and moving through a process that was healing, mobilizing, decolonizing and transformative for myself and for those that I engaged in this project.

Research is ceremony

A major challenge for Indigenous Peoples in research is engaging in research that is in keeping with Indigenous knowledge and the numerous critiques that Indigenous knowledge presents to Western knowledge and research. However, it is difficult to articulate what an Indigenous research paradigm would be and what a process of Indigenous research would entail. How does an Indigenous person with a desire to engage in research, that is meaningful to Indigenous peoples, actually "do" research? Further to this, how does an Indigenous person engage in research that is not simply a deconstruction of Western knowledge and then an appropriation of that knowledge to fit an Indigenous sensibility? What would an Indigenous methodology be, if there is such a thing? And if methodologies are informed by ontological and epistemological stances, what is the knowledge that forms an Indigenous research paradigm? These are difficult questions to answer in relation to Indigenous knowledge that is problematic because of its fragmentation.

In his book "Research is Ceremony" Wilson (2008) set about a process to define the components of an Indigenous research paradigm. He builds his discussion of an Indigenous research paradigm in contrast to the work of Guba and Lincoln (1994) who articulated that there are at base four dominant and competing paradigms in qualitative research. The four paradigms they discuss are positivism, post-positivism, critical theory and constructivism. With regard to these discussions, Wilson (2008) states, "Indigenous research must leave behind dominant paradigms and follow an Indigenous research paradigm" (p.38) and he articulates an Indigenous research paradigm as being "research that follows an ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology that is Indigenous" (p.38). While this may appear trite, his suggestion is based upon an observation with regard to how Indigenous Peoples view knowledge and that, he argues, is a key conceptual difference in the assumption of knowledge "as being *individual* by nature" (p.38,

original emphasis) whereby knowledge is created and held by an individual. This is in contrast to an Indigenous paradigm that views knowledge as "belonging to the cosmos of which we are a part" (p.38). He notes that this is a distinction with regard to notions of ownership where from an Indigenous paradigm, humans are only interpreters of such knowledge versus a Western paradigm where researchers become owners of the knowledge they "discover". This understanding then leads a discussion around what Wilson deems as *relational accountability*.

Wilson (2008) articulates relational accountability as being formed out of an understanding of an Indigenous ontology and epistemology. Central to his discussion is an Indigenous notion of relationship that is entrenched in an Indigenous ontological and epistemological view of knowledge. To capture his discussion accurately, it is worth quoting him at length. He states,

> In an Indigenous ontology there may be multiple realities, as in the constructivist research paradigm. The difference is that, rather than the truth being something that is "out there" or external, reality is in the relationship that one has with the truth. Thus, an object or thing is not as important as one's relationship to it. This idea could be further expanded to say that reality *is* (original emphasis) relationships or sets of relationships. Thus, there is no one definite reality but rather different sets of relationships that make up an Indigenous ontology. Therefore, reality is not an object but a process of relationships, and an Indigenous ontology is actually the equivalent of an Indigenous epistemology (Wilson, 2008, p.73)

An Indigenous notion of relationship is thus central to understanding an Indigenous research paradigm because it offers insight into Indigenous arguments about the need for research to be respectful of relationships which, in turn, speaks to what an Indigenous methodology and axiology are.

In his discussion, Wilson (2008) further explains that an Indigenous methodology and axiology thus emerge out of an Indigenous ontological and epistemological orientation. Thus, if an Indigenous ontology and epistemology is based upon the idea that reality *is* relationships and that reality is knowable *through* relationships, then it follows that an Indigenous methodology and axiology should also be built upon an Indigenous notion of relationship. This means that an Indigenous axiology is thus built upon the concept of relational accountability. Wilson argues that Indigenous researchers must be "accountable to your relations" (p.77) and in doing so, a methodology can be formed that adheres to notions of respect, reciprocity and responsibility.

Red Pedagogy

> *Insofar as the project for colonialist education has been imbricated with the social, economic, and political policies of U.S. imperialism, an education for decolonization must also make no claim to political neutrality and engage a method of analysis and social inquiry that troubles the capitalist, imperialist aims of unfettered competition, accumulation, and exploitation. Beyond an approach to schooling that underscores the political nature of education, American Indian students and educators also require a praxis that enables the dismantling of colonialist forces. They need a pedagogy that cultivates a sense of collective agency, both to curb the excesses of dominant power and to revitalize Indigenous communities. (Grande, 2004, p.26)*

* * *

Sandy Grande articulates the type of hope that the Haudenosaunee, and the broader Indigenous community at-large, desire and need. Indigenous Peoples are in desperate need of an "education for decolonization" (Grande, 2004, p.26) that results in a revolutionary decolonizing praxis "rooted in Indigenous knowledge" (Grande, 2004, p.166) that allows Indigenous Peoples to place "capitalism, patriarchy, white supremacy, and Western Christianity in radical

contingency" (Grande, 2004, p.51). In one sense, this research has the potential to *reframe* (Smith, 2012, p.154) the issues that affect us and how those issues are handled. In this sense, reframing considers the historical roots of Indigenous social issues as being a result of colonization and Indigenous peoples' inability to enact their own notions of self-determination. In another sense, it is an opportunity to *revitalize* and *regenerate* (Smith, 2012, p.148) the physical cultural practices that we practiced prior to colonization through the recapturing of narratives that have been lost or fragmented or through the creation of new narratives that, in turn, create new was of being. This would effectively be praxis of self-determination: the ability to turn our understandings of our culture into action. This research also presents an opportunity to *Indigenize* (Smith, 2012) our realities, which, according to Smith, has two dimensions. The first dimension represents the "centring of consciousness of the landscapes, images, languages, themes, metaphors and stories in the indigenous world" (Smith, 2012, p.147) and involves non-Indigenous Peoples and scholars. The second dimension refers to taking the traditions, knowledge and values of Indigenous culture and centring a "politics of Indigenous identity and Indigenous cultural action" (p.147). According to Smith, doing so would privilege Indigenous ways of knowing and being that counters the negative connotation of Indigenism that is associated with primitiveness.

With her work situated within educational research, Grande (2008a) thus argues for the creation of an intellectual space for Indigenous scholars to assert Indigenous knowledge and critiques that can "engage in dialogical contestation with critical and revolutionary theories" (p.237). She outlines a framework for a Red pedagogy, "an Indigenous pedagogy that operates at the crossroads of Western theory – specifically critical pedagogy – and Indigenous knowledge" (p.234). Grande (2008) is adamant that Red pedagogy is "not a method or a technique to be memorized, implemented, applied, or prescribed. Rather, it is a space of

engagement. It is the liminal and intellectual borderlands where indigenous and non-indigenous scholars encounter one another, working to remember, redefine and reverse the devastation of the original colonialist "encounter" (p. 235). Such a space would offer Indigenous Peoples a pedagogy and praxis to address the normalized, Western assumptions in critical theories and create the opportunity for Indigenous and Western scholars to jointly act against imperialism and ongoing colonization.

Critical Indigenous Pedagogy

This research also derives its orientation from the work of scholars who have been engaged in efforts to create dialogue between Indigenous and critical scholars. Denzin, Lincoln, and Smith (2008) co-edited the first edition of the "Handbook for Critical and Indigenous Methodologies", a text dedicated to building bridges between Indigenous knowledge and critical inquiry. In the introductory chapter, Denzin and Lincoln (2008) name this merging as Critical Indigenous Pedagogy (CIP), a form of inquiry that challenges the complicity of western academy with "neocolonial forces", that takes seriously Indigenous epistemologies and "encourages interpretive, first-person methodologies" (p.12). Denzin and Lincoln assert that CIP, "understands that all inquiry is both political and moral." (p.2); that it seeks to be a decolonizing process of human subject research that respects difference and creates opportunities for transformation, emancipation, empowerment and healing. Given the role of Western knowledge in the imperial and colonial projects, they also argue that CIP must engage in research with the goal of self-determination for Indigenous Peoples. They suggest that CIP must be cognizant of understanding how self-determination intersects with the locus of power in the research setting and subsequently how it adheres to concerns about initiation, benefits, representation, legitimacy and accountability as discussed by Bishop (2005). They suggest

that for CIP to be a form of inquiry that provides benefits and promotes the self-determination of Indigenous research participants, it must "meet multiple criteria. It must be ethical, performative, healing, transformative, decolonizing, and participatory" (p.2) and it "must represent Indigenous persons honestly, without distortion or stereotype, and the research should honour Indigenous knowledge, customs, and rituals (p.2). Like Grande's (2008) assertion of a Red Pedagogy, CIP inhabits a space that merges Indigenous and Western knowledge to advance an emancipatory research agenda while being mindful of the ways critical forms of inquiry re-inscribe neocolonial knowledge that continues to oppress Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous knowledge.

A note about Post-colonialism

There is a cutting critique amongst the Indigenous community that the "post" in postcolonial is a myth. For the likes of many Indigenous Peoples post-colonial can only mean one thing - that the settlers have left (Smith, 1999). However, as Smith (1999) quips, ""there is rather compelling evidence that in fact this has not occurred" (Smith, 1999, p.98). I would agree. Viruru and Cannella (2006) state, "postcolonial theory is not easy to define or delimit" (p. 175). They note that despite being part of academia since the publication of Edward Said's "Orientalism", there remains a constant barrage of disingenuous requests for its definition and a large amount of resistance to engage in understanding post-colonialism by many non-indigenous scholars. However, Viruru and Cannella suggest that postcolonialism offers a starting point upon which to "look with eyes that would attempt to reveal unexamined methods that would reinscribe domination and/or reinforce imperialism and to uncover ways in that society produces exclusions" (p.177). They see postcolonialism as a way for researchers to adopt an activist position that "pursues transformation" (Viruru & Cannella, 2006, p.177).

Ethnographic Refusal

Smith (2012) writes extensively about Western research and the often-volatile relationship it has with Indigenous peoples. As mentioned, she characterizes the word research as, "probably one of the dirtiest words in the Indigenous world's vocabulary" (p.2) and implicated in the "worst excesses of colonialism" (p.3) with the way Western values and ideologies were normalized; through the way research was used to racialize and subjugate Indigenous 'others'; through the way it has refused to acknowledge the value of Indigenous knowledge; and through the way it now requires verification of authenticity and empirical legitimacy. For Indigenous peoples, one of the questions to answer is, how to gain control over a relationship that has been destructive and dehumanizing? The answers are situated in the discussion of Indigenous notions of ethics within research.

It is no secret that Indigenous Peoples have become "deeply cynical about the capacity, motives or methodologies of Western research to deliver any benefits to Indigenous peoples" (Smith, 2012, p.122). Research is perceived as entirely negative and something that 'whites' have done to us, leaving us with no sense of control over research and no sense that we have been represented fairly or justly from our point of view. As such, Bishop (2005) discusses the need for Indigenous Peoples to free themselves from the neocolonial dominance in research. He argues that neocolonial dominance in research has represented the majority interests of the colonizers and, as a result, has primarily addressed the concerns and interests of predominantly non-Indigenous researchers and their cultural worldview. He targets "traditional research" as having misrepresented Indigenous understandings and ways of knowing by "simplifying, conglomerating and commodifying" (p.111) Indigenous knowledge for consumption by the colonizers. This is the result of a capitalist mindset that sees Indigenous knowledge as a marketable commodity and it has had

the effect of damaging the authenticity of Indigenous knowledge, as well as, perpetuating essentialized notions of Indigeneity that are not based upon the understandings of Indigenous Peoples themselves.

The question of control over research speaks to the ability of Indigenous Peoples to provide their consent to the use of their knowledge and also to control what happens after the research is done, in other words, what types of benefits will the community gain, once the researcher has left and then disseminated the community's information in various ways. However, as has happened often in research *on* Indigenous peoples, the information shared is often misrepresented or appropriated. Some interesting observations about ethnographic research, however, raise questions about resistance versus collaboration in the way those who participate in the research share information, as well as, the ways that researchers report findings. Ortner (1995) first used the term ethnographic refusal to describe what she observed as an unwillingness of the researcher to provide thick descriptions so as to not cast the researched in a negative light. This took the form of sanitizing the power and politics of communities, in other words, leaving out some of the information that may seem contradictory. She also notes that such research also did not go into great description of culture nor did it consider the nuances of subjectivity that people inhabit. She argues that ethnographic research should "reveal the ambivalences and ambiguities of resistance itself" whereupon actors are not understood as demonstrating resistance or being dominated and oppressed.

In the Indigenous context, however, the sharing of information and the control over the research is often maintained through what is shared and what is not shared. Simpson (2007), in the context of Kahnawake, a Mohawk community south of Montreal, Quebec, discusses a notion of refusal. Throughout her research of the community, she notes that the

Mohawks of Kahnawake often refused the authority of the state, particularly in relation to how Indigenous identity was conceptualized and enacted by the state through the paternalism of the Indian Act. She also notes, that while sometimes such acts of refusal were at times contradictory, they were nonetheless acts of a defining characteristic of the Kahnawake people in the face of relentless colonialism. Of particular interest to this project, however, was the refusal of participants to say anything to the researcher beyond what was deemed necessary by the research participants. Within her research, participants used refusal as a way to confirm their identity in relation to others and the state. However, they also used refusal in a way so as to not reveal information that they didn't deem necessary, to protect themselves or their community. Thus, from Simpson's perspective, refusal was a necessary act taken by the participants to protect and exercise their own sovereignty and not allow others the opportunity to define what it meant to be Mohawk.

Simpson (2007) thus argues for a solidarity of sorts with the research participants, to recognize that refusal was necessary so as to not misrepresent the individuals or bring harm to the community. This concept of ethnographic refusal is particularly important for this dissertation in that it must be recognized and remembered that much of the knowledge regarding Indigenous physical cultural practices are fragmented and have very often been misrepresented and/or appropriated. This has made it very difficult to know how to make sense of such knowledge, as well as, confusing as to which knowledge to share so as to not mispresent my culture or knowledge from the past. Often, this has resulted in a paralysis or an inability to write because of being primarily concerned about misrepresentation and notions of authenticity. The results of this research, then, very often is left with some ambiguity, creating more questions than answers and leaving much to the interpretation to the reader.

Axiology of Indigenous Methodologies

Smith (2012) states, “In a debate about ethics, distinctions are drawn between legal requirements and ethical codes of conduct. Indigenous groups argue that legal definitions of ethics are framed in ways which contain the Western sense of the individual and of individualized property.” (p.123) This legal orientation towards ownership of knowledge ignores the priority that Indigenous communities give to communal knowledge. It also ignores the Indigenous perspective that human beings are in a relationship to knowledge rather than producers or owners of such knowledge. Indeed, when the Western academy gives priority to individual rights of ownership, they then break their own rules when it comes to allowing Indigenous Peoples and/or communities to consent to the use of their knowledge and control the end results of the research process. As Smith (2012) notes further, there are innumerable projects of dehumanization undergirded by capitalist intent where capitalist notions of control, ownership and commodification are becoming the norm.

Bishop (2005) argues that the Western academy’s preoccupation with “neutrality, objectivity and distance” has emphasized “these concepts as criteria for authority, representation, and accountability” (p.111). He suggests that such preoccupations have omitted Indigenous involvement in the construction of knowledge and by extension the validation and legitimatization of Indigenous research. Dunbar (2008) concurs by stating, “Volumes of research have been generated about Aboriginals, but there is little research that Aboriginal people have been able to define for themselves” (p.91). The consequences of such behaviour has often legitimated the views of the other by so-called expert and objective observers, leading to everyday myths that are believed by Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples alike and result in major obstacles for the decolonizing project.

To address the ethical issues of Indigenous research, Bishop (2005) provides the

example of Kaupapa Maori research. The Maori's of New Zealand have developed a framework that focuses the locus of power on issues of i) initiation, ii) benefits, iii) representation, iv) legitimacy, and v) accountability. More specifically, there is concern about who and how the research process is initiated and whose concerns, interests, and methods are represented. There is a concern about who benefits from the research and whether anyone will be disadvantaged. There are questions about how the research represents Indigenous culture and whose research depicts an acceptable social reality. There are concerns about legitimacy and who can claim authority over our research. And finally, there are concerns about the researcher's accountability in terms of the "initiation, the procedures, the evaluations, text constructions and distribution of Indigenous knowledge" (Bishop, 2005, p.112). All of these concerns steer the conversation to issues of insiders and outsiders and the issue of who can conduct research in Indigenous settings.

Insiders and Outsiders: Essentialism in Indigenous Research

The issue of insider/outsider research returns to the discussion of essentialism. As researchers have tried to position themselves as detached, objective observers who research with the goal of providing an objective reality and universal truth, the argument has been made that outsider researchers are implicated in creating knowledge about Indigenous Peoples that has been misleading and dehumanizing. As more Indigenous Peoples find their way into research there are subsequent questions about Indigenous researchers as both an insider and an outsider. Bishop (2005) states, "One answer to the question might well be to take an essentializing position and suggest that cultural "insiders" might well undertake research in a more sensitive and responsive manner than "outsiders" (p.111). However, he makes the counter-argument that insiders could be "inherently biased, or that they are too close to the culture to ask critical questions" (p.111). But as Bishop notes, these

characterizations are dependent upon the essentialist views of identity that are highly problematic when it comes to Indigenous research.

The dilemma of being an Indigenous insider/outsider researcher becomes more complicated when one takes colonization into consideration. Smith (2005) argues that Indigenous Peoples who are trained in the Western academy are likely to engage in research that continues to marginalize the Indigenous community's contribution through the theoretical orientations, the methodologies and the techniques they employ. Not only are Indigenous researchers trained in the techniques of the Western academy they are also caught within a system that requires their obedience and complicity to ensure that the hierarchal, colonial structures are maintained. Dunbar (2008) asserts, "The unwritten rule of the dominant society requires that we all speak English, write research papers and exams assessed on specific criteria outside our Indigenous worldviews, and learn what others decide we need to know. Nor does what we learn in these institutions assist us in reaffirming and legitimizing our own ways of knowing and doing" (p.91). Adding to this, Grande (2008) states, "the colonial tax on Native scholars not only requires a renegotiation of personal identity but also an analysis of how whole nations get trans-or (dis) figured when articulated through Western frames of knowing" (p.234). The terrain of Indigenous research is thus one where the researcher is constantly shifting between multiple realities and between, usually, polarizing perspectives of Indigenous peoples. Thus, being an Indigenous researcher leads to a complicated dilemma of when we decide that we want to engage in research and find space for ourselves within the modern academy. The question then becomes: How does one address being an insider/outsider researcher?

Critical Self-Reflexivity: Respect and Responsibility

Being an Indigenous person and also being a researcher, I believe that it is

absolutely critical for me to continue to develop my abilities to be critically reflexive. However, being critically reflexive first requires one to take seriously the notions of respect and responsibility as Indigenous Peoples conceptualize them. Smith (1999) states, "The term 'respect' is consistently used by Indigenous Peoples to underscore the significance of our relationships and humanity" (p.120). She notes that 'respect' in the Indigenous context is a value that is expressed in all "aspects of social conduct" (p.120) and that "the denial by the West of humanity to Indigenous peoples, the denial of citizenship and human rights, the denial of the right to self-determination" (p.120) all point to a lack of respect that characterizes the West's relationship with Indigenous peoples. It is thus, critical that all actions in the development of a research project are centered within the value of respect.

Responsibility is also another value that must be adhered to stringently to ensure the ethics of the research process. Smith (1999) believes that Indigenous researchers have a responsibility to not only "share surface information (pamphlet knowledge) but to share the theories and analyses which inform the way knowledge and information are constructed and represented" (p.16). Thus, a researcher's responsibility is to be self-reflexive about their positioning as agents with power and to recognize that sharing of knowledge starts with understanding the epistemological frameworks that underpins one's perspectives. Self-reflexivity thus makes clear the values that allow or hinder a researcher to engage in full disclosure. Smith (1999) suggests,

> By taking this approach seriously it is possible to introduce communities and people who may have had little formal schooling to a wider world, a world which includes people who think just like them, who share in their struggles and dreams and who voice their concerns in similar ways. To assume in advance that people will not be interested in, or will not understand, the deeper issues is arrogant. The challenge is

always to demystify, to decolonize (p.16)

As such, self-reflexivity that is built upon notions of respect and responsibility becomes a critical skill for the researcher because it holds them to account to the people with whom they've worked with in the research and within the broader Indigenous community. Self-reflexivity helps also researchers to maintain respect for the researched by confronting his or her own personal reservations and perspectives so as to allow for the creation of trust and the development of reciprocal relationships.

Ladson-Billings and Donner (2008) call on researchers to search for a "revolutionary habitus" that "recognizes that the "field" (Bourdieu, 1990) in which academics currently function constrains the social (and intellectual) agency that might move us toward social justice and human liberation" (p.79). They suggest that questions about the ability of the academic to lead us to more just and equitable societies are an indication of the limits of academia. To remedy this, they argue that researchers must engage communities in their own spaces and this means a relinquishment of their power in order to "listen and learn from people actively engaged in social change" (p.79). They remind us that

> the challenge of those of us in the academy is not how to make those outside the academy more like us but rather to recognize the "outside-the-academy" identities that we must recruit for ourselves in order to be more effective researchers on behalf of people who can make use of our skills and abilities" (p.80).

In essence, to participate in meaningful change, we must develop the ability to step outside of the privilege of the academy into spaces that challenge our own perspectives and viewpoints. In a similar thread regarding the importance of challenging the capitalist normalizations within the academy, Jaramillo and McLaren (2008) argue for a revolutionary critical pedagogy that

> operates from an understanding that the basis of education is political and that spaces need to be created where students can imagine a different world outside of capitalism's law of value (i.e., social form of labor), where alternatives to capitalism and capitalist institutions can be discussed and debated (p.201)

In essence, Jaramillo and McLaren call for a "revolucion" of sorts. They advocate for a critical pedagogy that is based on Gloria Anzaldua's work on nepantla. Nepantla, refers to the way Indigenous Peoples in Mexico maintained their culture in the face of annihilation and assimilation. In essence, they resisted the Spanish conquistadors by "remaining faithful to their hearts and in honor of their spirits" (p.197) and in so doing were able to resist the imposition of religious practices and rituals of Christianity. Nepantla, in the context of education and Indigenous Peoples is thus a space where teachers and students can operate between theory and practice. As such, Grande (2004) states,

> What distinguishes the Indigenous struggle for self-determination from others is, thus, their collective effort to protect the rights of their peoples to live in accordance with traditional ways. It is a struggle to effectively negotiate the line between fetishizing such identities and recognizing their importance to the continuance of Indians as tribal peoples. (p.172)

Giving voice to those who may be more radical or to those who have been marginalized is dependent upon the researcher's understanding of the dilemmas of identity. Everyone has their own associative identity that determines their political outlook. It is not up to the researcher to judge their identity but to understand the forces at work to marginalize their voices. The goal, then, should be the emancipation of marginalized voices for decolonizing ends.

> Crucial to the decolonizing project is working with those who hold more radical

positions and developing a relationship of mutual trust, sharing and dialogue. For Grande (2004) and Jaramillo & McLaren (2008), these relationships are demarcated by the space that allows both the researcher and researched to oscillate between being the teacher and the student – in other words inhabiting a space that allows for dialogue, mutual learning and the co-creation of knowledge. However, the creation of this space is the sole responsibility of the researcher. Thus, it is the researcher's responsibility to create space for transformation that comes from allowing people to be engaged in the research process. This space is built the understanding of the complexity of historical issues, present-day material issues, identity dilemmas and ethics. For Indigenous Peoples engaged in decolonizing research, this reflects the colonial realities in which we are situated and is a necessity for an Indigenous research paradigm.

Sovereignty & Self-Determination in Indigenous Research

Amidst the critiques of European culture, of the Western academy, of postmodernism and critical theory, Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars continue onwards with decolonizing scholarship. Decolonization should be thought of not as an outcome but as a process of emancipation that is "focused strategically on the goal of self-determination of Indigenous peoples" (Smith, 1999, p.116). For Smith (1999) self-determination, as the goal for a strategic research agenda, is achieved through the processes of decolonization, transformation, healing and mobilization. Grande (2004) adds that self-determination is also marked by Indigenous struggles for sovereignty. Sovereignty in Grande's argument is not conceptualized just as 'self-government' within the Western paradigm of democratic governance. Instead, she argues for sovereignty to include a "measure of insuring an internal locus of (tribal) control" (p.54) leading individuals to realize a level of agency that allows them to transform their realities. She also argues for a conceptualization of sovereignty as

"intellectual sovereignty" that challenges the use of language in the structures of neo-colonial dominance and educational spheres. Her argument for a Red pedagogy thus "compels students to question how (whitestream) knowledge is related to the processes of colonization" (p.56) and thus for the transformation of educational spaces. Lastly, she also conceptualizes sovereignty as "spiritual sovereignty", "an inward- and outward-looking process, a process of re-enchantment, or ensoulment, that is both deeply spiritual and sincerely mindful" (p.57). Grande (2004) emphasizes that these notions of sovereignty are "not a separatist discourse" (p.57), a notion that she argues should signal to Indigenous Peoples the need to expand the "intellectual borders of Indigenous intellectualism" (p.3) and engage critical and revolutionary theories in "dialogical contestation" (p.3). It is through dialogical contestation that Indigenous Peoples can assert their sovereignty, attain self-determination and transcend the spaces of marginalization to enact "an education for decolonization" (p.17) or Red Pedagogy.

The decolonizing project necessitates that Indigenous Peoples and researchers engage in processes of transformation that requires complex understanding of many different issues. Grande's (2004) notion of dialogical contestation is key if Indigenous attempts to navigate the complexity of our world are to succeed. The challenge, however, is to understand where the sites of struggle are and what is needed to engage, challenge and transcend neo-colonialism. Smith (1999) offers that,

> methodologies and methods of research, the theories that inform them, the questions which they generate and the writing styles they employ, all become significant acts which need to be considered carefully and critically before being applied. In other words, they need to be 'decolonized'. Decolonization, however, does not mean and has not meant a total rejection of all theory or research or Western knowledge.

> Rather, it is about centering our concerns and world views and then coming to know and understand theory and research from our own perspectives and for our own purpose" (p.39)

Dialogical contestation is thus rooted in Indigenous peoples' ability to remain open-minded to Western knowledge that can lead to a transcendence of colonial oppression. Doing so will allow for the creation of new intellectual spaces that maintains our linkages to our cultures but simultaneously allows us to be in the present and bring forward Indigenous critiques of the dominant western paradigms. It is these spaces that much of the work for decolonization is currently underway.

Strategies of Inquiry

Benham (2007) notes that through education, assimilation policies were enacted to replace Indigenous languages and curriculum was introduced that devalued the importance of metaphor and spirituality that were important aspects of Indigenous narratives. These actions, in turn, disrupted the intergenerational transmission of knowledge. This is important to note given the importance of how Indigenous Peoples view knowledge. Benham states, "indigenous ways of knowing define power to bring about change not as individual power but as a sacred power that is passed on through story and ceremony" (p.520). This makes the importance of narrative as not solely personal but "deeply communal" (p.520). For Kovach (2009), stories serve two purposes with Indigenous epistemologies. There are stories that "hold mythical elements, such as creation and teaching stories" (p.95) and there are stories that relate personal narratives and relationships to the land and people. Stories, according to Kovach (2009) are not only purposeful for passing along teachings to the communities and future generations but are important for relaying an Indigenous way of understanding.

Stories are, thusly, not just individual tales of experiences, but connected to the words and stories of our ancestors. Stories, thus have the power to connect us to the past and to connect us to those in the future. They have the power to maintain knowledge but also to create change that can be both positive and negative. This is the power of stories and narratives and the reasons why they are held in sacred regard within our culture.

Kovach (2009) writes extensively about the need for Indigenous scholar-researchers to apply a "decolonizing lens with Indigenous research frameworks" (p.80). To do this, Kovach argues that such a lens can be positioned in at least three different ways: i) outlining a *tribal methodology* that privileges Indigenous epistemologies to guide the research process, ii) utilization of a *decolonizing theory* that works to transform western methodologies or iii) the inclusion of a decolonizing lens within an Indigenous methodology. However, regardless of what approach is taken, Kovach notes that representation and voice are critical components of both Indigenous and qualitative research. In this, she argues that Indigenous researchers need to attend to how they understand knowledge and their assumptions about power. By addressing these issues, Indigenous researchers can then determine how their research projects can give voice to the Indigenous experience and also determine the benefits of such research.

However, determining the methods for this project was a challenge in that I understood the direction I wanted to go with the project, but I didn't quite understand what I should investigate or how I was going to get there. I wanted to investigate leisure for tensions related to colonialism, but I was challenged to develop a pathway towards that goal. For example, I first wondered if I should explore the physical activities in the community and interview those involved. I then wondered if it best to explore any historical literature, if indeed there was anything in existence to explore. I also knew that I was

interested in words and stories as I engaged with the ideas of Delgado (1989) and Benham (2007) and wrestled with Friere's (2009) notions of internalized oppression and praxis. However, I did not quite understand whether I was looking for discourses, stories within practices, literatures or individual experiences. Specifically, it was also daunting to think about how I might approach a member of the community about the notion of internalized oppression. It seemed like a topic with very personal implications and this was an extremely difficult decision as I too was personally struggling with reconciling my identity with my understandings of Indigeneity.

As such, Delgado's (1989) discussion of stories and counter-stories was prominent in my early designs for this project, as I wondered what stories existed that could speak to the notion of a colonial mindset. While Delgado spoke of stories held by dominant ingroups and counter-stories held by minority outgroups, I was more interested in those stories that oppressed people (minority outgroups) held that spoke to the Friere's (2009) notion of internalized oppression. I wondered if engaging collective stories might be a better alternative than asking individuals for their personal stories and experiences of a topic that had dangerous implications. I then made the decision that collective stories from those in the Six Nations community might provide some insight into how, through narrative, imperialism and colonialism were operating and being maintained. Given the purpose of exposing tensions surrounding leisure, it seemed reasonable to focus the stories on leisure, sport and recreation versus asking for the intimate details of one's personal experience dealing with colonialism.

Wilson (2008) describes the inherent contradiction of utilizing Western knowledge to research an Indigenous research paradigm. More specifically, he wonders how an Indigenous methodology could be uncovered utilizing Western methodologies that are

inherently grounded in Western ontological and epistemological understandings. He argues that Indigenous research must abandon dominant western paradigms, and that utilizing decolonized methodologies are also very difficult given that such methodologies are still entangled with Western paradigms. He then moves the discussion to *method* and he argues that some *methods* from qualitative research are useful because of their ability to maintain an Indigenous axiology and he cites talking circles and participatory action research as examples of such methods. In utilizing qualitative methods, he advocates a shift away from "the traditional positivistic language of 'research methods'" (p.40) to "strategies of inquiry" (p.40). Such a shift allows flexibility for the Indigenous researcher to adapt a research process that is often fluid and changing. Thus, he recommends utilizing those methods that are best suited to maintaining an Indigenous ethic of relational accountability that speaks to an Indigenous epistemological and ontological stance.

Narrative Inquiry

Benham (2007), extols the virtues of narratives within the academy because she notes they will not "homogenize rich Indigenous knowledge" (p.513) by attempting to change Indigenous knowledge into a Western academic frameworks that can be neatly packaged and reproduced. However, she argues that in order for Indigenous narratives to move forward, the Indigenous scholar "must employ both culturally traditional discourses and 21st-century discourses that engage critical key issues" (p.529) and "become more skilled at both pivoting between and building bridges across native and nonnative discourse systems" (p.529). This orientation suggests that, in order for Indigenous researchers to reconcile their own experiences in the research process, they must oscillate between the discourses of Indigenous decolonization and those western epistemological discourses that may support or stand in opposition to Indigenous ways of knowing and being in the world.

Doing so, allows Indigenous researchers to create space for greater reciprocity and relational accountability. For example, Swadener and Mutua (2008) offer a critique of how to deconstruct the global postcolonial. They discuss how increasing neoconservatism and "hyper-positivist times" (p.32) have led to significant challenges for decolonizing research in that "the spaces for the articulation or performance of decolonization and the use of other interpretive methodologies are at best radically reduced or altogether dismantled" (p.33). As such, they contend that research that desires to challenge the global postcolonial must include narrative and performative research because these create space for Indigenous voices and epistemologies that challenge the backlash on interpretive research. As such, they extend the discussion of those scholars who have advocated for performative ethnographies (Denzin, 2000, 2003), autoethnographies, (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, Ellis, 2007), writing as method, (Richardson, 2000) and narrative inquiry (Benham, 2007; Clandinin, 2000; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) as legitimate ways of "doing" research that echoes Denzin's (2000) call for research that challenges the conservative backlash and engages in a "politics of hope" (p.262).

Performance Ethnography

Denzin's (2000) call for scholars to "enact an enabling, interpretive form of qualitative inquiry" (p.262), was the overture: the prelude of a cacophony of voices in search of harmonized scholarly oratorios and operas. The next stage, the combination of the eighth moment of qualitative inquiry and the continued decolonizing movements of Indigenous scholarship, is demarcated by our collective ability to develop praxis. However, the path to a decolonizing praxis is varied. The potential for this research has to be driven by an ethical stance that adheres to Indigenous calls for scholarship to address questions of initiation, benefits, representation, legitimation, and accountability (Bishop, 2005). This ethical framework specifically addresses

the dilemmas of insider/outsider research, the critical reflexivity of the researcher and the standards that further subjugate and oppress Indigenous Peoples in all steps of the research process.

To address these issues, much of Denzin's (2000) call was based upon the efforts of the Chicana/Chicano and Black arts aesthetic movements and he notes this movement utilized "art, photography, music, dance, poetry, painting, theatre, cinema, performance texts, autobiography, narrative, storytelling, poetic, dramatic language to create a critical race consciousness" with the primary goal to extend the post-civil rights movement. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) advocate for critical Indigenous pedagogies to embrace reflexive, performative writing. This is a form of narrative representation that fits within Richardson's (2000) discussion of *creative analytic practices* (CAP) that includes such forms as, "short stories; conversations, fiction; personal narratives; creative nonfiction; …personal narratives of the self;...fragmented, layered texts;…and performance writing that blurs the edges between text, representation, and criticism" (p.12). They also suggest critical personal narratives like counter-narratives and performance texts "that disrupt and disturb discourse by exposing the complexities and contradictions that exist under official history" (p. 13). These are all forms of writing that are intertwined with the ability to be flexible with regard to an Indigenous methodologies. They allow Indigenous researchers to not only challenge the accepted forms of writing that follow a post-positivist tradition that attempts to be detached and objective, but they also allow oppositional voices to be heard in ways that are pedagogical. As Denzin and Lincoln (2008) argue, "We need oppositional performance disciplines that show us how to create radical utopian spaces within our public institutions" (p.13). Such writing is in line with Indigenous inquiry that seeks to create space for Indigenous epistemologies that speak to notions of relationality that are situated within stories and story-telling.

In calling for a shift to performance ethnography, Denzin (2003) notes that there are a plethora of available ideas and practices that can implemented by Indigenous scholars in their work to decolonize and to address Indigenous ethical imperatives. However, any method has to be scrutinized for its ability to address the critiques of decolonization and the aforementioned ethical dilemmas. The requirement of scholarship to adhere to such an Indigenous ethical framework does not necessarily mean that such methods are not useful to Indigenous peoples. It means that Indigenous Peoples need to hold a high standard to those methods and methodologies that, from an Indigenous critique, still embody a colonial politics.

Talking Story: Talking Circles and Critical Reflexive Writing

In this dissertation, I utilized two methods to gather, document and analyze information. I utilized a form of talking circles that builds upon Wilson's (2008) discussion of "talk story" (p.100) and critical reflexive writing in the spirit of Richardson's (2000) discussions of "writing as a method of inquiry" (p.923). In discussing ways of applying an Indigenous Research Paradigm, Wilson (2008) discusses how he and his colleagues engaged in discussions to collectively work through the challenges of uncovering what an Indigenous Research Paradigm was. He notes the idea of *talk story* that is less formal in its approach and more conversational than a talking circle. Talking circles tend to be formal in that participants utilize a talking-stick to denote when it is their turn to speak. Talking circles then follow an order that usually moves counter-clockwise around the circle with each participant having an equal opportunity to talk and no one is allowed to speak out of turn. However, the idea of *talking story* was utilized by Wilson and his colleagues because it was less formal and allowed participants to add to the conversation when they felt compelled rather than waiting for the talking-stick to return to them. However, it utilized the rules that participants had to be engaged in non-judgmental listening and non-

interference. These were the rules that I applied to our talking circles with the additional caveat that participants also try to build upon the story that came before theirs.

In terms of critical reflexive writing, I endeavoured to write when possible in a paper journal and I also kept an electronic journal stored on the hard-drive of my computer. Richardson (2000) notes that "by writing in different ways, we discover new aspects of our topic and our relationship to it" (p.923). For this dissertation, I spent much of the time throughout the research process writing differently. For example, I wrote fictional stories using metaphor to try to relate an observation or an epiphany. I wrote about my feelings such as my trepidations and anger. I also wrote poetry and dialogues that attempted to capture my questions about the struggles I was experiencing. In essence, I wrote to work my way through the research and my struggles. However, I was often left frustrated and overwhelmed by my inability to capture and organize my thoughts. I tried writing academically with a view to a third person, objective viewpoint, but inevitably ended this in frustration as I constantly encountered questions about where my voice was situated, when I was supposed to speak about an Indigenous "they" or an Indigenous "us". It becomes very difficult to relate challenges of perspective, particularly when confronted with knowledge that creates questions and doubt. Kovach (2009) writes about the struggle that Indigenous researchers experience as they work to balance the accountabilities to the Western academy and the Indigenous knowledge with which one is engaged. She notes that "critical self-reflection is an essential part of a decolonizing mindset" (p.85) in that it helps the Indigenous researcher to gain an understanding of where, and to what extent, they can affect change. For me, this understanding was only gained near the end of this process, through the process of writing the results and discussion of this dissertation. Even then, my understanding of how my writing was maintaining an Indigenous decolonizing lens was blurred by the very fact that while my

mind was certainly more critical, I was still working within the confines of the extent that I understood my Haudenosaunee culture.

In speaking of the importance of Indigenous Peoples situating themselves, Kovach (2009) discusses the need for Indigenous scholars to focus on one's cultural identification, the purpose of why one is conducting the research and the relationship that one has with one's culture. As can be imagined, this is no simple task in that it requires the researcher to attend to, and be truthful about, how knowledgeable and embedded one is with one's culture. However, a major challenge arises for those Indigenous Peoples whose experiences with their own culture is cursory at best. Nonetheless, Kovach (2009) argues that it is important to locate oneself because doing so "anchors knowledge within experiences" (p.111) and thus ensuring that "individual realities are not misrepresented as generalizable collectives" (p.111). As Kovach acknowledges, this translates to an understanding that Indigenous methodologies are often situated within subjectivity that is then critiqued and often difficult to accept by Western research and scholars. It is, nonetheless, important to go through a process of self-location so as to contextualize one's knowledge. I endeavoured to do so in a way that showed the fragmentation and struggles with my identity, with my struggles to understand my culture and with my limited ability to articulate this fragmentation.

Richardson (2000) states, "Language is not the result of one's individuality; rather, language constructs the individual's subjectivity in ways that are historically and locally specific" (p.929). As I went through the process of reading and writing, I found that I had to somehow determine how to write my voice into the analysis while simultaneously struggling to essentially learn the language of Western scholarship while also balancing it with understanding an Indigenous Research Paradigm. As well, as I struggled with this language barrier, I was also engaged with learning about colonialism. Adding to this was also the struggles of wading

through leisure research to gain a sense of where this project was heading in relation to my desire to understand leisure's relationship to colonization.

Further to locating myself, my knowledge and my relationship to my culture, I found it difficult to locate the purpose of my study. As Kovach (2009) discusses, for Indigenous scholars, determining a purpose is about understanding one's motivation for doing the research. This is different than defining a purpose statement with research questions to guide the research process. As she notes, determining a purpose is important for Indigenous scholars because understanding one's motivation helps the Indigenous researcher to locate their purpose within their own story. Doing so allows the Indigenous scholar to understand their motivation for doing the research in relation to their experiential knowledge and thus allows the researcher to cultivate better relationships with communities and participants. In other words, understanding one's motivation and knowledge base, allows for more transparency for the development of reciprocal relationships throughout the research process. This is achieved by being critically self-reflexive about one's knowledge base and relationship with one's culture.

Participants

In determining who to approach about this research, I was struggling to understand Wilson's (2008) discussion about *relationality* (p.80). He describes relationality as the way in which Indigenous Peoples view the idea of relationship. As mentioned, he discusses the notion that Indigenous Peoples see themselves as being in a relationship with knowledge that is in the cosmos. This relationship is described as being interpreters of the knowledge versus being owners of said knowledge. There is also the belief that we are in relationship with each other and all things in the world. As such, he discusses the importance of interpersonal relationships and how in a particular example, existing relationships between Indigenous scholars helped emerging researchers (graduate students) within a student lead

conference to “become stronger and empowered as Indigenous researchers” (p.84). He also discusses an example of how a graduate students’ acknowledgement of a shared relationship allowed her to gain the trust of two Elders that she had recently met. I interpreted this discussion to mean that it is important for Indigenous researchers to build upon the existing relationships they have with people in the community. At this point, I made the decision to approach three people in the community who I knew and had an existing relationship. The three individuals were all Haudenosaunee and members of the Six Nations community. All three were females and professionals working in the community and connected to the Department of Community Planning and the Department of Parks and Recreation respectively. One of the participants was my older sister. The other two participants were people I had worked with professionally in various positions in the community throughout my life. The participant’s names and ages are not relevant to this discussion as this project was not focused on identifying the participants or identifying their specific individual experiences. Rather, the focus of this project was on the *stories within the stories* that were spoken and shared during the Talking Circles.

Protection of participants & anonymity

Prior to the talking circles taking place, participants were asked to authorize the use of information they shared and quotations they delivered. Due to the nature of the talking circles, anonymity during the session was impossible. However, for publications that arise from the study, pseudonyms for each research participant will be utilized as well as only basic information about the participants themselves. Participants were also informed before the talking circles that they were welcome to (1) decline answering any questions that made them feel uncomfortable, (2) discontinue answering questions they felt were answered sufficiently, and (3) withdraw their participation without reprisal.

Data Collection

I contacted each participant initially by email to set up a phone call about the study. I did this because I felt that discussing the study via the phone was more personal and that I could gain a sense of their interest in this study by hearing their voices. The phone call also gained their initial verbal consent to provide them with more information about the study. When the participants agreed, we organized an initial face-to-face information session to explain the study and to formally ask for their consent to participate and to have participants sign a written consent form (see example in Appendix A) or to provide an explicit verbal consent of their participation. One participant gave their explicit verbal consent but declined to sign the consent form. Once the participant's consent was confirmed, I coordinated a date, time and location for the first talking circle. When the first talking circle was complete, I coordinated a second talking circle 2 months after the initial gathering. Each talking circle lasted for a duration of 2 hours. Data collection occurred in December 2014 and February 2015. An important note – I explained to the participants that we could schedule a third talking circle to give them an opportunity to provide more information. I also explained that we could take the opportunity to invite more participants to the circle if they felt so inclined and comfortable doing so. All three participants provided feedback that they didn't think a third talking circle was necessary and that they did not want others to be involved in the project.

The first talking circle was conducted with the purpose of sharing stories about the history of recreation and sport in the community. The second talking circle was conducted to share stories about the present and also ideas about the future. There wasn't an interview guide, nor did I have a list of follow-up questions that I employed. I did this in keeping with the idea of non-judgmental listening and I made the decision that my questions and thoughts

would be part of the interpretation of the stories once the talking circles were complete. The talking circles were recorded using a digital audio recorder. And self-reflexive written notes were kept by the researcher throughout both talking circles.

The Performance Text: Data Analysis and Interpretation

The performance text is an alternative way of writing and presenting information. As I realized that this dissertation was a continuation of my previous research journey, I decided to create a performance text similar to the one I crafted for my master's thesis. I made this decision to convey the similarities in struggles I was experiencing in terms of dealing with multiple threads of thought, as well as, attempting to represent what it is like to struggle against multiple perspectives. My master's thesis was an autoethnographic account of my experiences in sport and of my coming to know how notions of race, and ultimately colonialism, affected me throughout my sport experiences. In that thesis I characterized the conflict of identity I was experiencing as akin to an ongoing debate between different and conflicting voices. As I moved into my dissertation work this conflict continued and I struggled to reconcile my identity with my newly formed critical consciousness through which I began to view histories and knowledge.

To keep some semblance of order, I wrote the performance text in keeping with the order in which the talking circles were designed; that being a discussion of stories that started with the past and moved through to the present and then looked forward into the future. Of course, the stories, the process of sharing, the process of analyzing and interpreting were anything but linear. Nonetheless, the performance text starts with stories about the past as a starting point but also to underscore the importance of discussing history in the Indigenous context. From there, the text moves back and forth through time and sometimes veers off on seemingly unrelated tangents. Very often it is confusing as any process of coming to know is, but it is representative of the confusion I experienced as I attempted to sort out what happened to us (and to me) through

colonization and what is still happening as we struggle to carve out an existence that is authentically Indigenous.

Within the performance text there are different voices that are representative of the many struggles of thought that confronted me at every stage of this process. However, to be clear, this project and the performance text is not an autoethnography of my experiences. While there is certainly an autoethnographic component, the inclusion of the different voices is my attempt to weave my self-reflexivity into the analysis, interpretation and presentation of the stories shared. The voices represent conflicting thoughts and questions I experienced, and I characterized these thoughts as my Researcher voice, my Colonized voice, my Indigenous voice and a voice of Oppression that, for me, comes from an external source, espousing knowledge and narratives that contradicted my thinking along every step. The main focus, however, remains on the tensions and interplay between the narratives shared in the talking circle and the connections I've made to the knowledge I was exposed to throughout the research process.

Richardson (2000) states, "Writing is also a way of "knowing" – a method of discovery and analysis. By writing in different ways, we discover new aspects of our topic and our relationship to it" (p.923). The performance text, then, is representative of *my* way of knowing, my way of discovering insights about myself and the knowledge that I am engaged. The performance text is also representative of the process that I experienced as I moved through the dissertation process. The creation of the text was, also, the way that I analyzed the stories that were shared through the talking circles. Specifically, I wrote in different ways to capture and convey thoughts, questions and epiphanies about the knowledge I was presented with. I transcribed the talking circles and I used my word-processing program to highlight certain quotations and examples that I had questions or comments about. By doing this, I was enacting Richardson's (2000) idea of writing as a method, in which, the process of writing "provides a

research practice through which we can investigate how we construct the world, ourselves and others (p.924). She advocates for writing as a methodology, whereby scholars must learn to locate ourselves in multiple discourses and communities, develop critical literacy, find ways to write, present and teach, to increase diversity and to be self-reflexive (p.939). It is with these ideas in mind that I engaged in a process of writing as my method of data analysis and interpretation.

During the process, I also came upon some archival information about the development of the Six Nations fairground that dated to the late 1800s. I decided to use a portion of these documents within the performance text to provide a glimpse of the history of fairgrounds and its connection to the development of Euro-centric leisures and sport in the community. I also used this document to showcase some of the language written by the person in charge of recording the minutes. The minutes appear to be recorded by a Six Nations community member; however, what is interesting is the type of broken English that is used that in some ways is representative of colonization of our peoples through language. I also used some quotations of text from a book by Cornelius (1999) to provide some insight into the types of language and narratives that capture the biases and racism held against Indigenous Peoples by prominent European men in the United States of America. Again, these stories are important for the Six Nations people because this is part of our history.

Criteria for Judgement

The criteria for judging this work is not easy to define. In keeping with Wilson's (2008) discussion of relational accountability and adhering to notions of respect, reciprocity and responsibility. Within an Indigenous research paradigm, *respect* is understood to be with regard to establishing and maintaining relationships between the researcher, the research participants and the knowledge that is shared. It's important to remember that Indigenous Peoples see

themselves as interpreters versus owners of knowledge. *Reciprocity* refers to a notion of how the research contributes to the research relationships. For example, Wilson (2008) asks, "Is the sharing, growth and learning that is taking place reciprocal?" (p.77). As well, *responsibility* asks whether the researcher is being responsible in regard to fulfilling the role of one who is in a position of power and thus fulfilling obligations of respect with regard to the knowledge presented and the people involved in the research.

While striving to maintain the axiology of an Indigenous research paradigm, I have also drawn upon Richardson's (2000) discussions around evaluating ethnographic research. She states, "although postmodernism allows researchers to represent their findings in non-traditional ways, it also constrains them asking them to be more self-conscious about claims to authorship, authority, truth, validity and reliability" (p.253). Although this research is not wholly concerned with the lived experiences of the participants per se, it is concerned with the words and narratives of the stories shared by the participants. It is thus incumbent upon the researcher to be self-reflexive and to "bring to consciousness some of the complex political/ideological agendas hidden in our writing" (p.254). This work thusly views self-reflexivity as a necessity to ensure that the researcher makes clear their positioning.

Richardson (2000) advocates that all ethnography be held to high and difficult standards. Thus, she suggests that such work be evaluated by its ability to contribute substantively to our understanding of social life, its' aesthetic merit and its ability to engage readers to ask questions about the text; the reflexivity of the researcher and their level of accountability to ensuring, and laying bare, their ethical self-awareness; the writing's impact and how it affects readers and participants of the study; and the ability of the research to express reality and "embody a real, plausible and credible account of lived experience" (p. 254). While each criterion has numerous questions to guide one's evaluation, the underlying importance is that ethnographic research

must be held to high ethical standards. This echoes the Indigenous research paradigms' notions of respect, reciprocity and responsibility.

Findings – Performance Text

Prologue

The experience of working to complete this dissertation has been fraught with frustration, confusion, anger and, at times, despair and cynicism. It is the continuation of a journey that began during my master's studies with my exposure to the many ways that colonialism has enveloped Indigenous Peoples. What followed has been a struggle, a struggle to make connections between the analyses of colonialism, the contemporary discussions of leisure and the controversial pleas for decolonization, Indigenization, sovereignty and self-determination. Perhaps my greatest frustration has been finding a seemingly simple starting point from which to begin this conversation. It then occurred to me that such a place must begin with *me* because this work has been predominantly about *my* journey, a continuation of struggles to comprehend and reconcile the conflicts that have beset my Indigeneity. In truth, it has often been debilitating to make statements about colonialism, particularly when armed with only a fraction of oppositional knowledge within a society where colonial knowledge, values and systems of belief have become normalized. It is thus my hope that readers of this text understand that this work is messy; the path is strewn with irreconcilable dilemmas that confront and distract you when thinking through the impact that colonialism has had not only on Indigenous Peoples but on all peoples from the past to the present. It is also my hope that readers will entertain travelling on their own journey and engage in their own struggle to confront and reconcile their own understandings of colonialism and imperialism as it is revealed in their lives.

Context

It is difficult to argue that sport doesn't occupy a space of importance in the Six Nations of the Grand River (Six Nations) community. Even the most cursory examination would reveal the community's seeming affinity for sport. In 1980, the elected band council of Six Nations

passed a motion to create the community's first Department of Recreation. It was a momentous decision for the community because it formalized the council's political commitment to the provision and development of recreation and sport that, in the previous decades, had been mostly organized by a community recreation committee and a contingent of volunteers. Today, the Six Nations Parks and Recreation department (SNPR) manages the community's recreation (read: sport) facilities, namely one arena, two ball diamonds, a 400-metre running track, two field lacrosse pitches, one outdoor summer rink, a gymnasium and a skateboard park. The department also provides drop-in programs for sports such as basketball, volleyball and badminton. And there are also several volunteer groups that organize youth participation in hockey, softball, figure skating and lacrosse. In recent years, the community's lacrosse teams have had success provincially and nationally, which has bolstered the community's image, so much so that a moniker of being a lacrosse "mecca" has been bestowed upon the community.

But what is the story of sport at Six Nations? We can't talk about sport in the present without talking about the past. Yet, it's difficult to talk about the past because so many stories are missing or there are questions about the truth of those stories that still exist. Is there a grand narrative of sport? Is it even important to find a grand narrative for the community? Or are there simply too many stories for too many specific moments in time? How can one accurately provide a snapshot of sport in the community? Is it even possible with so many tensions?

The Past: Contested HIStories

Researcher: How does one even begin to think about sport in the Indigenous context? Might it actually be better to think more broadly about the idea of leisure?

Oppressor: Historically, Indigenous Peoples didn't have leisure. Hence the reason why Europeans had to introduce leisure to them.

Colonized Self: That's not right, leisure has always been part of Indigenous culture. Just look at

lacrosse.

Indigenous Self: Leisure is a Western construct.

Researcher: And we didn't have a word for "leisure"

Indigenous Self: Do you know that for sure?

Researcher: No, I don't. I don't know my language or the stories of my culture. I find myself frustrated, bouncing between the present and a muddled past that exists only in my imagination. What was life like before colonization? Before our knowledge became fragmented and lost? Life had to have been different. But how? How were we different? Or were we different? Is there a truth to be found here? A difference that distinguished "us" from "them"? Or am I asking the wrong questions?

* * *

There is a drawing at the Rec office that depicts a game of lacrosse being played by the Haudenosaunee people prior to the arrival of European colonists. Or perhaps at the very least before the game was stolen by European invaders. In any case, it is the artist's version and vision of what a game of lacrosse might have looked like and it tells a story that has circulated through the community over time. As the story goes, it was a game played over a huge field, perhaps a kilometre or longer in modern terms, and it involved many players. It could last for days. And it's said, it was brutally violent and used as training for war.

* * *

Researcher: I try to imagine what it must have been like, but all I can think about are the stories I've been told. These stories circulate throughout my head and there's never a beginning or an ending. *Lacrosse was brutally violent and used as training for war*. So, I guess I'm searching for more stories. You know, those stories that everyone seems to have about what it was like before?

Indigenous Self: Before what? Remember Linda Smith. Remember there was a time when "we

had absolute authority over our lives" (2012, p.25). Remember, there is "colonized time" and "pre-colonized time" (2012, p.25).

Colonized Self: Indigenous life would have been like any other pre-modern society. We would have had work time and leisure time. There is no denying this.

Oppressor: The only thing that matters is the present. Authenticity is an illusion.

* * *

Turtle: "I was thinking about how they say that lacrosse is the medicine game, and I wonder if the medicine is that it's relieving that tension from that competition, right? So, the players would get the relief and then the people that are cheering for the team would also get the relief, you know? I wonder if that's why it's a medicine game?

Bear: I look at that picture over there on the wall, about how there's apparently, it's a depiction of how the game was played way back by our great, great, great, ancestors, um, and then it was also a way to um, settle disputes correct? Lacrosse was a way to settle disputes that if they had a disagreement, they said ok, we're gonna play this game until, until, I don't know whether it was like, the score? Or was it the last person? Last team standing so to speak? I don't know

Turtle: I don't know. Maybe they just got so tired they said, "I give up, I'll go with whatever you want!" (laughter)

* * *

Researcher: I hear these stories and hope that there's some type of truth here. I wonder about lacrosse being a medicine game, though I don't know what that means. I wonder about the notion that competitiveness is something inherent or innate.

Colonized Self: It seems logical that lacrosse would be used to settle disputes, doesn't it? There must be some truth to that and these stories?

Oppressor: Stories can't hold any type of truth.

Indigenous self: Stories can be truer than the written word if the storyteller had to learn it a certain way, rehearse it and retell it according to how they learned it. Stories hold the truths about who we were and how we were colonized.

Colonized Self: The lack of stories about leisure confirms that Indigenous Peoples had no conceptualization about leisure.

Researcher: Stories and knowledge change because of fragmentation and loss. Those that remain must still hold some truth. But how can we really know? One must be careful how stories are interpreted and how they represent those who shared them.

Indigenous self: The truth in stories is that they are seen through a lens and for Indigenous peoples, often, it is a colonized lens. These stories reflect a colonized viewpoint on how lacrosse was perceived.

Researcher: So, how do we know when we're not looking at lacrosse or leisure through a colonized lens? How can we recover from the domination of a colonized mindset?

* * *

Turtle: "So, I remember seeing on Facebook, a story on Facebook about lacrosse, on whether or not there is a belief that women shouldn't play lacrosse and there was someone who asked a question about "Do you think this is true or not?". Like, I can't even recall how many comments were made but there was probably almost a hundred comments made on this one person's Facebook post about whether or not women should be playing lacrosse or not in the community. It was really interesting that there were people saying that "I was always taught that women shouldn't play lacrosse because it's a medicine sport", and then there were people saying, "well the lacrosse that we play now really isn't the same lacrosse from before. That they played it as a medicine sport. So the conversation around it was really interesting about how our Indigenous sports are modernizing and changing and what does that mean for our community?" My sister is

a midwife through the Aboriginal midwifing program up at the Birthing Centre and she was saying that um, one of the beliefs that she's learned is that women that do play lacrosse have, like, I don't want to necessarily say challenges, but they, they, the births of women that she's come across that are lacrosse players are actually different than the women that are not lacrosse players. So, even within a totally different realm you can see all these influences coming into different parts of the community, um, relating back to sport and belief and things like that so, it's interesting.

* * *

Researcher: The truth about lacrosse is important, yet, it is impossible to know. Did we develop gendered rules about who could play lacrosse? That seems like a very patriarchal decision. Is this question about gender a colonized narrative we have come to believe as truth? It does appear that we had defined gender roles in other spheres of our culture. However, I often wonder about whether the narratives I know about our culture are simply colonized narratives that have been retold to me through a colonized lens.

Indigenous Self: Gendered roles are not an indication of oppression. We had gendered roles for good reasons and no one was oppressed.

Researcher 2: Do you think maybe you're focusing too much on trying to find a historical truth? Because it seems to me that there isn't one to be found. Knowledge is not static, and stories are constantly changing. Perhaps instead of focusing on finding a truth, it would be better to focus on any underlying truths in the stories that are being told.

Indigenous Self: There are truths. To suggest otherwise is to abdicate responsibility for injustices of the past.

Researcher: I've tried to not focus on searching for a historical truth because the stories of our past are so fragmented. Nevertheless, it's very hard not to search for a truth when you

desperately yearn for any insight that can give any indication about what it was like and about who we were, or about who I am. How does one not wonder about the truth? How does one move forward when your Indigeneity depends on knowledge that has been fragmented and lost? Or does it?

Colonized Self: Truth is only found in facts.

* * *

Turtle: Isn't that so interesting about competitiveness? I wonder whether it's like something that's inherent in us?

* * *

Researcher: What is the truth about our leisure history? We know we engaged in several activities that from today's standard might be considered games. But what about the meanings attached to these activities? I think that's the missing part that is the most frustrating.

Indigenous Self: Be careful not to take the meaning of "games" as self-evident.

Oppressor: But does it really matter? What does it matter whether you know the meanings behind the activities? Or the behaviours of people who lived hundreds of years ago? It doesn't have any bearing on the present.

Colonized self: Also, leisure has not been static. We, as human beings, create leisure and we assign meanings to it. And these meanings can change over time. What really should matter is how Indigenous Peoples define leisure in the present.

Indigenous self: Understanding the past is important to Indigenous Peoples because it provides an alternative to the reality in which we live today. It allows us to know that we were once different than what is perceived of us; that there is a past that predates the perceptions of the colonial gaze.

Oppressor: As long as one can define oneself in relation to the present, searching for lost truths

is irrelevant.

Indigenous self: Understanding the past, provides Indigenous Peoples with an oppositional voice that in turn allows us to fight against ongoing colonization and oppression.

* * *

Bear: But as far as the focus of, um, like Indigenous cultural, all I can mention is lacrosse. I think, you know, in as far as sport goes, well Snow-snake, now that I think of it there would be tournaments of snow snake. But even then, it wasn't something that was focused in on. Like, in school, I can remember once having Albert Porter and Roger Porter and they taught us, er, showed us a snow snake and I think that was when there was a little video that, um, the National Film Board of Canada had made, based on them making Snow-snakes and so then, they brought it and, you know, you had a half an hour lecture I guess, or not lecture but, um, viewing of this little film and meeting the actual gentlemen. But, you know, I think even then it wasn't during the winter, (laughter) you know, 'cause we didn't go outside and never saw the track or how to make the track, (laughter) um, but, you know, so that kind of thing. But it wasn't, it wasn't something that I grew up with as kids, we never went and said we gotta have our Snow-snakes and go play it.

Hawk: And I think that is something that is coming around more now than when we were even kids because we never did Snow-snake either when I was in school but it seems like oh there's a Snow-snake start tournament for the schools now and everything, so I think it's coming back but I think like, cause even when I do rec, people are competitive so if you wanted to travel and play you kind of had to play the sports that were out there. You needed to do softball, you needed to do hockey if you wanted to be able to go and play against other centres and that's how kids are today too. Like, even when we do kids are like, "do we get to play anybody, do we get to travel anywhere?", like, "no this is just recreational", um, so kids want to do that same with basketball,

we went to Paris and we, um, played a game with the Steve Nash Program. Kids liked it and it was recreational, but it became competitive because you were playing somebody different, um, so I think we kind of had to have those non-Indigenous events to be able to go and be competitive and play competitively. That's probably why they focused on the softball

Bear: Or even like the powwow, the powwow event, you know, in a sense, it has a competitive nature as well, you know. The participants compete for money. Like there's actually winners at the end of the powwow event and so again there's that, sort of, that competitive spirit being shown within the community and, you know, there's, like, a circuit, you know, a circuit of powwows that they all travel to, (laughter) um, during the summer months I believe. There's various powwows throughout North America that could be gone to or travelled to, so again, it's sort of linked to competition, that's what I find our community is, very competitive, you know, that we all want to excel

Hawk: And it starts young, like, when I do my 5 and 6-year-old basketball league they ask, "ok who won?" Well, nobody won. It's tied. We don't even keep track. But they know. They're like, "we scored four times and they only scored twice or something". So, the kids even as young as four, five, six, they have that competitiveness in them.

* * *

Researcher: It is interesting about competitiveness. So much has been made about Indigenous Peoples being inferior, of being primitive, of not being progressive or productive. It is interesting to think about the links between colonization and the competitiveness.

Colonized Self: But competitiveness is an innate trait of being human is it not?

Oppressor: Competitive instincts are part of the human experience. All you need to do is look at the types of activities Indigenous Peoples engaged in to understand that.

Indigenous Self: Remember that notions of character are projected onto people through a certain lens. Competitiveness might be a colonized narrative of who Indigenous Peoples are.

Researcher: I think the answer depends upon whether you believe humans have innate characteristics or whether we learn how to be. While humans have many instincts, is it right to assume that competitiveness is part of being human?

Indigenous Self: Regardless of this answer to this very circular debate, the colonizers insisted on assimilating Indigenous Peoples into their understandings of competition, their notions of progress and their notions of modernity.

Researcher: Perhaps understanding this past will provide insight to the role of leisure in colonization?

* * *

Indigenous Self: The Haudenosaunee Peoples at the Six Nations of the Grand River, like all Indigenous Peoples, have stories about colonization. We have our own stories of being attacked, of being removed and of being stripped of our human dignity. One such story describes an attack on a Seneca community by the French in 1687. In the story, the colonizers attempted to murder us but when they did not succeed they decided to decimate our means to survival. The French army spent 10 days destroying fields of corn, orchards and stores of vegetables, berries and meats. Indeed, it's estimated that they destroyed "1.2 million bushels of corn as well as beans and other vegetables" (Cornelius, 1999, p.143).

> ***Lieutenant Beatty, journal entry, August 30th, 1779***
>
> *"Our Brigade Destroyed about 150 acres of the best corn that I Ever saw (some of the Stalks grew 16 feet high) besides great Quantities of Beans, Potatoes, Pumpkins, Cucumbers, Squash and Watermelons, and the Enemy looking at us from the hills did not fire on us" (Cornelius, 1999, p.147).*

Major Burrowes, journal entry, September 15th, 1779

"The whole army employed till 11 o'clock destroying corn, there being the greatest quantity destroyed at this town than any of the former. It is judged that we have burnt and destroyed about sixty thousand bushels of corn and two or three thousand of beans on this expedition" (Cornelius, 1999, p.147).

Researcher: What do I do with these stories? They are as important as the stories from the Talking Circles. There are connections here that I can't see clearly.

Indigenous Self: These stories disrupt the dominant colonial narratives of justified European expansion and the narratives that Indigenous Peoples were primitive. For us, the Haudenosaunee people, it serves as proof that we were more than simply hunter-gatherers, that we contributed much to this world

Researcher: Historically, European racism and colonial discourses, that maintained Indigenous Peoples as primitive hunter-gatherers, is deeply entrenched in the narrative traditions of American Law and education. In his analysis of American Federal Indian Law, Williams Jr. (2000) sheds light on the narratives that were employed to justify the removal of Indigenous Peoples from their homelands. He cites Georgia Governor Wilson Lumpkin's speech in support of the 1830 Removal Act, President John Quincy Adams' speech in support of the Removal Act, Michigan Governor Lewis Cass' speech in support of the Removal Act and John Locke's book chapter on *Property* that was part of his *Second Treatise of Government.*

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Wilson Lumkin

The practice of buying Indian lands is nothing more than the substitute of humanity and benevolence, and has been resorted to in preference to the sword, as the best means for agricultural and civilized communities entering into the enjoyment of their natural and just right to the benefits of the earth, evidently designed by Him who formed it for the purposes more useful than Indian hunting grounds. (cited in Williams Jr., 2000, p.97)

John Quincy Adams

[I]n appropriating to ourselves their hunting grounds we have brought upon ourselves the obligation of providing them with subsistence; and when we have had the same good fortune of teaching them the arts of civilization and the doctrines of Christianity we have unexpectedly found them forming in the midst of ourselves communities claiming to be independent of ours and rivals of sovereignty within the territories of the members of our Union. This state of things requires that a remedy should be provided – a remedy which, while it shall do justice to those unfortunate children of nature, may secure to the members of our confederates their right of sovereignty and soil. (cited in Williams Jr., 2000, p.98)

Lewis Cass

A barbarous people, depending for subsistence upon the scanty and precarious supplies furnished by the chase, cannot live in contact with a civilized community. As the cultivated border approaches the haunts of the animals, which are valuable for food or furs, they recede and seek shelter in less accessible situations. …[W]hen the people, whom they supply with the means of subsistence, have become sufficiently numerous to consume the excess annually added to the stock, it is evident, that the population must become stationary, or, resorting to the principle instead of the interest, must, like other prodigals, satisfy the wants of to-day at the expense of to-morrow. (Cited in Williams Jr., 2000, p.98)

John Locke

There cannot be a clearer demonstration of any thing, than several Nations of the Americas are of this [the value added to land by labor] who are rich in Land, and poor in all Comforts of Life; who nature having furnished as liberally as any other people, with the materials of Plenty, i.e., a fruitful soil, apt to produce in abundance, what might serve for food, raiment, and delight; yet for want of improving it by labour, have not one hundredth part of the Conveniences we enjoy; and the king of a large fruitful territory there feeds, lodges, and is clad worse than a day labourer in the England. (cited in Williams Jr., 2000, p.99)

Yet there are still great tracts of ground to be found, which (the inhabitants thereof not having joined with the rest of mankind, in the consent of the use of their common money) lie waste, and are more than the people, who dwell on it, do, or can make use of, and so still be in common. Tho' this can scarce happen amongst that part of mankind that have consented to the use of money. (cited in Williams Jr., 2000, p.100)

Colonized Self: What was the point of keeping these stories? Any connection to leisure is weak and speculative at best.

Oppressor: These stories have nothing to do with sport in the Six Nations. They have nothing to do with leisure.

Indigenous Self: We have stories of the colonizer's attempts to civilize us, to Christianize us and rid us of our supposed savagery and primitiveness. We have stories of their attempts to teach us how to be productive, how to use the land "properly", how to work, how to "leisure" and how to live.

* * *

Researcher: I don't know what to do with these? These are transcripts of historical meeting minutes from the Elected Six Nations Council on the creation of the community fairgrounds and Agricultural (community) Hall.

Indigenous Self: Tell the story. They are important. There are connections to be made even if they are not clear at the start.

* * *

The Creation of the Six Nations Fairgrounds

The fair[7] had been running since the fall of '67. For the first 13 years of its existence, it was held in various farmer's fields around the village. Then in August of '80, the Council of Chiefs purchased a 40-acre farm for the Six Nations Agricultural Society (S.N.A.S.). The land was formerly owned by Kate Thomas. She had sold the land to John General who in turn sold it to Jackson Jamieson for a team of horses. The Council announced this decision to the Visiting Superintendent on **August 26, 1880** with the following statement:

> *That the Council have decided to fence in the said fair ground and to build the Agricultural Hall and to their best efforts to have it completed before the show. – The*

following deputation were appointed to view the ground and to see that the work is done properly – David Thomas, D. Hill

Seneca, Johnson Williams, Henry Clinch, Isaac Jacobs and Richard Hill, to act with Mr. Gilkison also a deputation of 3 be appointed by S.N.A.S.

On September 3rd, 1880, the raising of the Exhibition Building was appointed to Levi Jonathan and it was his responsibility to have the whole or part of it completed by the time the Agricultural Society needed it that year. The land to be enclosed was extended another "chain back", making it thirteen acres instead of twelve and this task was given to John Hill to superintend. The extra land enabled the foreman to "lay out a good ½ mile track". To level the fair ground, the Council hired Josiah Hill to work from 7 o'clock a.m. till 6 o'clock p.m. for one dollar per day and two dollars for man and team to board themselves.

Colonized Self: This has nothing to do with leisure and the tensions surrounding sport at Six Nations. Stick with the narratives.

Indigenous Self: It's interesting isn't it? Even in the 1880s, 44 years before the Confederacy was deposed, that our men felt the need to write this down into meeting minutes, to document the events of the day. The language they use, however, seems odd. Like they are trying to be something they're not.

* * *

Oct. 22, 1880

Mr. Gilkison was expected to be present as he had called the Council about the improvements and Buildings of the Six Nations Agricultural Grounds. But for some reason or other Mr. Gilkison failed to be present.

The President of the S.N.A.S. spoke at some length explaining how necessary it was to make a grant towards a ploughing match. The council then decided to make a grant of

seventy dollars towards it.

Paraschak: "Agricultural exhibitions, with government-funded monetary prizes to promote a "healthy spirit of competition", were likewise fostered by the Canadian government, beginning in the late 1880's, as appropriate replacements for indigenous cultural practices" (1998, p.123).

Colonized Self: This narrative is not about the government imposing these practices. This clearly indicates that the Six Nations People had agency and decided to engage in these practices.

Nov. 10, 1880

In reference of Fence Buildings and Fair Ground, the Council thought fit and proper to ask the Chiefs (protesting to lay out any portion of our funds towards completing the said Fair Ground Fencing and necessary Buildings as was decided by this Council on the 27th day of August last) to show their reasons for doing so.

In regard of the above question Moses Martin contended that the matter should be extended to the Warriors and consequently he wished that a Meeting of Warriors be called and ask them whether they are disposed to let the money be paid out towards the improvements in question.

He then announced that on Friday next there will be a meeting of Warriors in connection with our Council.

Indigenous Self: This narrative clearly demonstrates that there was resistance to the idea of funding a Fair Ground. It shows that there were tensions surrounding Six Nation's engagement with these activities.

Nov. 3, 1880

Moses Martin spoke on behalf of the Mohawks that they still hold out protest that they have sent in to the Indian Department that they will not let any portion of the funds be paid out for the Agricultural purposes.

Moses Hill spoke on behalf of their side of the House that they will repeat the previous decision in reference to the Agricultural grounds and buildings, and shall urge the matter in the Indian Department have it confirmed because it is believed by them that that would be paying out money from their funds with economy that the Governor General of Canada and her Royal Highness Princess Louise are going to pay us a visit next summer, they shall be entertained in those buildings and in thus entertaining, the expenditure shall be lessened by at least one thousand dollars according to our rough estimate at present and by pidging what the nation had to pay when we were honoured by the visit of a distinguished nobleman The Earl of Dufferin and his Lady, we are sure that the decision of the Chiefs in Council is a good one. It will not be only used for the purpose as mentioned above but the Building shall be there for years and years to come for the purpose of holding some large gatherings which may have in the future as well as would be used by the Six Nations Agricultural Society which enterprise deserves every encouragement from one who wish as well and prosperity in this direction especially from the Council of Chiefs and from the Indian Department moreover, if such work is (confirmed and) completed before the Royal visit, we shall be enabled to collect quite a handsome sum at the gate which we are sorry to say that some of the Mohawk Chiefs are objecting (by way of protest to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs) simply because they refuse to consider above reasons for the Council thus entertaining the question when it was proposed by Col. Gilkison on the 26th of August last year. It is the intention of the Council to be careful with the public money and not spend any of it without, it is the firm belief that the project whatever it is has a tendency of promoting our people both Temporal and Spiritual Council then authorized the speaker to announce the above decision to the Visiting Superintendent Mr. Gilkison on Tuesday next.

Indigenous Self: It's surreal to think about our people engaging in these activities, building an agricultural ground, a community hall and holding a plowing match. And to then be planning for "royal" visits. It reminds me of Grande's (2004) discussion around the naturalization ceremonies that Indigenous Peoples were compelled to participate in.

Grande: For example, some ceremonies required the Indian-citizen-to-be to take a final symbolic shot of his bow and arrow and to then place his hands on a farmer's plow (p.42).

Indigenous Self: Only, this is way beyond putting our hands on a plow. What does it say about colonization when we were an agricultural society first and then to engage in European practices like building a fairground and holding a plowing match while the protests of others in the community seemingly falling on deaf ears?

* * *

Researcher: Much is made about colonization being based upon racist ideologies. However, it must also be recognized that discussions of racism are intimately tied to the establishment of the superiority of one "race" of peoples over another and inherent in this tragedy are notions of competition, of comparison and justification of racial positional superiority. Is it any wonder then, that sport and leisure were wielded as powerful tools to not only instill European notions of competition? Is it any wonder then, that Indigenous Peoples would be apt or keen to participate in competitive sports with "non-native" and "outside" communities as a means to fight the racist perceptions that we were inferior? To compete and create an oppositional narrative through winning, however contradictory that may be? To prove that we were not, or ever were, primitive or inferior?

* * *

Bear: As I say again, it's just people in the community that you could probably name, I don't have the information about lacrosse to know what happened in the 60s and whether we had

teams going and playing off reserve so to speak. I know we had some hockey teams, but whether we had the teams going, 'cause, like, you know, our hockey teams used to go and play minor hockey and they might have started off in the midget level and bantam level, where they would go to Waterford and rent ice in Waterford and play, rent ice in Hagersville, maybe even Caledonia, but whether lacrosse did that, I don't know. But you know, lacrosse for sure was played out of our arena back in '72 when the Gaylord Powless arena was known then as the Six Nations Sports and Cultural Memorial Centre.

Hawk: They played outdoors did they not? 'Cause there was an old box lacrosse box outside 'cause I think my brother played on that and it might have been, it would have been before the arena, because he played lacrosse prior to the arena in a box and it used to be out over that way, (laughter) I'm not real clear…

Bear: that was probably the one that was, um, on the inside, where our demolition derby is – that the fair uses, right in front of the grandstand. I remember there being a box lacrosse, or an outdoor rink and it was wooden. But the floor, it was just, you know, a dirt floor. There wasn't any cement pad on it, so, it's um, but the council built that for the community and there had to be a need for that and that's why they did that, you know so, so yeah, if we didn't have the volunteers in the community we wouldn't have a minor sports system probably or it would be very limited you know? I don't know how it would have evolved, but then again, there's that connection of, I don't know how you would say it. It's that ***colonization*** maybe, because we key in on our hockey, we key in on, well lacrosse, but softball is there, um we're looking at other sports, maybe soccer will eventually happen but the community for sure there's hockey, there's softball, those two things the community wants to play them and I don't know whether we would ever get basketball going too?

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Researcher: Identity is so important. But yet, so much is missing because our stories are fragmented, our languages are fragmented, the foundations of our identities are less than what they were.

Grande: The current obsession with questions of identity and authenticity obscures the sociopolitical and material conditions of American Indian communities. Indeed, questions of who or what is an American Indian, who should be allowed to speak from an authority of that voice, who can conduct research on behalf of American Indian communities, and what counts as the "real" Indian history dominate the discourse in a manner that suggests to the non-Indian world that the primary struggle of American Indians is the problem of forging a "comfortable modern identity." By displacing the real sites of struggle (sovereignty and self-determination), the discourse of identity politics ultimately obfuscates the real sources of oppression – colonialism and global capitalism (p.92).

Researcher: So, struggling with identity must shift from searching for a truth to an understanding of identity as dependent upon the sociopolitical and material conditions of our realities? What does that mean for history of leisure? What does it mean for leisure in our community going forward?

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Turtle: It's interesting, cause, during one of the community engagements that I did, someone talked about the paved roads and how people always talk about how paved roads are so good we always want our roads to be paved but there was a particular person that commented on how they wished the roads never got paved because, like, when they were young the roads weren't paved and people drove slower so it was fine for them to go and meet all those neighbourhood kids. Like, I wonder if that's not happening now because parents don't feel comfortable sending their kids out onto the road?

Hawk: I, yep, cause even across the road, I'm wary of letting my kids across 'cause you hear the cars flying up and down the roads, so yeah, I'm wary of that. To go across the road to play with the kids back then we'd ride our bikes up and down the road and, um, I know at the one corner, they used to play baseball there and they'd use the roadway 'cause there wasn't much traffic and they had an open field beside the road and they'd be practically on the road playin.

Turtle: You'd fall in the ditch now (laughter)

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Linda Smith: Is history in its modernist construction important or not important for Indigenous peoples? We assume that when 'the truth comes out' it will prove that what happened was wrong or illegal and that therefore the system (tribunals, the courts, the government) will set things right…Wrong. History is also about power. In fact, history is mostly about power…It is because of this relationship with power that we have been excluded, marginalized and 'Othered'. In this sense history is not important for Indigenous Peoples because a thousand accounts of the 'truth' will not alter the fact that Indigenous Peoples are still marginal and do not possess the power to transform history into justice. (2012, p.35)

Researcher: It's difficult to turn history into justice when you don't have the knowledge or the stories to create change. Maybe these stories can be a good start?

The Contested Present

Researcher: How do we make sense of a past that is fragmented? How do we reconcile that fragmentation with the present?

I can't remember if lacrosse was popular when I was a child. If it was, I was either naïve and oblivious to it or simply not interested. I don't remember kids playing it on the playground or going to watch a game. I don't remember if there was a community team or a league. I don't remember when it was first explained to us what lacrosse was or its importance to our people. Yet, sometimes images flash across my mind – small signs of young people carrying their lacrosse sticks; lacrosse balls being hurled against the side of community buildings when they weren't supposed to be; lacrosse taught in a gym class at a predominantly white high school; lacrosse nets outside of homes on the Rez like basketball rims hanging from garages in the city. I remember people I knew playing organized lacrosse for the first time in their late teens.

Colonized Self: There can't be a "truth" to be found in lost stories. You must focus on the present and what is known.

Indigenous Self: But the past is important for Indigenous peoples. It's important that stories from our perspective be told, no matter how fragmented.

Oppressor: Searching for a truth about the past is futile.

Indigenous Self: There is truth in our stories. And truth in the fact that our stories are marginalized. The simple fact is our stories of leisure are fragmented. Whether this is an outcome of ongoing colonization, I don't know. But, searching a fragmented past is important, perhaps because it's more important to understand what is being perpetuated to maintain our marginality.

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Bear: So, you know sport has always been important in a sense of having organized teams, if

you think back there was always a Mohawks softball team - men's and women's. It's always been important in our community, and so, there's always been community interest, volunteers interested in that kind of thing. It started, you know, with our volunteers, I always say we have a strong volunteer base, um, in a sense, because like, our minor hockey, all of minor sports organizations are run by volunteers. They're not run by the Parks and Rec department and, you know, without those people involved and having a vested interested to make sure that there's a place for our children to play. So, I think, like, there's always been that strong connection to sport. There's always been people in the community that have had the vision or connection of wanting to see sport being played here at Six Nations. Like, we always have had teams play against communities in the surrounding area. We don't really so much as play against ourselves but you know, we're always playing against the outside communities, which is good 'cause you know that, um, it just shows too, like, how it has evolved and right now, you know, while we've always known that lacrosse has been a good, strong, I should say participatory, sport for our boys in the community, and girls, like now with the girls field lacrosse.

Turtle: I think that it must be something that is just within our own people, somehow, because I know that even before I got involved, it wasn't until high school that I really got involved in organized sports, um, but before that, I come from a big family so, we always had, when we had family events and stuff, we always had played hockey or volleyball or we played sports as like a family-like leisure activity. So, I think that's how we kind of built our athletic ability before joining up with the organized sports, as the things that we kind of did at home and things like that as well. I know in my family, sports and recreation has always been a big priority for not only just my immediate family but my extended family as well. So, I think we just always grew up in that environment and enjoyed it, so we just always continued on with it (laughter). I was just one of those people that played recreational basketball outside the community.

Hawk: Um, I'm the same, like, I grew up where the male played the sports until a certain age right? Then, I think I was about 10 when softball was kind of around and so I started playing. I might have been a little younger, but it was always male. Like, he played the lacrosse, he played the hockey and winter events. We didn't really. We went to the arena, (laughter) and that's just how we grew up but you know what? We did things amongst ourselves to keep us active, like, which people don't do today. Like, you don't see a lot of people just playing outside with their kids. They want to send them to the recreation program. There's not that family, um, the family playing it together as much anymore. So, you're not building that ability to be able to join a team when you're in high school because you haven't done that much activity when you were younger. But when we were young, yeah, we did all those, we played, we did games, we played baseball and played hockey out on the pond in winter, we just all did that and um, I don't see that as much nowadays.

Turtle: I think in the summer time when you drive around, you can still see kids like shooting lacrosse balls at the nets and stuffs, but to see actual self-regulated games I don't know how much that really does happen? But we used to have like full-on games.

Hawk: Yeah, we did that in the winter too, like, all the neighbour kids were out on the ice and you'd just have a game going, um, so yeah, I don't know how much they do that now

Bear: Yeah, I can remember being, as a child, we would get together in the summertime and go and be a group, maybe ten people or so, and all go meet at the school and play lacrosse or play ground-hockey, you know, during the summer. Just to past the days. Just to have something to do, and just go and play.

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Researcher: So many stories. It's hard to decipher and hard to know what to focus on. I was hoping to find stories that might give some insight into how and why sport and recreation has

thrived at Six Nations. But the stories are jumbled and confusing.

Colonized Self: These stories are unreliable and irrelevant and they're not providing any unique insight. The stories are too fragmented, and the discussions are typical – always the same discussions around a blind acceptance that sport is inherently a good thing. Or the same old wonderings about why children aren't playing sports.

Researcher Self: But perhaps that is the truth in the situation? Perhaps the truth of the story is about confusion and fragmentation? Rather than looking for facts or truths in stories about the past and the present, perhaps it's more important to recognize them for what they are – a representation of confusion and ongoing fragmentation because of the distruption we've experienced?

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Hawk: But even now there's more facilities that you could go to but you know what, I don't see the basketball courts being used that much up where I live on First Line. The park sometimes, and if they're having a picnic there's lots of people there but you don't see people just there, like, all the time hanging out, even over here at the box, like yeah, there's people out there every so often but they're not there all the time kind of thing and so there's more opportunity for self-directed play but it's not happening. So I don't know if it's kids are staying in to play the video games?

Bear: That could possibly be one reason right, but it's also maybe too, like you say, like with sending the kids, parents may be very mindful of, "No I want them to be in my sight" and so you wouldn't send them over to the ball hockey rink as an example and to just play

Hawk: And you know what? I'm more wary as a parent now. I don't know what my mom was like, I'm like, ok, I don't want him to go there by himself, what if he breaks an arm? Like if he went to the skatepark, I would not want them to go to skatepark by themselves because yeah, you

don't know, you're more conscious, of what could happen and I don't know if our parents were like, "see you later" (laughter). I mean we used to have a little play area, like, on the edge of the ditch when we were kids, But I would never let my kids play at the road now (laughter)

Bear: Well yeah, it's just the safety issue and like you say, people are just so more mindful of what potentially could go wrong and you don't want that kind of thing to happen so you are protective of it and there's nothing wrong with that either

Hawk: Yeah, that's what they talk about, the bubble society right, everybody has their kids in these bubbles that we didn't grow up in, like helmet wearing and all that, all these rules we didn't have to grow up with.

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Researcher: It seems like this is the same story for many places; facilities are built and they are being underused, changes in lifestyle where people don't "hang out" at places like they used to, and a sense that people are being more cautious about letting children just play. Blame rules and video games. It seems very typical and frustrating.

Colonized self: And there doesn't seem to be anything that is related to being Indigenous or white. It appears that there is nothing related to colonization in these stories.

Indigenous self: Except that in the Indigenous context, these observations are made in relation to the fragmentation of culture and of stories that Indigenous Peoples are experiencing.

Researcher: Ok, so what is the link between these observations and such fragmentation and colonization?

Indigenous self: For a people struggling to make sense of the world and struggling to find an identity, is it any wonder that the material world doesn't connect with the stories of being Indigenous?

Colonized self: So, then what are the stories of being Indigenous that are causing the confusion?

Grande: Communities struggling to fetter the impact of colonialist forces – specifically, identity appropriation ("ethnic fraud"), cultural imperialism, and corporate commodification – are compelled by essentialist definitions of Indian-ness and the clearly demarcated lines between "us" and "them". The project of defining a contemporary Indian identity is, thus, highly mediated by whitestream forces, particularly the homogenizing effects of **global capitalism**. This reality exposes the perceived existential crisis of identity as in actuality a crisis of power. Specifically, the power to name, shape, and control the products and conditions of one's life and particularly one's labor". (p.94)

Colonized self: This has nothing to do with the observations made about facilities, safety and participation.

Indigenous self: It has everything to do with those things. The power to name, to shape and control the products of one's labour is vital to Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination.

Researcher: So, there must be connections between notions of leisure as being a product of one's labour and a connection between Indigenous struggles for identity that are connected to the way leisure (sport and rec) has developed in the Indigenous context? Much depends on how we view identity and how we understand leisure?

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Bear: About the lacrosse again and about how it's such a, like, I was at that lacrosse celebration back in November at the community hall when they recognized our Arrows and Rebels and Chiefs and the Rivermen and one of the things that was stated, I believe it was the Ontario Lacrosse League Commissioner, that with our teams winning these championships all in one year and that it's never been done before, that Six Nations is regarded as the mecca of lacrosse because of all the players that are coming from our community and excelling, well, at least as far as the boys, you know we've had some girls going on in the field lacrosse area, but of course the

focus was on the men's and the boy's lacrosse. And having Johnny Powless being nominated for the Lou Marsh Award, that's a great feather in the cap for our community, having someone, you know, being one of Canada's elite. So, now it's going to be, no I shouldn't say, but it's probably going to be a hard act to follow because they've set the benchmark now. The benchmark is there and it's going to be that you're always going to have to defend the titles. The Rebels have been very successful, I think they've won four Founder's Cups, so, you know, that's good to see because, why not? You know, we gotta be, let us turn out the lacrosse players and see where it goes. It's positive for the community, it gives our young boys something they can shoot for and now they can make a little bit of a living at it too, and it's also nice to hear about children wanting to get a scholarship, it's opening up a lot of doors, you know, they get scholarships to Syracuse and some of them get to play Division 1 or Division 2 lacrosse.

Hawk: And you get an education and that's good for the community

Turtle: Well, and I think that it also contributes to community pride and community competence, right? And I think for so long because of all the things that have happened, and in colonization, that, that's one of the things that we really need to work on, is building that community competence and community pride to let us all know that we can do this and we can excel at these things and just to encourage the younger people coming up to keep at it because there's the clouds parting. I remember seeing a story on Facebook about lacrosse and about the belief that women shouldn't play lacrosse and someone had made a comment about "do you think this is true or not?", like there was probably almost a hundred comments made on this one person's Facebook post about whether or not women should be playing lacrosse or not in the community and…

Hawk: Was it split?

Turtle: Yeah it was split, it was really interesting that there were people saying that "I was

always taught that women shouldn't play lacrosse because it's a medicine sport", and then there were people saying that, "well, the lacrosse that we play now really isn't the same lacrosse from before that they played as a medicine sport", so the conversation around it was really interesting, even how our Indigenous sports are modernizing and changing and what does that mean for our community that's also changing as well. My sister is a midwife and she was saying that one of the beliefs she's learned is that women that do play lacrosse have, I don't want to necessarily say "challenges", but the births of women that she's come across that are from lacrosse players are actually different than the women that are not lacrosse players, So, even within a totally different realm you can see all these influences coming into different parts of the community and relating back to sport and beliefs. It's interesting.

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Grande: As a result, the "crisis" of American Indian identity is perhaps better articulated as an identity paradox. That is, at the same time the relentless cadence of colonialist forces necessitates American Indians to retain more closed or "essentialist" constructions of Indian-ness, the challenges of their own "burgeoning multiculturalism" requires the construction of more open, fluid, and "transgressive" definitions of Indian-ness (p.95).

Colonized Self: It seems like a stretch to make connections between identity paradoxes and leisure as a colonialist force.

Indigenous Self: Lacrosse did not inform Haudenosaunee identity. It was Haudenosaunee identity that informed lacrosse.

Researcher: It's so difficult to know how leisure was yielded as a colonialist tool. However, it's important to remember that lacrosse was appropriated, remade and re-presented to the world. What does this mean for understanding Haudenosaunee identity in relation to lacrosse and vice versa? How do Indigenous Peoples find balance between "essentialist" ideas of Indigeneity and

transgressive notions of a contemporary, "multi-cultural" Indigeneity in relation to leisure, sport and recreation? These are important questions amidst increasing pressures from sport development and sport for development initiatives. For Six Nations, lacrosse is an example of broad struggles related to how notions of competition have changed the Indigenous community. Lacrosse could also be a starting point to understand appropriation, the purpose of sport related to notions of progress and Indigenous identity in relation to notions of gender. So much to sort through.

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Bear: Yep, It's just like the, um, the tv promotion about the jumpstart or the advertisements that Canadian Tire has on, you know, about how the child wants to play and but he can't because he doesn't have the resources, the financial resources to do that and so that's another issue that happens too like Cindy says, everybody appreciates if it's free, free of charge instead of having to pay

Turtle: I think it's one of the problems in our community is that it seems to me that there's almost like a gap there's a lot of people who have a lot of money in the community and then there's people that really don't have a lot of money in the community, so, as much as I would never be, I would never go out and say I think we need to pay taxes because I think that there's, I think I would get run out of the community if I ever tried to say that, (Laughter) But on the same hand, we did one project and we were talking with a group of teenagers between the ages of like 16, 17 in that age range, and one of them actually talked about taxation and how maybe we need to look at taxation as not how we see it now but our way of giving back to the community right? So maybe that, as bad as people see taxation, maybe there's some sort of way that we could look at being able to, like, lessen that gap between the haves and have-nots to be able to offer a higher opportunity for those that can't afford that or don't have the resources in order to participate.

The Contested Future

Turtle: Well I think that um it's interesting for me after having a daughter how things, how my perspective on things changed so making sure that I have um the keeping active and not just concentrating on work and concentrating on making sure that her needs are really coming to my mind a lot lately um at work couple of weeks ago, we did like a ground-breaker to make sure that all the different departments kind of know who each other are, one of the icebreaker activities were what were your hobbies and I was sitting there, I'm like oh my god I don't even have a hobby anymore (laughter) how bad is that? So being able to, and I think that I'm in a process of trying to figure out not only what sorts of things do I like now but what comes with what time do I have and where can I um do those things right? So I think that my ideal, um, for parks and recreation, leisure for the community would be to make sure that everybody had the opportunity to do something enjoyable in their life at least once or twice, do you know what I mean and that's really, I think, going to make a difference in their overall life is to make sure that they're not just concentrating on work and not just concentrating on making sure that their family and themselves are functioning but that they're actually enjoying life, things that they like to do. So, I think that that for me would be an ideal vision for the community.

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Decolonizing Self: I'm not sure whether leisure is relevant to Indigenous Peoples if, the desire of Indigenous Peoples is to decolonize.

Colonized Self: Leisure will always be relevant because all cultures engage in some form of leisure.

Indigenous self: Indigenous Peoples need to find ways to create leisure that relates to their identities and stories.

Fox: Although Eurocentric leisure is obviously relevant within a modern and globalised world,

the use of this category for understanding the worldviews of Indigenous Peoples risks appropriating and deforming Indigenous knowledges and practices (p.404).

Researcher: It's problematic to assume that Indigenous Peoples have knowledge to create leisure that is relevant to their struggles, particularly when knowledge and stories are so fragmented. Critical awareness of how leisure perpetuates ongoing colonialism is crucial and leisure must constantly be analyzed for how it can maintain a colonialist mindset.

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Hawk: So, in terms of the programming part, what I think is, people enjoy it. A lot of the feedback, they've always seen it as a positive thing, um, but I think, like, most of the kid's programs we have to maintain the free basis. They like that, it's recreational, they can send their kids to it, um, and at a no cost fee to them.

Bear: In Saskatchewan they decided that they thought sports and recreation would be the answer to make their community healthy? And they, they had their counsellors pass like a, a um, like a mantra or, what do you call it, like operational principles? You know and that their, every community member would have to do certain amount of physical activity thoughout their, and then they went, they made a, um, decision that they would provide facilities in their community so that people could go and get fit and, and, you know, I think it was one of those um rich first nations out west that was doing this because they had a you know a lot of money where they could build infrastructure type thing but you know even having said that though it was good to see that there is a small community taking that type of approach to try to make their community healthy, healthier. And I'm always a strong advocate too like as Hawk says you know we'll have less people in the health system (**Turtle:** that's right) if we, you know, think of recreation being preventative, um, activity or resource in your life, like if you have those kinds of outlets opportunities, activities or whatever you want to call it, um, and it prevents you from getting

heart attacks or uh, (**Turtle:** getting stressed) or experiences or getting obese and all that and you, you, know, you're going to be healthier and stay out of the health system as far as being **Hawk:** Or even like just your mind too there, like it could help with dementia and everything because you're still being active and um, you're doing things right up to 90 years old like the Canada Games for seniors. There was, like, a 92 year old doing javelin or something and I was saying to my mom maybe you should go into javelin (laughter) or running?

Bear: Yeah or why not? Um, you know, like yeah, to keep people, it's proven that if you can stay active and, like, you know, we have a saying, I think we still have it, one of our rink boards out there, you know, if you rest you rust. You know, that's so true and I can remember when I finished playing softball in 1997, so, then all of a sudden there was a regular activity, um, taken, I stopped doing it so I thought oh well I don't need to play ball or I don't need to do anything and through the summer, or through the next year of '98 I found that, yes, I do need to do something 'cause I wanted that activity of doing, of getting out and playing or doing something. So then I missed being active even though maybe it was only during the summer time with playing ball and so then I felt I gotta find something that I want to do and try to keep it going now and so. you know. it's, it's yeah, once you find that and you know that can be so beneficial. And, like, I often find too that I jump at the opportunity to say ok I will look after our noon hour skates. It gets me an opportunity to get away from my desk and I find that it can actually help me perk up, um, after sort of the stress of the morning and be able to tackle things with a clear mind in the afternoon. So, um yeah, I'm one who's very supportive of let's use sport, let's try to change the world through sport and recreation. As far as the positive sides, like I know there's a lot of negative too, you know, um, as far as, um, people can get hurt, people can be bullied, you know, that kind of thing. Or, like examples that Hawk has used, you know, where kids are the ones that wanna try but they're not as good; they get forgotten, you know, if we could get passed all that

somehow then it would be good, life would be good (laughter)

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Indigenous self: It's important that physical activity become part of Indigenous peoples' lives again.

Colonized self: Sport has a lot of positives. It is not leisure or recreation or sport that is the problem.

Researcher: Leisure, sport and recreation can be positive and negative. It's becoming clear that we're approaching the issues from the wrong starting point. Rather than focusing on the problems and issues, perhaps a change needs to focus on what Indigenous Peoples know. But again, the fragmentation is the problem. We still need to be cognizant of the colonialist mindset that still exists in contemporary leisure.

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Bear: I just had my meeting with the director of finance yesterday about our budget for next year and one of the words mentioned again was well, parks and rec is a deficit department and I had to, I spoke up against him and I said you know we're not a deficit department we are a service department and then you know his comeback to me was "well central admin runs a deficit as well" but I said you know "but it's all service oriented, that's what Six Nations Council is, service oriented and you know we, we can't, I don't think we can get rid of Parks and rec , like I would be very surprised if um there wasn't an uproar, like if the Six Nations Council decided that ok, they can't make a contribution and this is what I always get into this debate with, with our counsel members um they aways say well "you're a deficit department, you know we have to subsidize you or get you out of your deficit " and I tried this last time like in all my years it was always the conversation at budget time with the council and so then two councils ago um I decided to say to them "look, you're not um getting us out of a deficit when you don't even

contribute any money to Parks and Rec in the first place" (chuckles)

Turtle: Well I even think for myself about how as a young kid I was really painfully shy, I was a very, very shy person and then one, not that long ago I was actually kind of thinking like how I got to be like where I am now and what had transpired over the years and I really think that it did have to do with being involved in sports because it did help me to gain leadership qualities and confidence and team-building and a lot of things that I don't know if I would have those skills now if it weren't for having participated in those sorts of events so, again, I think that when we're trying to concentrate on being, whether we're the deficit department or not the deficit, like I really think we need to redefine what success is for each department on an individual basis because they contribute to the community in so many different ways that you can't just always be about the bottom line (**Bear:** right, yeah)

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Researcher: There is a growing problem with how leisure, sport and recreation is connected to capitalist and neoliberal values. It is particularly problematic for Indigenous Peoples wanting to decolonize.

Colonized self: Leisure, sport and recreation is separate from the economic and political forces acting as gatekeepers. It is wrong to think of leisure as perpetuating colonialism, when the problems stem from the outside.

Indigenous self: There are questions that should be asked of leisure, sport and recreation even if there aren't any answers. For example, how does the promotion of individual endeavours work to promote an agenda of individualism? This is problematic for a culture based upon collective efforts.

Colonized self: It's ridiculous to think that individual sports promote a certain set of values. It is the meanings assigned to such activities that drive selfish and individual mindsets.

Grande: While acknowledgement of the relationship between education and culture is important, unless the relationship between culture and the socioeconomic conditions within which it is produced is recognized, the so-called at-risk conditions common to peoples living under siege will persist. With regard to American Indians, this means understanding that "the Indian problem" is not a problem of children or families but rather, first and foremost, a problem that has been consciously and historically produced by and through the systems of colonization: a multidimensional force underwritten by Western Christianity, defined by white supremacy, and fueled by global capitalism" (p.19).

Researcher: There are so many things that have to be remembered as we move into the future. This is perhaps the biggest task, to keep leisure, sport and recreation within a critical lens. But how do we do that?

Turtle: So I just did a really horrible engagement recently. (Laughter) but the thing about it that I took away from it because I was trying to find something positive um the positive thing that I took out of it was that um again I always think about being the change that you want to see right? So, one of the sad things that I saw was that our community is still really driven by fear, like fear of change, even if it could possibly be good change they're really afraid of, it could be good but what if it's not good (laughter) you know what I mean, there's a lot of fear in the community which is really sad so I was, I think this was another reason why it's on my mind making sure that I myself participate in leisure and recreation activities is that if I want the community to be happy I have to then make sure that I'm happy and what is my, If I can be a role model by doing things that I love to do and people else in the community can say hey this is something else that's great that maybe I should, look how her, how well here if is going, I want to be able to do that too then um, I just think it's really important after having gone through that engagement to really start focusing on happiness and wellness in our and not only just health like, I know that we

have a lot of health concerns like diabetes and heart disease and all of these things but really if we just start concentrating on being happy maybe that's something that could be good for the community (laughter) is enjoying life and generally being happy instead of being so fearful all the time, like I was just, it was, as hard as it was on me I felt really bad a lot of times because that's when I was listening to people talk even though a lot of time they were saying not very nice things to me, on the undertone was really that there was a lot of fear and that was really kind of sad for me so I think that we need to just start concentrating on happiness (laughter) maybe that's a little too hippy but I don't think there's anything wrong with enjoying things in life.

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Bear: You know, you have, um, you want our department and yet, you have to or you made that commitment and, like, the council of the day back in the 1980's decided to establish a parks and recreation department or a recreation department I should say, um, they decided to commit money towards it so then, um, it's a contribution that they're making towards the operation of the department and it's a contribution towards our salaries so that we can have staff to operate and manage the facilities, plus offer programs and what not. So, two terms ago I was very proud in a sense that the council changed a little bit, the mindset went away of saying you're a deficit department. Ok, yes we've got to, you know, it got to the point where, you know, even I had to make the statement that, ok, they need to make a decision then, if they think that we're such a "deficit department" and we're such a detriment to the community then just tell me that you're not going fund parks and rec and you can give me, and this is what I said to the counsellors, I said you can give me pink slip tomorrow and I'll go back tonight and I will inform all my staff that we're gonna be without a job tomorrow. You know, then you can take the five hundred thousand dollars that comes into the community which is what comes from the community to

rent our facilities that we use to operate these buildings and the community hall and, you know, so then, um, again like the council after hearing that I guess, it sort of made it touch base a little bit so then, now, it's a good thing that our chief right now, she was part of that conversation back two, um, three years ago and thankfully she's been supportive of our department. So, then she's not stating, ok, we are going to, um, cover off their deficit, you know, this is not the terminology. Not, what are we going to give Parks and Rec? And so, um, it has quieted down a little bit but, you know, there's still that, like, well it was just again yesterday that the Director of Finance says, "well we gotta cover off your deficit". And it's just, um, it's frustrating, you know? And then you get thinking they put a little pressure on me by saying well you gotta come up with novel ways to generate more money for parks and rec. But you know if you put the shoe on the other foot then you have the community coming in and saying "No I don't want to pay". (**Turtle:** that's right) you know, we'll have somebody always wanting a discounted rate to use our community hall. I don't know what it is about the community hall facility, we have very few that ask for that for the arena but, um, I can probably count on my hands the number of times people have said to me, "Can you give me a discounted rental on that?". As far as the community hall goes it's always something from somebody, who says, "I need to have this fee waived" or, you know, they'll go to council and have the fee waived (laughter) (**Turtle:** so really, who's creating the deficit?) **Bear:** Exactly! (laughter) Yeah, so the council will pay for it it just becomes a big vicious circle.

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Indigenous self: Deficit department, covering off deficits! It seems that the neoliberal language of deficits is prominent in the context of Indigenous peoples. It seems to reflect a colonialist mindset that views the world and Indigenous peoples, as deficient.

Colonial self: I'm not sure that what is meant by deficient? The economic world is the reality in

which we live. You need money to run programs, pay works, maintain infrastructure. If Indigenous Peoples want recreation and sports, they have to adapt in order to progress forward.

Researcher: Language is central to understanding the meanings behind the things we've created. There needs to be more critical analysis of how certain language is reflective of neoliberal and capitalist language and where it came from. It is certainly having a turbulent effect on Six Nations, creating confusion and disagreement as to the purpose of sport and recreation, as well as, disagreement over how it can be delivered and maintained in the community.

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Bear: Ok, my vision would be that we have more human resources to operate and offer more programming, because, or we somehow try to unite Health Services with Parks and Rec to offer that programming so that we are providing one giant program, I guess, for the community of Six Nations, cause right now the existing Parks and Recreation only has one and half programming people to provide activities for, you know, our community of 11 thousand people and it's, there's not enough people, you know Cindy does an excellent job for what she does, what's she's able to do but she's only one person, and you know, I know it's looked upon us too to try to provide more activities, more programs, and try to um, I guess, give a well-rounded type of parks and rec And um again, money, we need money, like right now, um, this new building that's coming up one of the burdens is where are the operational and maintenance dollars gonna come from after we build it and how are we going to operate it and there's even a bit of resistance which was very saddening on Tuesday at the uh, senior staff meeting, cause one director who I was sitting beside said to me, "it's too bad you know you don't even have operational maintenance dollars to be building that youth and elders building where if they went after the library and did the library archive project, there's operational maintenance dollars to carry that building on"

Turtle: I think taxation is an interesting and touchy subject in the community um I don't, I think

that traditionally we did things that were similar to taxation without actually calling it taxation right? because in a village everyone would have participated to do what need to be done and that's kind of how tax dollars go to fund the things that you need for your community whereas before people would have just pitched in to do it and really I don't know whether or not community members are opposed to necessarily paying something like taxes without calling it taxes um I think if it were to go back into community maybe they'd be a little bit more receptive to it, I think that they're just concerned about paying tax dollars to like the Canadian government or to the provincial government when there's a lot of land issues that haven't been resolved so I think that's one of the big issues on taxation but I think that there are other ways to be able to meet our needs without having to um collect taxes or to even go privatize like and when we're looking at launching the development corporation in April and hopefully that's going to be able to alleviate some of that discussion on taxation and along privatization by creating community business that then it's like the corporation is almost like a social enterprise because all of the revenues go back to meeting community needs so um you're worried about money for doing programming potentially what could happen with the new development corporation is that your programming could maybe, could get paid for, for the businesses that we create so it's just another way to be able to supply services and things to the community without having to rely on a tax base or to privatize those things cause I know that there's concerns on either side of that but then again like you're saying there's also concerns about everything being free right so how do we provide things to the community that they need without creating like a dependency or a

Hawk: Or "I deserve or "Everything should be free".

Turtle: Entitlement

Group: Yes.

Bear We may not be the critical emergency type part but you still need parks and recreation

facilities in your community…

Turtle: But if you go back to again, like, we're always in such crisis management, like, not even just in parks and rec but in so many places even within a lot of personal lives people are just managing crises after crises after crises. And I go back to the why can't we go back to, like, why can't we start thinking about, having enjoyable lives, like, not just like talking about managing bad things but actually looking at the flipped, the positive side and being able to say that it is an essential part of life because it creates a holistic balanced lifestyle and if you go back again to the wellness committee that's the whole function of the wellness committee – to promote that balance that is work-life, right?

Researcher: So one of the questions will be, so what's the crisis? We're always in crisis but then do we actually step back and ask what was the crisis?

Turtle: Yeah, cause it's true, it seems like there's always one thing after another coming up and it's hard to, I think that's one of the comments I always hear back in the community, is that we're always um like almost responding to something bad, we're always reactive so again like I was saying before there's always that sense of fear, we don't ever seem to get out of that fear because there's always a reaction to something else right so? It'd be really nice to be able to step out of the constant response, the constant fight or flight, just to be able to be enjoyable for a little while. But yeah, I don't know what the actual real crisis is, the drama and trauma.

* * *

Discussion

This dissertation is the culmination of a long process of learning that is ongoing and continues even as I write this discussion. It is the continuation of a journey that started with my master's thesis (Henhawk, 2009), a process that was essentially the start of my coming to know how colonialism affected me through sport. I began that journey with a desire to understand why it seemed that Indigenous Peoples were not participating in sport. From my standpoint at that time, race appeared to be the foremost issue confronting Indigenous Peoples. However, my understanding of race, and racism, was limited and I approached the problem with the bias that Indigenous perceptions of racism were false and a product of a misguided "reverse discrimination" towards non-Indigenous people. I reasoned that *their* lack of success in sport had more to do with debates about motivation and nothing to do with race. The dynamics of race and power were inconceivable to me as I sat entrenched in the idea of sport as a space of equality wherein one's merit was the deciding factor of one's success. At that time, I was also introduced to the academic notion of colonization as it is conceptualized through a critical theoretical lens and I eventually came to a fuller understanding of race and racism and how these concepts operated in the context of sport. However, most jarring were the realizations that my perceptions of race and racism reflected a colonial mindset that viewed Indigenous Peoples as indolent and that I had participated in conceiving Indigenous Peoples as the "other" while completely oblivious to the contradictions I inhabited. I was then completely unsettled as I came to understand that I was indeed complicit in the ongoing colonization of Indigenous Peoples and that through my own privilege and selfishness I had also been complicit in racism, patriarchy, and seemingly every notion associated with how imperialism is reified.

I'd like to believe that I was not completely ignorant of colonialism throughout my entire life. At Six Nations there were always stories of colonialism that evoked sharp emotions of anger

and frustration. However, I often confined such stories of the past to the past and I scoffed at any intimation that the histories of colonization had any bearing on the present. I reasoned that colonialism was only ever associated with overt acts of racism and that the ability to succeed in life was dependent upon one's agency. By my reckoning, colonialism was not tangible and, therefore, not real. Yet, there were always issues swirling in my mind that angered and frustrated me about being an Indigenous person living within a colonial reality, however, I could not articulate why.

To reiterate, this dissertation has ultimately been about me and my journey through this research process. In the weeks and months after my master's thesis defense, I struggled immensely with my identity and with what it meant to be Indigenous. I did not fully understand the impact of my frustrations until after I engaged in the talking circles and subsequently struggled with the analyses of the narratives that were shared by the participants. To be clear, this struggle was not about my position as an Indigenous person doing research *in* the Western academy (although this too created significant frustration) but fundamentally what it meant to be an Indigenous person, or from my culture, what it meant to be Onkwehonwe (loosely translated as "original being" or "to live originally"). As I reflected on the words of Linda Smith (2012) and began to understand *how* "the reach of imperialism" (p.24) made it into my head, I then struggled with understanding how to decolonize my mind and how to recover myself, "to claim a space in which to develop a sense of authentic humanity" (p.24). This struggle created much turmoil as I came to realize the enormity of the question I was asking: What did it mean to be Indigenous?

The following text is from my comprehensive examinations. It is an excerpted transcript from a webcast lecture by Taiaiake Alfred, presented in 2010 at the Global Encounters Initiative Symposium at the University of British Columbia[8]. The title for his talk was "From Noble

Savage to Righteous Warrior: Regenerating and Re-inscribing Indigenous Presences". At this point in his lecture, he was discussing the role of the Indigenous academic. I share this because I feel it captures the angst I was feeling about my identity in the early stages of my dissertation. At that point, I was also very frustrated with academic writing and I desired to experiment with different ways to convey ideas. One such way was to transcribe excerpts from text, audio and video sources. I did this because I felt like I didn't have the words to be able to convey someone else's ideas. Everything was new to me and I felt it was more meaningful to share the words of others that I had been exposed to and then build a dialogue around those excerpts. In many ways, I still feel like this form of writing is a better way for me, personally, to share and engage ideas. Please note, the bolded and italicized text represent my emphasis with the purpose to highlight words and phrases that were meaningful to me at the time. My voice is represented as the "Decolonizing Self", a voice struggling for identity and a way out of colonialism.

* * *

Taiaiake Alfred: In fact, if you're useful to anybody it should be for those younger people who have to reconnect to those ancestors in order to survive. Not to "prosper" as we're finding, not to do anything else but survive. T**hat's how crucial it is this time**. Look at the suicide rates, look at all of the problems in our communities. And art matters, literature matters, philosophy matters, all these things matter because we're not doing them *for us anymore*, we're doing it in large part for other people, and we're living with the results because our communities are becoming, I use the phrase that was taken from Leroy Little Bear, he's a Blackfoot philosopher, ***decultured***. What do you have in a **decultured** environment where there's other stressors, the economic stressors and health stressors and so forth? You get a disaster, a **social disaster**, and **in fact** that is what is happening in our communities. So, there's a very compelling need to really look at these questions in a serious way and whether you're an artist, a writer, a professor, or anything

else, an intellectual of any sort, a political actor of any sort, we really have to consider, I think, the necessity of channeling back into the question of "**What is it to be an Onkwehonwe today in our society?**", and give the younger generation of people something meaningful to work with. We're not going to solve their problems by the work that we do as intellectuals, but I think what we *can* do is give them the tools. Right now, the tools that they have to work with are very poor. ***The cultural foundation***, I use this kind of metaphor a lot because it was the one that was given to me, ***the cultural foundation*** that our ancestors stood on to confront the challenges that they faced was huge, it was as big as this stage if you want to think about it as a rock. Now, that's their language, their culture, their knowledge of history, their ceremonial engagement, their social connections, their spirituality and so forth. It was a huge rock that they stood on and they could successfully engage a lot of different challenges at the same time and maintain themselves. Over time, though, what we've seen is that because of the bleeding away of energy, of people, of the direct attacks on our culture and our communities, that **cultural foundation** has been **whittled away**, to the point now where I had a student come to me this week, and this is a graduate student, who said, "you talk about that big rock foundation?" She goes, "I feel like I'm carrying around **a little pebble**." She goes, "that's how I feel right now and what can I do carrying around this little pebble? **What right do I have to even say anything?**" And so, the question of art and culture and writing and all these sorts of things and education is so crucial and so much more important, I believe, today, than the kinds of negotiations we're having over political agreements and funding and so forth. There's a lot of people doing that, I think, because it's, *ironically*, the easy thing to do. The central fact about all this, as Fanon alludes to, as every writer who has written from a decolonizing perspective and those of us that have lived and thought seriously about it, **is that it's a very personal and difficult challenge to face…**

Decolonizing Self: I feel worse than Taiaiake's student. I feel like I'm carrying around one grain of sand in comparison to the foundation our ancestors stood on.

What **right** do *I* have

to say

anything

if all

I'm carrying

is a single grain of sand?"

* * *

Decolonizing Self: I think Taiaiake is right. Decolonization is a very personal and difficult challenge to face. I try repeatedly to recall stories, anecdotes, sayings, hearsay, anything that can tell me what traditions and knowledges from my culture would inform an Indigenous identity. I can't even begin to fathom what an Indigenous methodology in research would be. Nothing that I know seems to be able to help me answer the questions I have. I know extremely little of the traditions and knowledge of my own people. I know only what was taught to me briefly in public school in our very short sessions of our "native" studies classes or through the stories shared by my family. But how can I trust that knowledge? As I now understand how this happened, how it came to be that I know very little of my own culture, I can very honestly say that I understand what rage feels like.

* * *

At that point in my life, and in the research process, I was struggling to understand what it meant to be an Indigenous person. I had always thought that I knew what it meant. I understood where we came from, and I had a cursory understanding of our history in relation to colonization. Yet, I found myself yearning for more.

In November of 2006, my father had a massive heart attack. At that point I had already entertained returning to university for master's work due to the questions I had regarding Indigenous participation in sport. However, I was also starting to struggle with questions about my Indigeneity. This trauma in my family's life, was part of the impetus for me to return to university. It wasn't until after his death in June of 2016 that I realized how profoundly my relationship with my father had impacted my journey. Without going into great detail, I always felt uncomfortable with my father. Neither of us, I think, had much interest in each other's *interests*. However, the experience of witnessing his health problems, of reflecting upon our relationship and my subsequent journey through my master's work, I began to be curious about all the knowledge my father had. He was, to me, the epitome of what it meant to be an Indigenous man as he seemed to have great knowledge about the earth. He gardened. He fished. He hunted. He was also the product of a generation of men who were very mechanically inclined and skilled at many "trades". Yet, he never shared that knowledge with me, or at least, when he tried I was, in my own arrogance, unresponsive to it. In any case, as I struggled with my Indigeneity, I found myself yearning to understand more of what my father knew. Our relationship grew after 2006. Yet, for a variety of reasons, I, regretfully, did not get the chance to fully engage my father in his knowledge. I will have to live with this for the rest of my life.

While struggling to understand my Indigeneity, I was extremely challenged as I was confronted by the scholarly work that exposed the problems that confront Indigenous identity. Particularly troubling was Grande's (2004) discussions around the notion of authenticity and essentialized theories of identity. She states, "The discourse of 'authenticity' is underwritten by 'essentialized' theories of identity. That is, theories of identity that treat race (and other aspects of identity) as a stable and homogenous construct" (p.92). I realized that throughout my life, and subsequently in my search for an Indigenous identity, I had essentialized what it meant to be

Indigenous. In many ways, my perception of my father was driven by this same essentialization about what it meant to be Indigenous and, to be bring a gendered lens to the discussion, about what it meant to "be a man'. And I struggled, because I had been equating Indigeneity with notions of stability that could be derived from the past. In essence, I had fallen into the trap of how colonialism wanted Indigenous identity to be: that of being an idealized vision of a "noble savage", of being magically and mythically connected with nature. Many of the traits that I saw exhibited through my father. However, Grande further argued that critical theorists advocate for "theories of difference" that remove notions of identity "from the specious discourse of 'authenticity'" (p.93) and re-situates it within discussions related to power. As I came to understand her arguments, it still took time to situate myself within Grande's (2004) discussion. Particularly difficult was understanding the connections being made between identity and global capitalism's desire for simple homogenous notions of Indigeneity. I understood the concept, but I was having difficulty understanding how this might have occurred through leisure and my sport participation. I also had difficulty understanding the role of European constructs of democracy and citizenship in the process of creating such essentialized Indigenous identities. In turn, it was very difficult balancing my struggles with identity with my growing understandings of colonialism, of Indigenous scholarship and then applying this to the problem of leisure's relationship to colonialism.

As I struggled to integrate these discussions, I then found myself struggling with the idea of what it then meant to be an Indigenous person doing research in the Western academy. Again, being confronted with fragmented knowledge about my identity and the writings of Indigenous scholars who levelled serious critiques at Western knowledge and research (Grande, 2004; Smith, 2012), I fell into an abyss of confusion, anger and despair. I found myself oscillating between a longing for those stable, tidy notions of what it meant to be an Indigenous person and

some magical ability to transgress all that I knew. It was very frustrating. Every time I seemed to take a leap forward in my understanding, I found myself inevitably taking two steps back in terms of being able to make the connections between my experience, the scholarship I was exposed to and the questions I wanted answers to.

Representing my struggles

To reiterate once more, this dissertation was about my experience as an Indigenous person learning how to conduct research in the Western academy. I came to understand this through the process of analyzing the stories from the talking circles. I found that I could not disconnect my struggles with identity with the analysis of the narratives. I discovered this because every time I tried to analyze the words and stories my mind would wander back to questions about my Indigeneity. Sometimes it wasn't solely about my individual identity, but wonderings about my connection to a collective Indigenous identity. For example, I wondered about who we were, how we lived and what we would understand concepts like leisure. I also wondered about how our beliefs would have conflicted with the ways we live our lives today. However, every time I tried to answer these questions, I was confronted with the essentialism described above and could not find the words to connect these struggles to Eurocentric leisure.

The performance text I crafted is thusly representative of three major threads of challenge. First, it is a representation of my experience moving through the research process. It is my attempt to capture and convey the struggles I experienced while wrestling with the discussions of Indigenous identity which, as discussed, had a major influence on how this research process unfolded and the subsequent analysis of the narratives from the talking circles. Secondly, the performance text is a representation of the struggles I experienced with what it meant to be an Indigenous person conducting research in the Western academy. So, while I struggled to understand what it meant to be Indigenous, I simultaneously struggled with the

question of how an Indigenous person can engage in the Western academy without compromising, or trivializing, Indigenous struggles to decolonize. These struggles were expressed through the voices of my colonized self and the Oppressor that often interjected harshly within my thought processes. In truth, the process of reconciling the place of the Indigenous academic, and Indigenous knowledge, in relation to academia led me to seriously question my place in the academy. I struggled with whether academia was the most suitable venue for me to pursue a "work-life" and to attempt to answer the questions I had regarding my Indigeneity. It was a very dark time for me as I struggled to understand my place in the academy and the world. Thirdly, the performance text is a representation of the struggles I experienced while researching the topic of leisure and colonialism. Perhaps more than any topic, the knowledge about Indigenous, or Haudenosaunee, understandings of leisure is the most fractured. Without learning our language, I surmise that it is nearly impossible to extract a traditional Haudenosaunee understanding of something equivalent to leisure. However, as I learned through this journey, it is not delimiting to not understand that historical knowledge, but perhaps more important to understand colonialism and the constructs that have profoundly impacted Indigenous Peoples' lives.

When I try to imagine what life may have been like before European settlers came to this continent, I often wonder about the things we would have done when the activities for survival were put aside or finished. In essence, what was life like? How did we live? And what did we think about the different aspects of human experience? I've often wondered how we viewed such activities and what meanings we attached to them. What did we think about the "work" that had to be done and the activities that happened after that work was finished for the day? Did we even conceptualize our lives that way? Or was every action an act of survival? Or was every action an act of deep conviction about our place in the universe? The answers to such questions are elusive

because they require an intimate knowledge of the time before colonization and a command of the languages we spoke. Unfortunately, much of that history is lost or it remains locked within our languages that have been disrupted and decimated. A more hopeful approach might suggest that traditional knowledge may still reside with those in our communities who have learned the languages and the stories of our history from previous generations. However, complicating matters is the question of how traditional knowledge may be tainted by the Euro-centric lenses, and languages, through which we now view them. Indeed, there are many fundamental questions about whether European languages and perspectives of history have the ability to help Indigenous Peoples with their struggles to regain some of that historical knowledge. Some would argue that our traditional knowledge is not lost and that it continues to exist in the oppositional ways of knowing and ways of being that Indigenous Peoples exhibit in the present day. Yet, there are still gaps in knowledge to be filled and cracks in logic to be challenged. From a perspective of research, it is hard to deny that the breadth of knowledge we carried about ourselves is at the very least, fragmented, and that we now only carry a fraction of that knowledge upon which to build a foundation of resistance to continued colonization.

Gloria Ladson-Billings (2008) writes of an experience she had while sitting alone in the concierge lounge of a hotel. She tells the story of how a "white man" entered the lounge and addressed her by asking "What time are y'all serving?" (p.62). She responded with "I don't know what time *they* are serving, I'm here as a guest" (p.62). While it's unclear whether the man made a simple mistake or whether he was projecting his own racial profile onto her, the event served as an example to Ladson-Billings of how, at any moment, people of colour can be "snapped back into the constraining racial paradigm, complete with all the limitations such designations carry" (p.62). This research project was initially born out of a desire to understand the relationship between leisure (broadly defined) and ongoing colonialism in the Indigenous

context. It was also driven by a desire to gain an understanding of an Indigenous conceptualization of leisure, if indeed one existed. However, from the outset it became evident very quickly that such knowledge was laden with a multitude of contradictions and dilemmas both real and perceived. Perhaps most frustrating were my attempts to make sense of anecdotal stories about the history of "leisure" in the Indigenous context. Quite often I tried to draw upon my personal knowledge about our history and our culture but was immediately confronted with issues related to notions of authenticity and truth. It was my hope, then, that stories or narratives would emerge from the talking circles that might shed some light on the activities that my people engaged in prior to colonization and that such stories might reveal an Indigenous (or at the very least a Haudenosaunee) understanding of leisure that, in turn, would provide the basis of an oppositional critique of western leisure. However, as I moved through the research process it became abundantly clear that glimpsing an Indigenous conceptualization of leisure would be impossible without first dealing with the problems that history presents in the Indigenous context.

At an early age I remember being exposed to the notion that we (the Haudenosaunee and Indigenous Peoples in general) did not have a word for leisure. You can imagine my delight and surprise when I read the same sentiment echoed by Fox (2006) who stated, "the very word leisure is not present in many languages (including many Indigenous languages). However, even when the word is present the connection between an Indigenous concept and a Eurocentric leisure system is far from clear." (p.404). My delight was quickly replaced with frustration as I realized that my ability to corroborate her statement was stifled by my inability to speak my language. Did we have a word for leisure? Or, even if we didn't have a word for leisure, what words or phrases in our language might be understood as Indigenous conceptualization of leisure that is close to a European notions. Adding to this frustration was Hunnicutt (2006) who wrote,

"The major texts in leisure studies have long agreed that leisure is an historical product; that there was a time (for example, among hunter-gatherer peoples when leisure was unknown, and that at some point leisure emerged as a cultural category" (p.55). This statement, while perhaps innocuous, presented a conundrum. I had heard sporadically throughout my youth the narrative that "Native Peoples" were a hunting and gathering culture. Of the colonial narratives that have subjugated Indigenous Peoples and our cultures, the narrative of primitiveness is perhaps the most appalling and upsetting; the narrative that we were savage, unprogressive – static, with no place in modernity and that we lacked the mental faculties to engage in productive labour that Europeans had claimed as a uniquely inherent attribute of European people and European cultures. This narrative of primitiveness has been the grounds for much of the subjugation and oppression that Indigenous Peoples have experienced. Yet, while I understood that Hunnicutt (2006) made this statement within the much broader discussion of human evolution, referencing a time when humans as a species did not grasp a concept of being at leisure, his words made me pause. Is it possible the claim that many Indigenous languages did not have a word for leisure is connected to the European categorization of Indigenous Peoples as hunter-gatherers? Could it be that the notion that Indigenous Peoples did not have a word for leisure, a story I had heard and reiterated in my youth and adult life, a story that Fox (2006) and so many others have told and re-told, was in actuality a colonial narrative of Indigenous People's primitiveness? If so, how then could I possibly ever reconcile this conundrum without knowing my language or the knowledge that provides our understanding of "leisure"? And even if I learned the language, how might such notions become lost in translation? Or is it that I am imagining this connection, that the connection is coincidental, and that the truth of the matter is that many Indigenous languages simply did not have a word or a conceptualization for leisure? Indeed, I would realize that the ambiguity of this conundrum would represent the norm within my search for understanding.

Colonialism as more than the overt

Within the ambiguity of this process, an ever-present challenge was to maintain attentiveness to the conceptualization of colonialism as more than the overt violence of Europeans to gain control of lands and to subjugate Indigenous peoples. It was important to remember that such colonial practices were driven by an undercurrent of philosophies and values that posited the superiority of Europeans, their knowledge and their cultures. While certainly the overt examples of colonialism should not be ignored or forgotten, I had to remind myself constantly that this dissertation was concerned with the insidiousness nature of colonialism versus a focus on the overt use of leisure as a tool of colonialism.

From the beginning, part of my focus was also on the discussions around decolonization and what decolonization could mean in the context of today's society. It seemed prudent, early in the process to pose the question, "if we are to take seriously the calls for decolonization, what would this mean for leisure? How, if even possible, would we go about decolonizing leisure?" While it's overly simplistic to think of a complete reversal of the present to an idealized past, it was certainly intriguing to entertain a notion of the decolonization of leisure as the utter removal of western conceptualizations of leisure and the dismantling of the multitude of activities that have been created as a result. However, as Fox (2006) notes, Euro-centric leisure is relevant in the modern globalized world and while it may be incumbent upon any decolonization process to imagine a radical future free of all that contributed to Indigenous colonization, the reality is that any process to decolonize or indigenize our lives will be forced to navigate a path through the practices of modern western leisure and, perhaps even more daunting, the underlying conceptualizations that have created it. Therefore, I maintain that understanding the tensions presented by Euro-centric understandings of leisure is critical, if Indigenous Peoples are to conceptualize a decolonization, or perhaps an indigenization, of leisure that then creates

opportunities to enact a praxis that brings Indigenous notions of sovereignty and self-determination into reality.

The Talking Circles

The analysis of the talking circles was challenging in that as I struggled to understand my Indigeneity, I was also struggling with understanding the problems presented by contested histories. In searching for oppositional knowledge that might lead to a revelation about an Indigenous conceptualization of leisure, I found myself in a constant struggle to allow the stories to present the issues needed to move forward with this analysis and this discussion. There was definitely an interplay between analyzing the stories for what they presented but also analyzing the stories for issues I had identified as important. As such, I made the conscious choice to analyze the stories for tensions that I deemed important. It was an important choice because I came to realize that there wasn't a way to analyze the stories without one's perceptions guiding the analysis. As such, I analyzed the stories with regard to the Smith's (2012) discussion about contested histories. That imperialism and colonialism have infiltrated our heads and as such, we are struggling to understand how this occurred, particularly through history because the "business of history is not done for us". However, I fell into the trap of focusing on finding truths of the past. In some instances, it may not have been that I was focused consciously on the past, but that questions about the past intruded upon the talking circles and within the stories that were shared. Particularly because we started the talking circles with discussions about the past, there were moments when irreconcilable questions about the past surfaced and none of us had any answers.

In the first talking circle, the participants were asked to share any stories they knew about the history of sport in the community. This was a very broad request and they were given examples of potential topics they could touch upon. For example, they were asked to speak to

how sport may have started in the community, how recreation and leisure services began or how volunteer or sport groups formed. The results were stories that represented a spectrum of thought processes: from pondering the meaning of traditional games like lacrosse or snow-snake to the histories of how certain sport teams were created in the community to discussions of people, places of importance, and opinions about the state of sport in the community or the state of Indigenous Peoples' participation in sport, particularly that of children and youth.

My analysis of the talking circles, however, was flawed in that I focused on answering the question of how leisure could, or should, be decolonized rather solely focusing on the relationship between leisure and ongoing colonialism. I then found myself frustrated because the stories shared were mostly about the past that occurred in the last half of the last century and were full of conjecture and speculation just as my own understanding of Haudenosaunee history. I had believed it necessary to provide an accurate historical perspective of Haudenosaunee history to contrast with the ways Euro-centric leisure was culpable in the process of colonization from the time of first contact with European settlers. However, as the process of analysis moved forward, I found myself frustrated and confused, again with an inability to articulate what I wanted to say versus what the date was telling me.

I also found that it is not good enough to deconstruct narratives and retell them from an Indigenous perspective because, so often, we lack the knowledge, the English words, and language to truly retell such stories and critique them. Coming to understand this has been highly unsettling given the ubiquity of leisure in our lives and the multiple ways we give leisure meaning. It's also been important to remember that ambiguity is not trivial but in actuality central to the Indigenous experience.

Capitalism, Neoliberalism and Indigeneity

Grande (2004) argues that the education of Indigenous Peoples "was never simply

about the desire to ‘civilize’ or even deculturize a people, but rather, from its very inception, it was a project designed to colonize Indian minds as a means of gaining access to Indian labor, land and resources” (p.19). Her statement is a radical departure from the civilizing discourse that centers colonialism’s task as ridding Indigenous Peoples of savagery and primitivism. I agree with Grande. Her argument is guided by the understanding of colonialism as being based upon Western Christianity, white supremacy and “fueled by global capitalism” (p.19) and is situated within the arguments that the realities created by socio-economic conditions and historical materialism are the driving force behind the many social problems within Indigenous communities in the present. Indeed, it could be argued that the normalization of social life around capitalism and neoliberalism is responsible for the inability of Indigenous Peoples to attain a decolonizing praxis. In short, it cannot be overstated that capitalism was, and continues to be, part of the colonialist project and is antithetical to Indigenous ways of knowing and of being. Resistance to capitalism and neoliberalism is, thus, a matter of survival for Indigenous Peoples and a moral imperative for any who wish to right the wrongs of colonialism and stand in solidarity with Indigenous peoples.

A base understanding of capitalism is of an economic system in which capital (e.g. a natural resource such as lumber), that is usually privately owned, is used to produce goods. In the capitalist system, goods are sold with the goal of making a profit. In other words, they are sold for cash that is of greater value than the cost of production. The profit from the sale is then reinvested in more capital or accumulated as wealth. (Drislane, R. & Parkinson, G., Online Dictionary of the Social Sciences). Additionally, neoliberalism is the contemporary term attached to the resurgence of classical liberalism. Classical liberalism is “a political and economic philosophy” that developed alongside capitalism and it upholds a central

belief “that unregulated free markets are the best means to allocate productive resources and distribute goods and services and that government intervention should be minimal” (Drislane, R. & Parkinson, G., Online Dictionary of the Social Sciences). While these definitions are simplistic, I draw attention to them to make the point that Indigenous ways of knowing and being did not allow for the existence of capitalism and neoliberal ideology. It is important, then, to somehow discuss the points of collision between Indigeneity and the tenets of capitalism and neoliberalism.

While it might seem ridiculous to explain capitalism and neoliberalism in such basic terms, I do it to make the point that this economic system and ideology was not part of Indigenous culture. I am not suggesting that Indigenous Peoples didn’t engage in practices that utilized resources to survive. Nor am I trying to obscure the fact that some Indigenous cultures may have exploited and exhausted resources much in the same manner that a capitalist system does. I’m also not suggesting that Indigenous Peoples were ignorant of this type of economy prior to colonization. It may seem trivial to make these points, however, within the capitalist society that we live, the arguments are plentiful against the notion that Indigenous Peoples did not engage in an exploitative resource economy. I am, however, asserting that Indigenous ways of knowing and being did not allow for the practice of capitalism as developed through European domination. Our cultures did not have the same exploitive motivation to turn natural resources into commodities nor did we have the capitalist mindset for the accumulation of wealth. These counter arguments are examples that constantly cloud my thinking about my Indigenous culture when, truthfully, the empirical evidence to corroborate my statement does not exist.

In discussing the negatives ways in which Indigenous cultures were perceived, Fox (2006) provides the example of the Haida Gwaii, a group of Indigenous Peoples on

Canada's west coast, who developed governmental processes that involved food, storytelling, song and gifting. One such process was called a Potlatch, a ceremonial and governmental process that involved "gifting". It was outlawed in 1884 by the Canadian Government (Paraschak, 1998) and is example of an Indigenous cultural practice that was viewed negatively because it stood in stark contrast to the capitalistic values and objectives of the Canadian Government's assimilation plan for Indigenous peoples. It is one example of many cultural practices that were banned or outlawed by the Canadian Government during the early years of the nation's existence.

It should come as no surprise, then, that early Indigenous education initiatives sought to teach Indigenous people about the Eurocentric "value of labour" and the ethic of using land for the purpose of progress as defined by Europeans. Grande (2004) notes that the state and the church conspired to develop a number of "manual labour schools" (p.13) that were charged with providing vocational training. However, these schools used Indigenous children for labour under the pretense of education, "transforming the ostensibly "moral" project of civilizing Indians into a for-profit enterprise (p.13). Such developments in education took their cue from the likes of John Locke and his theory of property in which he argued that "the cultivator's society" had rights to lands that Indigenous Peoples did not. Locke's arguments fit with the colonizing discourses that Indigenous Peoples were primitive, hunter-gatherers that did not utilize the land for which it was meant – agriculture. It was also reasoned that because Indigenous Peoples had no conceptualization of private property they thus had no rights to the lands where they did not directly reside.

In addition to expropriating lands that weren't being "used", the United States government created the General Allotment Act of 1887. This piece of legislation was created with the purpose of democratically breaking up Indigenous people's communal land

holdings. As Grande (2004) notes, Indigenous Peoples lost nearly two-thirds of the land that they occupied because of the act. Additionally, they were then "divested of their right to determine their own membership" (p.42) and, as a result, were broken into "various 'classes' of Indians, commencing enduring divisions between 'full-bloods', 'mixed-bloods', 'traditional', and 'assimilated' Indians" (p.42). This was reasoned and justified again by colonialist discourse that deemed Indigenous societies as inferior and thus not able to progress because of their lack of understanding or inclination, towards private property and a commitment to agricultural enterprise. In 1924, the Indian Citizenship Act in the United States sought to finalize what the Dawes Act was unable to do, to impose citizenship upon all Indigenous peoples. This however was not without resistance as Grande (2004) reports, "the entire Grand Council of the Six Nations (Iroquois Confederacy) declined U.S. citizenship, stating in a letter to the president that 'they were not then, had never been, and did not intend to become American citizens" (p.43). So where does this lead our discussion of identity and capitalism? Grande (2004) states,

> Though a cadre of Indigenous scholars have always expressed resistance to essentialist depictions of American Indian culture and identity (e.g. Chrytos, Deloria, Durham, Forbes, Vizenor, and Warrior), they continue to hold sway. In particular, communities struggling to fetter the impact of colonialist forces – specifically, identity appropriation ("ethnic fraud"), cultural imperialism, and corporate commodification – are compelled by essentialist definitions of Indian-ness and the clearly demarcated lines between "us" and "them." The project of defining a contemporary Indian identity is, thus, highly mediated by whitestream forces, particularly the homogenizing effects of global capitalism. This reality exposes the perceived existential crisis of identity as in actuality a crisis of power. Specifically,

> the power to name, shape, and control the products and conditions of one's life and particularly one's labor. (p. 94)

Grande (2004) argues that the crisis of Indigenous identity is thus better articulated as an "identity paradox" (p.95). At the same time essentialized identities are problematic, essentialization has become part of Indigenous peoples' resistance to neo-colonialism. Our communities and cultures are in such disarray from colonization that one of the solutions has been to appropriate, for ourselves, colonial notions of what it means to be Indigenous at the expense of creating new notions of Indigeneity that transcends colonialism. Grande (2004) states, "at the same time the relentless cadence of colonialist forces necessitates American Indians to retain more closed or "essentialist" constructions of Indian-ness, the challenges of their "burgeoning multiculturalism" requires the constructions of more open, fluid, and "transgressive" definitions of Indian-ness" (p.95). Thus, engaging in meaningful dialogue about the state of Indigenous struggles for identity have to be tempered with caution so as to avoid reinforcing Eurocentric essentializations and thus continued oppression of Indigeneity.

As cultural practices were banned, the government then supplanted Indigenous ceremonies and activities with Euro-Canadian forms of recreation and sport by providing funding for the explicit purchase of prizes for fairs and sport meets that rewarded Indigenous Peoples for their participation in Euro-Canadian sporting activities (Paraschak, 1998). Six Nations' participation in Euro-North American sport, recreation and leisure has also been situated in the context of contemporary globalizing movements of capitalism and neoliberalism. These movements are on display in the globalizing initiatives of sport development (e.g. equipment, facilities, leadership capacities) and sport *for* development (i.e. Right to Play "PLAY" program, Active Circle, Gen7) in Indigenous communities that

have intimate and inconspicuous connections to the global neo-imperialist movements of capitalism and neoliberalism. Questions thus arise about the pedagogical nature/function of sport and the ways in which Indigenous Peoples are engaging in sport, recreation and leisure as part of broader movements of resistance or reproduction of imperial values and ideologies. As Giardina (2005) states, "global (cultural) sporting agents, intermediaries, and institutions actively work as pedagogical sites to hegemonically re-inscribe and re-present (hetero) normative discourses on sport, culture, nation, and democracy through an ascendant global capitalist order" (p.7). Stewart et al (2008) discuss the example of neoliberal discourse that has become embedded in leisure research and has informed much of the policy development of recreation provision the past decades. Neoliberal discourse generally calls for: i) the retrenchment of government involvement and spending in public services, ii) an increased adherence to market ideology, deregulation and privatization and iii) an increased focus on individual rights and individual responsibility. Coakley (2011) states, "In sociological terms, neoliberalism is a web of ideas and beliefs that identifies a combination of free markets, political deregulation and privatization, individual self-interest, and inequality as the foundation for progress and all forms of development" (p.69). Its increasing ubiquity throughout society is problematic for Indigenous Peoples and scholars who challenge the idealized "end-states" for society in neoliberal discourse and its affiliation with capitalist economic imperatives.

Questions thus abound about the place of recreation, sport and leisure in the Indigenous context. As the talking circles revealed, there were some focus on the place and provision of recreation in community. Addressing the Department of Parks and Recreation as a "deficit department" raises many questions about the influence of neoliberal ideologies and discourses within the context of sport, recreation and leisure in the Indigenous context.

For example, are Indigenous communities, like Six Nations and in generally Indigenous reserves, havens for, or strongholds of resistance to, neoliberal incursions? Or is neoliberalism more prominent in the reserve setting than is perceived? How is neoliberalism connected/situated to the provision of sport, recreation and leisure opportunities in the Six Nations community and what are those tensions that exist within Six Nations Parks and Recreation? These are questions that I gleaned about the place of sport, recreation and leisure in the Six Nations community and it is this area of conflict that deserves more attention given the historical moment of domination by neo-capitalist and neo-liberal thought.

The impact of capitalism on Indigenous peoples, like the impact of democracy, has been more profound that is currently understood. It is intertwined with neoliberalism ideologies that uphold Euro-centric ideas and beliefs about how economic, political and social life should be organized. These concepts are inextricably linked to the dominant imperial and colonial narratives and discourses of Indigenous People's inferiority and both concepts are antithetical to Indigenous ways of knowing and being in the world. Taking seriously Indigenous critiques of capitalism and neoliberalism are, thusly, vitally important so as to comprehend the actions of European settlers and why, then, anti-capitalist sentiment is echoed repeatedly in Indigenous critiques of imperialism. In short, it cannot be overstated that capitalism and neoliberalism are antithetical to Indigenous ways of knowing and of being in the world.

A last story: Recommendations for future research.

In 2017, Canada celebrated the 150th anniversary of its confederation. Of note, the Six Nations of the Grand River also celebrated the establishment of the Six Nations fairgrounds and the Six Nations fall fair. According to the Six Nations Agricultural Society, the Six Nations

fairgrounds opened in 1867 and subsequently, the Six Nations fall fair has been running continually since. This means that 2017 also marked the 150th anniversary of the fairgrounds and the fair. Given the role of leisure in colonization, questions abound about the connection between the creation of the Six Nations fairgrounds, the fair and the confederation of Canada.

Of course, there are many other questions to be asked. In 1924, our traditional form of governance was supplanted with a model of a Canadian municipal government. At approximately the same time, the Six Nations school system was created while children were still attending the Mohawk Institute. Between the early 1920s and the 70s, sport also slowly developed with softball gaining in popularity with a ball diamond and community hall built at the Six Nations fairground. The community hall would become the new hub for activity, becoming a space for community meetings, dances and a space for youth to play games and sports.

By 1970, the Mohawk Institute had closed and the "on-reserve" school system was well established. There were many churches and the RCMP still patrolled the community. The Six Nations Council decided to build an arena and in 1972, the Six Nations Sports and Cultural Memorial Centre was opened. It was built using the structure of an airport hangar from a neighbouring community. The steel girders were dismantled and transported to Six Nations where it was reassembled and transformed into an arena and the catalyst for the development of the Six Nations Minor Hockey Association.

At the outset, the story of sport and its development at the Six Nations of the Grand River community may appear to follow a path similarly to the dominant narratives about sport development in other non-Indigenous communities. These stories are often shared as anecdotes and paint a picture of sport as being informally organized by community members: teachers, ministers, police officers, and various volunteers. At some point, all have played a role in

introducing and organizing people in the community to participate in some type of sport. The fragmented and anecdotal nature of these stories, however, made it difficult to imagine a "community narrative" of sport. Yet, it is difficult to argue that sport doesn't occupy a space of importance in the Six Nations of the Grand River community. The game of lacrosse and its history, the development of various sports, volunteer and sport groups and facilities are important markers of the community's acceptance of sport. Arguably, these developments have contributed to the recent success of the community's lacrosse teams which brought the recognition of being labeled a lacrosse "mecca". While this label could be perceived as an honour, it also evokes a profound sense of irony as lacrosse is something that Six Nations has always laid claim to. It is thus ironic that such a label should be bestowed upon the community only after achieving success in regard to the standards of the modern version of the game. Yet, Six Nations has always argued that lacrosse is "our" game, a game that we invented, a game that we've always been successful at and played long before European colonizers appropriated it and transformed it to fit their sensibilities.

In the grand scheme of ongoing colonialism, narratives, like Six Nations' claim to lacrosse, are often dismissed as hubris. However, I would argue that such stories are laden with tensions that have a powerful and profound effect on Indigenous Peoples' ability to reconcile the trauma that colonialism has caused. Colonialism was not only a tool of physical displacement and overt oppression, but a tool that has had devastating outcomes for Indigenous Peoples and a profound effect on the stories that constitute Indigenous experiences and realities. While the current importance of sport in the Six Nations community may not be at issue, how it has reached such prominence is contentious.

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) put forth 94 Calls to Action to "redress the legacy of the residential schools and advance the process of Canadian

reconciliation" (Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, 2015, p.1). Of the 94 calls, 5 were dedicated to sport specifically. These calls to action, in various ways, have asked for Indigenous cultures to be central in the develop of sport initiatives in Indigenous communities. However, there remains some ambiguity around what or how Indigenous culture should be utilized to inform sport development. The TRC report acknowledges that issues of identity and loss of culture are barriers of significant concern in regard to Indigenous participation in sport. As, hopefully, can be garnered from this dissertation, there are many questions about sport development and sport *for* development initiatives in the Indigenous context that have serious implications for how Indigenous communities address the issue of identity and cultural renewal. Furthermore, it is critical to acknowledge the role that Euro-centric conceptualizations and practices of leisure are utilized throughout the 94 stated calls to action. Further research must be conducted to continue to understand the ways that Euro-centric (or Euro-North American) leisure practices are connected to ongoing processes of neo-colonialism. In the context of Six Nations, the ongoing development of the Department of Parks and Recreation and the increasing use of sport and recreation to address social issues alongside reconciliation efforts must be contextualized with how contemporary leisure practices are intertwined with the many stories that give shape to the history of sport, recreation and leisure in the community and its current place of importance within the mindset of Six Nations community members.

It is my recommendation that ongoing research into leisure, sport and recreation in the Indigenous context be tempered with analyses of colonialism that address the ways stories about leisure, sport and recreation are reflective of a colonial mindset. It is thus imperative that contemporary leisure practices within Indigenous communities be addressed seriously for their connection to ongoing neo-colonialism. To continue to utilize contemporary leisure, sport and

recreation practices as a panacea for reconciliation efforts is to ignore the inherent contractions that present themselves in Euro-centric conceptualizations of what leisure is. To engage in leisure practices as a means of reconciliation within the normative structure of the work-leisure dichotomy may be akin to perpetuating ongoing colonialism in a cycle that cannot be broken.

Conclusion

Thomas King (2003), an Indigenous scholar and professor of English, wrote, "The truth about stories is that that's all we are" (p.2). In his book, "The truth about stories: A Native narrative", he repeats this phrase at the beginning of each chapter and qualifies it with a teaching from a different person each time. He quotes Okanagan storyteller Jeannette Armstrong who states,

> Through my language I understand I am being spoken to, I'm not the one speaking. The words are coming from many tongues and mouths of the Okanagan people and the land around them. I am a listener to the language's stories, and when my words form I am merely retelling the same stories in different patterns (p.2)

As I read this passage, a deep sense of sorrow overcame me as I realized the impact that not knowing my language has had on my identity as a Haudenosaunee person. I realized that not knowing my language meant that there was a connection lost to the voices of those who came before me and it weighed heavily on my mind as I searched for some type of truth about what it meant to be Haudenosaunee and how could I even begin to understand an Indigenous perspective related to this idea of leisure.

King, however, was referring to all humanity and not just Indigenous Peoples and Jeanette's passage was a reminder of the importance of language as it has the power to

transmits knowledge across time. As I came to understand the wisdom in these thoughts, I also understood that the narratives and stories the surround leisure, sport and recreation at Six Nations, not only carry the voices of the Haudenosaunee peoples, but of all of those who have influenced how we understand leisure, sport and recreation in the context of today's moment. It is thusly critical that we acknowledge the importance or these stories and the messy tensions that accompany them. In his book, King's underlying message was implicit; that to understanding how we, as Indigenous peoples, know the world, how we maintain our relationships to the world and how we maintain relationships to those who came before us and those who will come after us, is important for the simple fact that stories are all that we are. The importance of this teaching is that stories have the unequaled power to transfer knowledge from one person to the next over time and have a unique power to create broad sweeping change. It is thus important that we nurture and hold in high regard the importance of stories so as to not repeat the past and break the cycle of ongoing colonialism. Reconciliation is thusly, perhaps, much more than how we utilize cultural activities to create a better human experience but deeply dependent upon the stories we choose to perpetuate that leads to self-determination, to sovereignty and emancipation.

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Endnotes

[1] The term *Indigenous Peoples* is the term used to connect peoples who have related experiences with imperialism and colonialism. This term will be used interchangeably with the terms Aboriginal, Native (Native-Canadian, Native-American), First Nation(s) and Indian(s) (American-Indian).

[2] Haudenosaunee (Ho-di-no-sho-nee) is one of the words we use to name ourselves. It means 'People of the Longhouse'. We also use the term Onkwehonwe, which means "Original people". Others know us as Iroquois or as the Six Nations people or the Six Nations Confederacy. The term Six Nations refers to the confederacy of six distinct cultural groups of people that comprise the Haudenosaunee people. These people are: the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Senaca & Tuscarora. The use of the name Haudenosaunee is to denote the large group of peoples who existed prior to colonization and were fragmented after the American Revolution. These peoples relocated to many different communities throughout those areas that are now known as the states of New York State, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin in the United States of America and the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario in Canada. The term is also used to distinguish the large group of peoples from those that relocated specifically to the Six Nations of the Grand River community.

[3] Sandy Grande (2004) describes Indigenous knowledge and perspectives as a *critique-al* to describe its ability to offer a critique to Eurocentric knowledge. She based this understanding on Marxist-feminist scholar Teresa Ebert who distinguished critical from critique-al studies as a means of re-centering the importance of critique as opposed to criticism in discourse.

[4] The Johnson v. McIntosh case set the legal precedent for the United States' justification for

colonization of Indigenous peoples. It developed the "Doctrine of Discovery" precedent for the legal takeover of Indigenous lands.

[5] "Historical Legislation: 1850-1970." *Indian and Northern Affairs Canada*. 14 April 2008. <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/qc/csi/hist1_e.pdf>s

[6] They note that DuBois' conceptualization came prior to the establishment of critical theory and the Frankfurt school. Yet his voice, and name, remains invisible in comparison to those (European men) who attended the school and are synonymous with critical theory.

[7] The excerpts utilized here are taken from a historical file from the Six Nations Archive (but housed at Six Nations Parks and Recreation) The document is titled, "Six Nations Indians – Yesterday and Today – Agricultural Society in Existence from 1867-1942. The document is a record of minutes from Six Nations Council meetings. It includes a history of how the Six Nations Fairgrounds and Community Hall came to be. There is no author or date of publication.

[8]May 2010 - Global Encounters Initiative Symposium webcast sponsored by the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre. Hosted by MOA, From Noble Savage to Righteous Warrior: Regenerating and Reinscribing Indigenous Presences by Taiaiake Alfred (Indigenous Governance, UVic)