

Editorial: Indigenizing the International Academy

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The 2014 theme, *Indigenizing the International Academy*, was inspired by a five-day invited international Indigenous roundtable held during May 2013 at the University of British Columbia's Vancouver campus that focused on the theme *Place, Belonging and Promise: Indigenizing the International Academy*. This roundtable recognized the contested discourses, tensions, possibilities, and sites related to actions, expectations, and aspirations of Indigenous faculty, allies, post-secondary students, community activists, Elders, and youth to Indigenize the academy. Participants came from colonized countries such as Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand, the last countries to become signatories to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The domestic and international dimensions of the roundtable added richness and extended our understandings of the challenges and possibilities of Indigenizing the international academy. At the conclusion of the roundtable, a commitment was made to extend the scholarship on this important topic through the *Canadian Journal of Native Education* (CJNE) 2014 theme issue.

The CJNE's call for papers for its 2014 theme issue suggested the following questions be considered:

- What is the difference between Indigenizing the academy and Indigenizing the international academy? Is either possible?
- How can the academy engage Indigenous knowledges, peoples, and communities in meaningful ways? What are the barriers to such approaches?
- How can a sense of belonging in the academy occur without giving up one's Indigenous knowledge and identity?

- How can university governance systems include Indigenous peoples and Indigenous approaches?
- In what ways can academic teaching/learning, research, and community service be transformed through Indigenous knowledges, peoples, and approaches?

The articles in this theme issue represent international scholarship from scholars in Canada, the US, Australia, and New Zealand. The cooperative editorship for this 2014 CJNE theme issue also represents an international collaboration within the academy. An introductory statement by each editor regarding the meaning of this year's theme is presented, followed by short summaries of the articles in this collection.

Shelly Johnson, Mukwa Musayett, of Saulteaux (Keeseekoose First Nation) ancestry is a first-time editor of the *Canadian Journal of Native Education* and is an assistant professor in the University of British Columbia's School of Social Work. She was the principal investigator of the 2013 *Indigenizing the International Academy* roundtable funded by the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies and the University of British Columbia. The impetus for the Indigenizing the international academy theme and roundtable was rooted in an email exchange with Dr. Devon Mihesuah (Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma), a Native American scholar of such ground-breaking books as *Indigenizing the Academy: Transforming Scholarship and Empowering Communities* (2004), *Indigenous American Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism* (2003), and *Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing about American Indians* (1998). She was invited to be a guest speaker at the 2013 *Indigenizing the International Academy* roundtable but declined, explaining that since her 2004 book *Indigenizing the Academy* was released, she had experienced brutal backlash in the academy, including ostracism, slander, and libel. It was shocking to learn that only recently she felt any kind of peace in academia's ivory tower. It is through her experience that we were encouraged to pick up the important activism of her work and journey forward together as a collective of international Indigenous scholars.

Jo-ann Archibald, Q'um Q'um Xiiem, of Sto:lo and Xaxli'p First Nation ancestry, has been the theme editor of the *Canadian Journal of Native Education* since 1992. She believes that the CJNE is one important means of Indigenizing the academy by presenting Indigenous education scholarship through a double-blind peer-reviewed journal. In 1991, a former CJNE editor and Indigenous scholar, Carl Urion, called for changes in academic discourse that had often emphasized Indigenous acculturation to non-Indigenous mainstream education. Today, Indigenous scholarship increasingly resists notions of acculturation, recognizes the impact of colonization from past educational policies and programs, and introduces

educational approaches and research based on Indigenous knowledge systems. Jo-ann believes that the CJNE's annual theme issues since 1992 have taken up Urión's challenge to reflect Indigenous ontology, epistemology, and methodology because, in his words, "good scholarship demands no less" (1991, p. 9). The goal of Indigenizing the academy is one that is both local and global; therefore, it seems timely that the CJNE demonstrates an international cooperative effort of editors to reflect local and global Indigenous education scholarship, adding an international dimension to the theme. We can learn much from sharing our educational and research understandings with each other and from working cooperatively, as demonstrated in this 2014 collection of articles.

Lester-Irabinna Rigney is a professor and the dean of Indigenous Education at the University of Adelaide in Australia. He is a well-published Aboriginal researcher from the Narungga, Kurna, and Ngarrindjeri Nations and is deeply honoured to be a CJNE co-editor. Over his 30 years of experience while working in universities, the goals of Indigenizing the academy have ranged from basic access toward increasing the number of Aboriginal students and staff, to including Indigenous knowledges and research. However, the world is rapidly changing. Recent and modern approaches to indigenizing the academy are concerned with 21st century challenges facing Indigenous people locally and globally. What is needed is a refocusing of the discipline of Aboriginal education/ studies and its curriculum on the big questions of the future, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, the digital divide, globalization, feeding the world, and food and water security. The world's temperature rise will impact Indigenous peoples collectively in Alaska, Australia, and across the entire Pacific. Aboriginal researchers of Indigenizing the international academy are beginning to determine, "What are the great Indigenous scientific questions of our modern age?" and questioning, "Why don't we know the answers?" These big questions regarding Indigenous sustainable futures and their pressing challenges and mysteries have yet to be solved. However, before these mysteries can be explained, Indigenizing the academy is crucial. Indigenous future survival is depending on it. This important edition of CJNE outlines some solutions for Indigenizing the international academy while others indicate how frustratingly out of reach solutions remain. The 21st century is here today. Tomorrow, what knowledge will be needed to future-proof Aboriginal longevity? For answers, let your reading journey begin within the pages of this edition.

Georgina Martin identifies as Secwepemc and is a member of Lake Babine Nation in British Columbia. She recently obtained her doctorate degree in the department of educational studies at the University of British

Columbia. While developing her doctoral research, Georgina understood the importance of sharing and discussing her research on cultural identity in scholarly forums, both nationally and internationally. She presented her ideas in eastern Canada, the United States, and Australia to affirm that her topic had far-reaching significance for Indigenous peoples. It became apparent that many Indigenous peoples share similar experiences and challenges globally in respect to identity, self-determination, self-governance, and education. Indigenizing the international academy is necessary for upcoming scholars to sustain their knowledge within the academy, through greater understanding and reduced resistance. Debating these issues globally is timely, as understandings expand and support the development of Indigenous knowledges and Indigenous voice.

The 2014 CJNE theme is exemplified through international exchanges and stories in the article by authors Johnson, Te Momo, Clark, Sparrow, and Hapi. The following two articles by Altamirano-Jiménez and Te Momo present critical higher education issues that Indigenous people face and challenges for creating space for Indigenous knowledge. The authors also advocate for approaches steeped in decolonization and self-determination. In the five articles that follow, the authors discuss disciplinary considerations, approaches, challenges, and opportunities for Indigenizing their respective fields. Mutu's article about Maori studies reminds us of the longstanding struggles of hegemony and the slow progress to make change within academia. She also presents a hopeful future for which to strive. Nelson and McGregor continue the discussion on the role of decolonization but in relation to geography. Co-authors D. Darlaston-Jones, Herbert, Ryan, W. Darlaston-Jones, Harris, and Dudgeon offer a critical perspective of conscientization, especially in relation to the field of psychology. Tamburro's article develops an applied approach for faculty members to engage in self-assessment on how they and professional programs include Indigenous content in curriculum. Ahenakew's article brings us back to important considerations on Indigenizing the international academy through emphasis on epistemological pluralism.

The remaining three articles address graduate capacity building and multi-year international course learning experiences. Caron, Thira, McCormick, Butler Walker, Lalonde, Arbour, Vedan, and Jovel offer promising approaches for facilitating the development of Aboriginal health research expertise of graduate students. We end the journal with two examples of effective international course cooperation by authors Galla, Kawai'ae'a, and Nicholas, and by Leonard and Mercier.

Article Summaries

In *Contested Context: Welcoming Diverse International Indigenous Colleagues to Unceded Musqueam Territory*, authors Johnson, Te Momo, Clark, Sparrow, and Hapi draw on their Indigenous woman's perspective and their diverse cultural and academic backgrounds to analyze two experiences that took place on Indigenous lands at the University of British Columbia in 2013 and at Massey University in Albany in 2014. Collectively, they review what it means to Indigenize the international academy in Canada and Aotearoa/New Zealand. The co-authors reflect on their knowledge of community engagement, teaching and learning, research, governance, human resources, and student success in relation to key topics of the 2013 *Indigenizing the International Academy* roundtable which included the principles of legal sovereignty, cultural self-determination, activism, rights, and reconciliation.

Altamirano-Jiménez's article, *Neo-Liberal Education, Indigenizing Universities?*, explores the limits of Indigenizing the academy within the context of university restructuring by examining neo-liberalism as a governance project that shapes the knowledge economy; the configuration of entrepreneurial education which redefines the student body and constitutes knowledge; and the limits of institutional-driven indigenization as the social significance of colonialism, racism, and gender inequities when removed from the public space. Altamirano-Jiménez writes that "the restructuring of education, the focus on community and lifelong learning, internationalization, and the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge into the curriculum, among other initiatives, are part of new processes of neo-liberalism subjectivism." Altamirano-Jiménez sees activism in the classroom as a choice to disrupt colonial knowledge production and neo-liberal assumptions. Indigenizing the academy transforms universities into places that accept diverse knowledge systems.

In *Indigenizing the International Academy: How Can a Sense of Belonging in the Academy Occur Without Giving Up One's Indigenous Knowledge and Identity?*, Te Momo reflects on how Māori academics struggle to retain *Turangawaewae*, a place to belong, and *Tino Rangatiratanga*, which refers to self-determination in academic institutions. The battle takes place where Māori and Western knowledge intersect as Western systems influence Māori academics to modify their views of the world. The imbalance of control between Māori and non-Māori is exposed in respect to whose knowledge is valued and whose authority is privileged. The struggle is evident in colleges or schools where programs delivered demand a high input from Māori but they are staffed by a large population of non-Māori and non-Indigenous academics. The challenge escalates and is more complex when Māori people debate self-determination and authenticity among themselves.

Mutu describes the development, successes, and challenges of the Māori studies department at the University of Auckland in her article *Indigenizing the University of Auckland*. In 1951, Maori studies courses met strong White resistance in the academy. Today, the Māori studies department is a small and marginalized school in the Faculty of Arts. Mutu draws from her own Māori experience, her role as a department head, and the legacies of five professors and former heads of Māori studies. The less than satisfactory results of Māori enrolment, Māori staff complement, and degree completion are associated with White hegemony and, hence, control. In hindsight, Mutu suggests a more fitting title to the article would be *Attempting to Indigenize the University of Auckland*.

In *Are We Asking the Right Questions? Why We Should Have a Decolonizing Discourse Based on Conscientization rather than Indigenizing the Curriculum*, co-authors D. Darlaston-Jones, Herbert, Ryan, W. Darlaston-Jones, Harris, and Dudgeon pose the question of terminology and definitions associated with the concept of an Indigenized academy or curriculum. The authors imply that the calls to Indigenize the academy or curriculum are asking simply for an overlay or inclusion of Indigenous content, preferably by Indigenous peoples, as a means to incorporate histories, traditions, and knowledges that diverge from dominant perspectives. The authors question if this is enough as there is no requirement on the part of the dominant group to consider their role or position relative to that of Indigenous Australians. A critical pedagogical approach of decolonization based on conscientization is offered. This approach requires an awareness, acknowledgement, and shift from the dominant group's monocultural approach to education. It creates a third space where substantive reconciliation can occur.

Decolonizing the Discipline? Questions and Methods in Indigenous Geography uncovers how Indigenizing the academy is not a matter simply of inserting Indigenous content into existing curriculum or programs. Rather, Indigenizing requires challenging and changing institutional and systemic orders that support hegemony. Nelson and McGregor link geography with Indigenous scholarship and scholars for the decolonizing process in the discipline of geography. Five themes related to decolonization are examined: the concept of community and the undertaking of community-based research; the role of different approaches to learning in research and the academy; considerations in mapping Indigenous knowledge; forms of knowledge sharing in Indigenous research; and the concept of place itself with respect to the academy and Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies. Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies require the same validation, respect, and academic weight as other perspectives on truth and forms of knowledge.

In *Indigenous Content in the Curricula of Professional Academic Programs*, Tamburro describes how the framework *Self-Assessment Process for Indigenous Content* can facilitate integrating Indigenous content into a curriculum. The tool incorporates 150 topics and was developed by using inter-disciplinary literature of 1,400 documents. The self-assessment tool can be used by faculty to assess their own syllabi and course outlines and self-study documents for accreditation. Tamburro demonstrates the application by assessing the self-studies and syllabi of three social work programs. Social work, education, and nursing educators identify the importance of incorporating Indigenous content into accredited curriculum; however, they realize that integrating content and resources that are accurate and relevant to Indigenous communities can be challenging.

Ahenakew emphasizes that “in the process of decolonization and Indigenization, Indigenous peoples use alternative histories, Indigenous metaphors, and spiritual teachings that construct narratives” to make sense of their world. His article, *Indigenous Epistemological Pluralism: Connecting Different Traditions of Knowledge Production*, offers a situated response to the question, “What relationship between language, knowledge, and reality would enable us to engage with differently positioned traditions of knowledge production in the movement towards Indigenizing the international academy?” He argues that epistemological pluralism is an effect of specific Indigenous metaphysical assumptions that connect reality, being (ontology), knowing (epistemology), and language. Epistemological pluralism is situated as an under-explored feature of some Indigenous cosmologies that can be used productively to enhance research processes and transnational spaces of dialogue to support international efforts to Indigenize academic space.

In *Capacity Interrupted: The Kloshe Tillicum Graduate Student Training Experience*, Caron, Thira, McCormick, Butler Walker, Lalonde, Arbour, Vedan, and Jovel reflect on a graduate student initiative to develop research capacity in Aboriginal health research. The program known as *Kloshe Tillicum: Healthy People, Healthy Relations* involved four research-intensive universities in British Columbia. The program adopted a training methodology that challenged existing research paradigms while advancing Indigenous research methodologies that emerged from community- and place-based research. The authors adapted Kirkness and Barnhardt’s (1991) 4Rs of Indigenous education (respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility) to guide their theoretical and applied research practices.

Galla, Kawai’ae’a, and Nicholas describe an ongoing international collaboration on Indigenous language and culture education with post-secondary institutions in Hawai’i, Arizona, Alaska, New Zealand, and

Canada in *Carrying the Torch Forward: Indigenous Academics Building Capacity through an International Collaborative Model*. The co-authors, who are Indigenous faculty, discuss the impacts of engaging the academy with Indigenous knowledges, peoples, and communities. Using hybrid delivery, virtual, and face-to-face interaction through internationally-conducted coursework, topics include Indigenous epistemology, language, culture, knowledge, traditions, and identity. The international seminar space grounds Indigenous values of responsibility, respect, relevance, relationships, and resiliency in support of the potential that collaborations have in providing access to power while supporting the responsibility of Indigenous students to navigate the pathway of higher education toward Indigenous self-determination, broadly.

In *Shaping Indigenous Spaces in Higher Education: An International Virtual Exchange on Indigenous Knowledge (Alaska and Aotearoa)*, Leonard and Mercier believe that little systematic work has been done on expanding Indigenous knowledge(s) and research outside of local institutions. The co-authors describe four international virtual exchanges between Alaska and Aotearoa students through courses at the University of Alaska and Victoria University of Wellington. University of Alaska courses offered are *Documenting Indigenous Knowledge* and *Communication in Cross-Cultural Classrooms* while the Victoria University of Wellington course offered is *Science and Indigenous Knowledge*. There are three aspects that motivate the continuation of virtual exchanges across international Indigenous spaces: the courses convey a critical sense of place in local and global senses; they (re)orient students in terms of Indigenous identities; and cause students to reflect on their current and future roles in shaping spaces.

The editors of the 2014 CJNE theme issue raise our hands in thanks and respect to our many reviewers and authors. We look forward to continuing the work, research, dialogue, and scholarship about the important responsibility of Indigenizing the international academy. This work is difficult but not impossible. There is great hope and potential for current and future scholars who engage in this academic endeavour.

References

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