Unsettling Place-based Education: Whiteness and Land in Indigenous Education in Canadian Teacher Education

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Indigenous education is being increasingly emphasized in Canadian faculties of education. While Indigenous education in teacher education must prioritize addressing the learning needs of Indigenous students, it must also serve to shift the gravely lacking common knowledge of most Canadians regarding Indigenous peoples in Canada. In this article, the author shares the results of her doctoral study investigating the use of critical place-based education, in Indigenous education in teacher education, to address and improve the preparedness of predominantly white settler pre-service teachers in building relationships in their own teaching practice so that they can do a good job of including Indigenous peoples and perspectives in their teaching. Employing the methodology of self-study of teacher education practice (S-STEP), she has analyzed trends and patterns in student assignments, responses, and anonymous feedback in 17 sections of a required course in Aboriginal education in a Faculty of Education. Centreing Land and local Indigenous peoples can support unsettling whiteness, and can reveal and recover Canadians' existing citizenship implications related to Land and to Indigenous peoples, to serve a just future in Canada.

Introduction

Recently, public awareness has increased greatly regarding the need to change what all Canadians learn in school about, with and from Indigenous peoples. This message was fore fronted in the June 2015 release of the report on the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Like the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) report released in November 1996, the TRC report, *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action*, emphasizes the need for education to play a key role in service of justice and resurgence for Indigenous peoples. This call echoes the messages in such reports as People for Education's 2013 report on "First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education: Overcoming the Gaps in Provincially Funded Schools", the Association of Canadian Deans of Education's 2010 "Accord on Indigenous Education", and the Ontario Ministry of Education's 2007 "Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework: Delivering Quality Education to Aboriginal Students in Ontario's Provincially Funded Schools". While the struggle for Indigenous control of Indigenous education is as old as colonization in this land, for at least 20 years scholars in education, such as Mi'kmaq[1] scholar Marie Bat-

tiste (1995, 1998, 2000) and Métis scholar Susan Dion (2007, 2009), have been teaching, advocating for, and writing about the need for the educational changes outlined in these policy papers and documents. Between 2009 and 2010, I entered the field of Indigenous education by teaching eight sections of *EDUC 4416 Aboriginal Education*, a required course for Bachelor of Education students at the Orillia campus of Lakehead University, in the territory of the Chippewa Tri-Council (Chippewas of Rama First Nation, Chimnissing, and Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation) and the Williams Treaty. After this first (incredibly challenging and inspiring) year of teaching, I committed to researching this practice. My research question is: *How is place-based education in Canadian teacher education promoting cross-cultural understanding of the interrelated histories and lands of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada?* Now, having taught 17 of these courses over six years, another perennial question that has emerged is: *What role do White, settler Canadians have in this education shift?* As Dion (2009) points out in her important book *Braiding Histories: Learning from Aboriginal Peoples' Experiences and Perspectives*, this work must be about teaching educators to better reach and serve Indigenous learners, but it must also be about shifting the perspectives of non-Indigenous learners.

At this time, with large population increases in Indigenous communities and with institutions such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015), People for Education (2013), and the Ontario Ministry of Education (2007) calling for changes in schooling, to help address the social and economic inequities that persist for Indigenous peoples, there is a window provided for all to act. This is the responsibility of all Canadians. As I have come to learn over the last six years, there are teacher educators all over Canada who are similarly committed. There is diversity in programs in many ways: in geographical location; in whether the program or course is an elective or mandatory; in the length or frequency of the classes; in the intention of the classes; in resources available; and in duration of the program. For some, the emphasis is on how to reach and support Indigenous learners through culturally appropriate or responsive pedagogies, iconography, and practices. For others, the emphasis on treaty relationships is a key aspect. From the writings and presentations that I have consumed, it seems that many of us who are engaged in this work are encountering similar obstacles, including the profound ignorance of many of the non-Indigenous participants relating to Indigenous peoples, communities, and histories; the frustration of Indigenous students regarding these ignorances; the disavowal of privilege and cultural location of whiteness and of settlers; and an unwillingness to contend with the personal implications of changing these understandings. It is also my perception that what is

working, in my own practice and coast to coast to coast, is Land-based engagement with local Indigenous peoples and communities.(As discussed later in this paper, I capitalize the word *Land* throughout this work in reference to my own understanding of *Land as First Teacher*.) My perception has been shaped and supported through data collection using the methodology of the self-study of teacher education practices (S-STEP) (Kitchen, 2005a, 2005b; Kitchen & Russell, 2012; Loughran, 2004; Samaras & Freese, 2006). This paper begins with a section on methodology, then moves the topic of whiteness as it relates to me as a teacher-researcher and to the pre-service teachers, and then proceeds through the findings from my practice of place-based education, with Land and decolonization at the centre, in the territories and with the peoples from where and with whom I have taught Indigenous education in teacher education.

Methodology

In Kitchen and Russell's polygraph series publication for the Canadian Association for Teacher Education (CATE), "Canadian Perspectives on the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices", the editors, in their introduction, make a conscious choice to use the acronym *S-STEP* instead of using the more common abbreviation *self-study*. They indicate that this choice "reflects our view that both the self and teacher education practices must always be in view" (2012, p. 3). In my own practice, what this means is that I use the written anonymous feedback and questions that I have collected from each course, my own writings and journals, and my instructor evaluations to make sense of my teacher education practice over the last six years. "We advance the field through *the construction, testing, sharing and re-testing of exemplars* of teaching practice"(LaBoskey, 2004, p. 821). While no direct quotes from students have been collected, there are very strong patterns and recurring responses to the assignments, during in-class discussions, and, in particular, in responding to and processing the many experiences in the courses: "The pedagogical practices employed by self-study researchers are an integral part of the methodology of self-study because . . . they are the interventions in our research design" (LaBoskey, 2004, p.834). Over the time I have been teaching this course, I have also had great mentorship and conversations with other instructors across the country who are doing similar work.[2] Citing many studies, Kitchen and Russell (2012) wrote that teacher educators in S-STEP have long recognized that the development of community among teacher educators makes for more effective learning of teacher candidates. The dialogues and sharing practices, and reflection that these communities support, are of great benefit to the educators and to the candidates (Kitchen & Ciuffetelli Parker, 2009;

Knowles & Cole, 1994; Russell & Bullock, 2010). From a methods perspective, this call for dialogue will also be addressed in the final stage of my research through my conversations with other practitioners in Indigenous education in teacher education. This variety of methods and of reflection supports a triangulation of perception and analysis that creates trustworthiness of findings in S-STEP (LaBoskey, 2004, p. 853). As I have written in previous articles, the emphasis in the S-STEP literature on accountability, respect, community, relationality, humility, and location appeals to me—both in its own right and in the kinship that these emphases demonstrate to Indigenous research methodologies. (See Plains Cree and Saulteau scholar Margaret Kovach (2009); Métis scholar Gregory Lowan-Trudeau (2012); Scully (2012); Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999); Cree scholar Evelyn Steinhauer (2002); and Opaskwayak Cree scholar Shawn Wilson (2008).) This methodology fits well with my own intention to be in right relation[3]: to understand myself and my practice in relation to the broader community doing this challenging work.

Complicated Locations: What Does Whiteness Mean for Me?

Being a White settler working in this field is complex and contentious. It will be a lifelong process to integrate how to *be* in this field in a way that is both respectful and that "spends my privilege" (McIntosh, 2009). In this section, I address how Indigenous education must also be about shifting the way we learn from and about Indigenous people in the Canadian education system, and what my place and responsibility as a White settler committed to learning solidarity might be in these aims.

On the first day of all of my *EDUC 4416* classes that I teach in the Bachelor of Education programs at Lakehead University's campuses in Orillia and in Thunder Bay, I walk into the classroom, smile, and say, "Okay! First things first. Why is the W/whitest woman on the planet teaching Aboriginal education?"[4] There have been a variety of responses but, for the most part, laughter on a scale from hearty, to nervous, to forced; some indignant glares; and then an expectant pause. I tell them how I came to teach the course, and then move on to two statements that I see as crucial in terms of my being White and being in that role with any sense of integrity. These two statements are: (1) I have no traditional knowledge; and (2) I have no cultural authority. I make it clear that I will not be giving any teachings or conducting any ceremonies, and that I will be speaking from the experiences and knowledge base that I have been given in my interactions with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities. The very first experience that these students have in my class is that they see I am W/white when I walk in the door, and I announce or expose my whiteness as a socio-political

location in my first words. I did this before I had any knowledge of critical theory. I am coming to understand just how important it is for me to do this in this role for several reasons; first and foremost, "Discourses, particularly within anti-racist projects, and given tangible realities, position the white body as always-already the oppressor" (McLaren, 1995, p. 63). Greenhalgh-Spencer (2008, p. 10) identifies the tension inherent in identifying as White in a textual context and suggests that the readers become resistant because of this tension: "On the one hand, we have a body which corporeally and discursively signifies inequality and racism. On the other hand, we have a body, posed by the white author, which signifies purity and expertise". It is not my intention to erase my whiteness by confessing it, and I hope that I am not enlarging and reinforcing my privilege by naming it. It is my intention to actively remain aware of the problems and conflicts that my whiteness poses in my work in Indigenous education. However, Ahmed (2004) points out that the confession of whiteness often gets viewed as a pronouncement of anti-racism, while not actually achieving any anti-racist effects. Ahmed (2004) further writes that the confession of whiteness can then be seen as an "exercise [of] rather than a challenge [to] white privilege" (p. 4). I am likely performing or persuading people that I am Probyn's (2004) 'good white': Probyn (2004, p. 6) puts it as follows: the oppressor "is the very thing that the white critic of whiteness is but does not want to be".

The history and current realities of colonialism in Canada, with relation to the Indigenous people of this land, necessarily means that my whiteness identifies me as the oppressor. I want to be exposed in my whiteness, to be reflective about my privilege and the power relations that ensue. Ahmed (2004, p. 4) points out that the ability to see race and racism often counts as evidence of a lack of racism, and writes that, "We (white authors) need to be uneasy about the ways that attempting to subvert the invisibility of whiteness can develop into the recuperation and affirmation of whiteness and white privilege". In my teaching, I have personally experienced the phenomenon that DiAngelo and Sensoy (2009, p. 447) refer to as opinion as a disruption of the call for positionality—I am perceived in many cases to be what Kincheloe (as cited in DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2009. p. 447) refers to as a "detached practitioner"—I am unbiased by virtue of not being Indigenous. (The energy and interaction in the classroom change drastically upon my utterance of the word *feminism*.) "Without this perceived detachment in relation to the object of study, she is [I am] positioned as a biased instructor with a personal agenda" (DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2009, p. 447). In this way, my whiteness in the context of Indigenous education both diminishes my authority, as it fosters resistance by those

learners / readers for whom it signifies oppression, and it lends me authority for those learners / readers for whom it renders me unbiased.

I was the first white instructor who was hired at my institution to teach this course, in the fourth year after it was added to the requirements of the degree (in 2007, it was separated from a course on multicultural and Aboriginal education to become *EDUC 4416 Aboriginal Education*). In the spring of 2009, I was notified by Dr. Connie Russell, a former instructor of mine from York University, now working at Lakehead University (LU) in the Faculty of Education, that there was an opening at the Orillia campus of LU for instructing this course. I had given a presentation in Dr. Russell's *Environmental Studies 101* course back in 2001 on the topic of Indigenous education; I have an undergraduate degree in Indigenous studies from Trent University and wrote a major paper on experiential education with an emphasis on Indigenous knowledge for my Master in Environmental Studies at York University[5]. I taught eight sections of *EDUC 4416* from 2009 to 2010 as an adjunct, while working outside four days a week in a provincial park two and a half hours away, as an outdoor educator and labourer. I had 240 students in four and a half months, in eight demanding and interactive sections. At the time, the Orillia campus was new enough such that there were few employees doing a great deal of teaching and administrative work. When I moved to Thunder Bay the next year, to the territory of the Fort William First Nation in the Robinson-Superior treaty area, I continued teaching the course. In a faculty meeting of some instructors of *EDUC 4416*, a few Indigenous faculty who had been teaching the course made it very clear that they were no longer willing to do so, due to the profound and violent ignorances that they were exposed to, both in class and in their evaluations. While these experiences are not unilateral, they are part of the reason that I was hired. As a non-Indigenous instructor, I am committed to centreing the local Land and community members in this work. Thanks to a wide web of relations from many years of generous teachers, mentors, and community connections, and the privilege afforded by the academy, when I teach I have been able to engage and appropriately remunerate local Indigenous knowledge holders and Elders to teach culture and Indigenous epistemology, and to provide local first-person experiences and accounts. I also take the learners out onto the land and into community, to learn from the Land and from local Indigenous peoples; these practices are well understood to be central to Indigenous education (see Battiste (2000); Tewa scholar Gregory Cajete (2000); Anishinaabe scholar Jan Hare (2011); and Tanaka (2009)). The information, activities, and structure that I provide are related to understanding the (continuing) colonization of Indigenous peoples in Canada, and the intergenerational

and continuing effects of these processes, institutions, and systems. I am grateful to the many community members that have helped me to do this work. In Orillia, I am grateful for the work and mentorship of Elder Mark Douglas of Mnjikaning/Rama, Elder Neil Monague of Chimnissing, Brian Charles of Chippewas of Georgina Island, John and Dave Snake of Mnjikaning/Rama, Anishinaabe artist Vicki Pavis, and to Nicholas Howard and the teachers at the Mnjikaning Kendaaswin Elementary School in Rama First Nation. In Thunder Bay, I am grateful for the work and mentorship of Elder Gerry Martin of Mattagami First Nation, Elder Sarah Sabourin of Pic Mobert First Nation, Bruce Beardy of Wajashkonigaming First Nation, Diane Maybee of Moose Factory, Sandra Wolf of the Chippewas of Turtle Mountain, Elder Dolores Wawia of Gull Bay, Lisa Korteweg, Tesa Fiddler of Onigaming First Nation, and Yolanda Wanakamik of Whitesand First Nation. It is their generosity and availability that supported my efforts to centre Indigenous peoples, places, and Land in my practice of critical place-based education in teacher education, as I strive for solidarity.

There are some rooms that I will not enter and some gatherings that I will not be included in—that is as it should be. After centuries of violence and oppression by White people, it is of great importance to understand that there are circumstances where *safer space* excludes me. It will take me a lifetime to understand what my solidarity with Indigenous peoples might look like—how I might contribute without appropriating, speaking for, or taking up space that is not mine. As Aleut scholar Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang (2012, p. 3) describe, "Solidarity is an uneasy, reserved, and unsettled matter that neither reconciles present grievances nor forecloses future conflict". In 2010 in the late fall, an insight came to me that helps me to work in this field: I will never profess to be an expert on Indigenous peoples, having never been one. I am becoming an expert on the *miseducation* of non-Indigenous peoples. There are some circumstances where modelling and communicating my position in solidarity can shift perspectives of non-Indigenous peoples and can provide support for Indigenous community members. There are some circumstances where my role is to create a context to learn from Land and community, and then get out of the way. I seek to create those circumstances in my teaching.

In the introduction of John Milloy's (1995) excellent and devastating book on the residential school system in Canada, *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879 to 1986*, he writes about being a non-Indigenous scholar in his subject area:

> ... this is a non-Aboriginal story, too. In 1965, the Department of Indian Affairs asked a number of residential school graduates to put in writing their memories of their school days. One,

> recalling his experiences at the Mohawk School, wrote: "When I was asked to do this paper I had some misgivings, for if I were to be honest, I must tell of things as they were and really this is not my story but yours."... As such, it is critical that non-Aboriginal people study and write about the schools, for not to do so on the premise that it is not our story, too, is to marginalize it as we did Aboriginal people themselves, to reserve it for them as a site of suffering and grievance and to refuse to make it a site of introspection, discovery and extirpation—a site of self-knowledge from which we can understand not only who we have been as Canadians but who we must become if we are do deal justly with the Aboriginal people of this land. (p. xviii)

As Milloy's writing demonstrates, I am implicated by my complicated location, as a settler, as a treaty-partner, as a beneficiary of White privilege, and as a Canadian.

What Does Whiteness Mean for Pre-service Teachers?

Madden's (2014) recent work calls for greater attention to the troubling of whiteness and racism in both pre-service teaching and in professional development for in-service teachers. As I previously stated, the vast majority of my students have been White. I frequently encounter denial and even rage in classroom discussions around privilege and whiteness; it will come as no surprise to others working in this realm that this recurs each semester around class discussions and presentations about stereotypes, and about sports mascots in particular. This denial of positionality (race, class, or gender) "allows the dominant group to deny the results of dominance for itself: privilege, excessive power, and resources" (DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2009, p. 451) and is rooted in the ideology of individualism "positioning us as unique individuals outside of culture and history" (p. 451). This is a dangerous fallacy: we are always already in relation. Tupper and Capello (2008, p. 567) assert how important it is to teach Native Studies to non-Indigenous peoples in order to challenge "the tacit and overt reproduction of dominant cultural norms" through curriculum and teacher enactment of curriculum. To further complicate the implications of learning about cultural location in the classroom, there are also some learners in these classrooms who are not White, who are non-Indigenous, and who are not settlers, but who are in Canada as a result of a myriad of factors, including forced migration due to economic, political, and cultural oppression and violence. Haig-Brown (2009) takes up the ineffectiveness of the binary of Indigenous/settler in this way:

> I began to see how offensive and really unfair they are to people who came to this continent in ways which, while not unrelated to colonization—we cannot escape the endless march of capital across the globe—did not implicate them in the same ways as those who came with the clear intention of exploitation for profit. Many people came for better lives, to escape war and famine, to seek freedom, to start anew in a country that was advertised as terra nullius, empty land, there for the asking. (p. 9)

Morgensen (2014) further challenges the insufficiency of the term *settler* as it relates to White solidarity with Indigenous peoples, at the expense of accountability to racialized and intersectionally oppressed peoples. In this specific context of Indigenous education in Canada, the troubling of whiteness and taking up of race as a material and ongoing concern increases tension by "working towards decolonizing not just cultural location and relative privileges of student-teachers and their pedagogy, but also of engendering an acknowledgement of legislated implication in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous relationship in Canada as all Canadians are treaty partners" (Scully, 2012, p. 153); in areas where there are no treaties, there are still nation-to-nation agreements inscribed in the Canadian constitution.

Mohawk scholar Taiaiake Alfred (1999, p. 70) asserts: "Attempting to decolonize without addressing the structural imperatives of the colonial system itself is clearly futile". In the teacher education classroom, working towards the understanding that all Canadians are implicated in these developments, decisions, and oppressions is incredibly difficult, owing in no small part to the dependence of the current economic and political system on dysconsciousness[6] (King, 1991) relating to Indigenous peoples and Land.

While the education systems in Canada have oppressed and essentialized Indigenous peoples (see Battiste (1998) and Arapaho scholar Michael Marker (2000)), it is of crucial importance that as work is done to redress these oppressions and their legacies, the cure is not further essentialization through assumptions about what Indigeneity is in a contemporary context (Marker, 2000). In particular, Nehiyaw-Métis scholar Tracy Friedel (2010, 2011) has troubled the notion of an *authentic identity* for Indigenous peoples, and youth in particular, that can be oppressive and archaic for learners. While Indigenous knowledge and identity is inherently Land-connected, it must be acknowledged that some urban and non-urban Indigenous people do not have access to or interest in their heritage epistemologies. While there is a common experience of being Indigenous in Canada, part of this work is to impart that there are as many different versions of being an Indigenous person as there are Indigenous people. This adds yet another layer of complexity in the work to bring Indigenous education respectfully into schools in Canada.

In all 17 of the *EDUC 4416* courses that I have taught, a large portion of the students in these classes are so astounded by how little they knew about Indigenous peoples in Canada that they have a difficult time taking in this *new* information. Right up until the spring of 2015, there were many people in each of the classes I taught who reported having never heard of

residential schools or of the missing and murdered Indigenous women. In the first class assignment, the "Local Assignment" (a variation of Trent University's "Homelands Assignment"), I ask the students to find out which treaty or comprehensive land claim they live in, and to research what the closest Indigenous nation and/or community is to where they live (a good example of a critical place-based education assignment). Every time, many students asserted that there was no treaty or land claim, there were no Indigenous peoples where they live, and, most tellingly, some students asserted that there was no way to find out this information. Once they discovered that they were, indeed, on Indigenous lands, and neighbours to Indigenous communities and that there were residential schools in their hometowns, the shift would start. I found that these experiences seemed to materially change the perceptions of the students regarding their own interrelationships with Indigenous peoples and lands: spending time with community members (Elders Mark Douglas in Orillia and Gerry Martin and Sarah Sabourin in Thunder Bay); working at the fall harvest or going on Gerry Martin's plants walk (Thunder Bay) and at LU Orillia; visiting the Mnjikaning fish fence with knowledge keeper Elder Mark Douglas; and visiting the Rama school Mnjikaning Kendaaswin, facilitated by Principal Nick Howard and his excellent staff. These were, without exception, with over 650 students involved, the classes that were singled out as the most powerful and enjoyable. These were the classes that supported the pre-service teachers' understanding that they were *already* implicated in relation to Indigenous peoples. How can I make this assertion? These classes produced excitement, wonder, some well-placed outrage, and warm-hearted inspiration from the people and places that hosted us. It is no exaggeration to say that in the closing circles of each class, these experiences were raved about nearly unanimously. In the early classes, there were consistent expressions of fear of appropriation, of hesitancy in case of offending or due to lack of knowledge, and of scepticism about the need for the class: The contrast to the end of the courses was both universal and remarkable. It is not lost on me that the favourite classes were overwhelmingly those that I was not leading and that this might be a factor! However, I (and my ego) can peaceably appreciate the importance and power of the local community members, Elders, and Lands that were the true teachers in these classes. It is also not lost on me that these were the classes where I was not actively challenging them to understand their implications in the historical and ongoing oppression and settler colonial structures that privilege non-Indigenous Canadians. However, I would argue that their excitement and interest in these classes, and the interest demonstrated by students in these experiences long after these courses

were over, seem to demonstrate that these experiences with Land and with local Indigenous people open these students up to taking up the call to do education differently, in service of justice for Indigenous peoples.

The abject failure of the Canadian education system to teach accurately and respectfully about Indigenous people perpetuates the oppression of Indigenous people, just as this system oppresses Indigenous learners. Milloy's (1995) description of the residential school system also applies to the current education system:

> The residential school system was conceived, designed, and managed by non-Aboriginal people. It represents in bricks and lumber, classroom and curriculum, the intolerance, presumption, and pride that lay at the heart of Victorian Christianity and democracy, that passed itself off as caring social policy . . . (p. xviii)

Omushkegowuk scholar Jacqueline Hookimaw-Witt (1998) argued similarly that the Canadian education system has not shifted appreciably since the residential school era to create success by Indigenous learners—that it, in fact, continues to marginalize, oppress, and assimilate. Can this be shifted through teacher education? This is the hope and the potential of this work. As Indigenous education in teacher education gains momentum in Canada, I am both encouraged by the innovative and powerful practices and frustrated by the challenges and ignorances being observed and reported in my own classrooms and in classrooms across the country.

Place-based Education (PBE)

These practices that have been successful in my classes belong in the pedagogical family of place-based education (PBE) (Bowers, 1993; Greenwood, 2009; Gruenewald, 2003; Smith, 2002; Sobel, 2004): What local PBE provides is a way of seeing common ground in a different light. I am committed in my classes to confronting the legislated racism and oppression in Canada, and to showing how all Canadians are implicated in this. I am not afraid to make people angry, and according to my instructor evaluations, I sometimes do. In the literature about Indigenous education in teacher education, anger and resistance is well documented (Dion, 2009; Regan, 2010; Schick, 2000; Wilson, 2008). I am, however, also committed to fostering a community within the classroom where this can begin to be addressed, and where we try to move through the anger/guilt/ disavowal to seeing the potential of moving forward with the past in front of us. What I am seeing in these classes are many pre-service teachers who are excited about the possibilities of doing a great job of learning—from and with Indigenous peoples and communities—for justice, wellbeing, and right relation.

As is often invoked in the context of the methodological field of self-study, the *how* of teaching is easily as important as the *what* (Russell, 2006). Many education theorists, from Freire (1970) to the PBE scholars cited earlier, agree that it is of vital importance to relate classroom learning to the lifeworld of the student; that without repeatable and relatable experience, decontextualized information has no meaning or relevance to the learner. It is the very decontextualization of learning and of information about Indigenous peoples and about Land that supports the fallacy that all Canadians are not implicated in the unjust conditions and exploitation of both. Non-Indigenous teachers and teacher educators need to decolonize their own perspectives and practices so as to transform Indigenous education in Canada for increased success by Indigenous learners, justice for Indigenous peoples, and greater cross-cultural understanding by non-Indigenous learners (see den Heyer (2009); Dion (2009); Godlewska, Moore, & Bednasek (2010); Haig-Brown (2009), Haig-Brown & Mohawk scholar John Hodson (2009); Kanu (2005); Schick (2000); Cree and Métis scholar Verna St. Denis (2007); Tompkins (2002); and Tupper (2011, 2012)). Common across all of these authors' works is the documentation of resistance on the part of student teachers to examining or changing their own perspectives and practices, and the insistence that either there is no problem or that inclusion of Indigenous materials or perspectives connotes a privileging of Indigenous cultures over the other cultures represented in the classroom.

Reading these articles was very affirming; as I have recounted, I have encountered these resistances in the classes that I have taught. The perception that Indigenous history in Canada is somehow discrete from settler history is evident here (Donald, 2009). There is also the problem of managing *competing marginalities* (Dei, 2005); many of my students felt that they were more likely to encounter non-Indigenous students from cultural communities that were not Euro-derived, and that these largely *immigrant* learners were somehow more important to learn about—this was central to their perception that *EDUC 4416* was privileged as a mandatory course over multicultural education and should not have been. In some of the contexts that these pre-service teachers will work in, there may be a large proportion of recent immigrant learners in their classrooms. Relating to these students with grace requires teachers who understand personal location and who enact culturally responsive pedagogies (Johnston, Carson, Richardson, Donald, Plews, & Kim, 2009). This job is especially crucial as these classrooms are shaping Canadian citizenship and communities.

I encounter little understanding of the different relationship that the Canadian government—and, by extension, Canada's citizens—have to

Indigenous peoples versus to settlers or to immigrant, in the context of education. This relationship is described by Chickasaw and Cheyenne scholar James (Sakej) Youngblood Henderson (1995, p. 246): "The prerogative treaties are sacred documents to First Nations because they empower the older values of Aboriginal society and because they are a sacred vision of the future of the first people among multicultural immigrants". The early European migrant workers and immigrants—the voyageurs, trappers, whalers, and settlers—learned to live, travel, and harvest from the Indigenous peoples here; these early relationships predate Canada and enabled its eventual founding. The year 2014 marks the 250th anniversary of one of the founding constitutional treaties and events that formed the country of Canada: the *Treaty of Fort Niagara*, part of the Silver Covenant Chain Treaties. Although the *Royal Proclamation of 1763* is often invoked as the founding constitutional document of Canada—issued by King George after the British won the Seven Years' War—it was the meeting and agreements during the next year in Niagara that led to the peace and the cohesive territories and understandings between the British and the 24 nations that were signatories to the treaty. The *Treaty of Fort Niagara* was signed by the British Crown and by the Six Nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Wyandot, Menominee, Algonquin, Nipissing, Ojibwa, Mississauga, and Chippewa, all member nations of the Western Great Lakes Confederacy. This was a great gathering: there were 2,000 people in attendance, and this was an important affirmation and acknowledgement of the fundamental importance of the necessity of a good relationship between the First Nations and the British Crown in the territory of what would become Canada (Brian Charles, Chippewa's of Georgina Island band member, personal communication, February 26, 2014). This should be Canadian common knowledge, particularly in the territories of the nations that participated. Education for citizenship in Canada should include this and many other understandings regarding First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples as founding peoples of Canada. Critical, territorially, and culturally-specific PBE offers this.

Decolonization?

Indigenous education is anti-oppression education. As such, it can be incredibly disruptive and unsettling—and it should be. By starting with the place-connection, through the "provision of rich activities that might be interpreted" (Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Kapler, 2008, p. 66), pre-service teachers can come to the understanding that all Canadians are implicated in relation to Indigenous peoples and territories; again, we are always already in relation. Tuck and Yang (2012, p. 3) have asserted, however, that

a significant danger inherent in PBE is that it may serve to "rescue settler futurity". Baldwin (2012, p. 172) explains the need to address settler futurity in this way: "any politics seeking to challenge whitenesses and their hold on racist social imaginaries may benefit by analysing how the future is invoked in articulations of white identity and how such future-oriented articulations shape geographies of all kinds". How I understand Baldwin's (2012) assertion here is that this learning—about whiteness, about colonization—must not be merely in service of reifying these power relations, but with a veneer of acknowledgement that permits continuing with the status quo—the continuation of the privileging of settler claims to *natural resources* (Indigenous territories and relations) and the inhabitation and proceeds from exploiting these Lands. Indeed, this danger can be easily extended to both Indigenous and environmental education (EE)—both, happily, trending in teacher education currently—in that these educations must be critical and must be complex to be emancipatory. There is a danger that uncritical PBE—just calling something *decolonizing*, or insufficiently respectful / accurate / unsettling of Indigenous education in teacher education—merely serves as what Swiencicki (2006) calls *the rhetoric of awareness narratives;* it re-inscribes settler claims, both moral and embodied, to Indigenous territories. Decolonization is not a metaphor (Tuck & Yang, 2012); it is a process that addresses the profound oppression and inequity that continues in the colonialist Canadian institutions of governance, social services, and education, and it must address the rematriation of Indigenous land and resources. It is not enough to just name whose traditional territory one is on, to then feel good about being enlightened, and not to challenge ongoing colonialism and oppression. To refer again to the work of Davis, Sumara, and Luce-Kapler (2008), the *interpretation* part of the provision of rich activities must be emphasized. That settler colonialism is ongoing, and that non-Indigenous Canadians are implicated in these processes, is often met with rejection and incredulity by settlers. As with many facets of Western epistemology, these are seen as events or structures that are situated in time, in the distant past (see the work of Lakota scholar Vine Deloria, Jr. (1994)). Columbus, the administrators of the residential schools, and Duncan Campbell Scott—these were the perpetrators of colonialism, not *we*. Marker (2006, p. 485) describes this trend: racism towards "the indigenous Other . . . is unlike the experiences of any other oppressed ethnic minority" and is based on the "long-held hostilities" and "deep insecurity" of the settler. Mexican / Tigua scholar Calderon (2014) addresses the ways that settler colonialism is re-inscribed in current models of PBE. As expressed in the recent writing of Anishinaabe scholar Megan Bang and co-authors Curley, Kessel, Choctaw scholar Ananda Marin, Suzukovich III,

and Strack (2014)[1], a crucial piece of Indigenous education in teacher education that I continually encounter is the need to disrupt the *settler zero point epistemologies*—that is, the profoundly mistaken belief that settler communities are the first to be in a particular place and that there are no Indigenous peoples or communities in a place (this was described earlier in the resistances to the "Local Assignment"). The 5,000-year-old Mnjikaning fish fence is located at the Atherley Narrows, between Lake Simcoe and Lake Couchiching. Many of the LU Orillia students passed over this site on the highway bridge every day on their way to school and yet most did not know it existed. They were taught about this place, and some were taught in this place, by Elder Mark Douglas, who is the keeper of the fence. The iconic Sibley Peninsula, known locally in Thunder Bay as the Sleeping Giant, is *Nanabozhoo* in Anishinaabemowin—the Elder Brother protagonist in many stories that are central to Anishinaabe epistemology (as noted by Anishinaabe scholar Benton-Banai (1988))—and was visible from some of my classrooms in Thunder Bay. We learned the local story of *Nanaboozho*, both the Thunder Bay tourism board version and the ancient version. Now, when those students pass over Mnjikaning or see *Nanaboozho*, they think an Anishinaabemowin word; they see Anishinaabe land.

Education for Right Relation: Starting with Land

There are two main elements necessary for fostering right relation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. First, it is crucial that Canadians know the history and the current, legislated relationship we all have to each other in this binaristic context of Indigenous/non-Indigenous people. At Trent University, I was taught that the most respectful and effective way of learning about and from Indigenous people is to build relationships within local community. Second, cultural and territorial specificity are crucial components of respectful and accurate Indigenous education (Scully, 2012, p. 156). This central tenet of Indigenous education is echoed and reinforced in the discourse of PBE; as Cajete (2000, p. 183) phrases it, "learning relationship in context". Canada is Indigenous territories. Learning from and about Indigenous people in context therefore is possible everywhere—this is a powerful and empowering realization that should pre-suppose the centreing of Indigenous peoples and epistemologies through critical PBE in teacher education. I have long capitalized *Land* in reference to my own understanding of *Land as First Teacher*, as articulated by Cajete (2000), Deloria, Jr. (1994), Dumont[7], Lowan (2010), O'Chiese[7], and Anishinaabe scholar Leanne Simpson (2011). More recently, Mohawk, English, and French scholar Sandra Styres and her co-authors Celia Haig-Brown and Algonquin scholar Melissa Blimkie (2013) characterize their observance of this

convention as denoting the primary relationship rather than when used in a more general sense. Bang et al. (2014) articulate this in two ways:

> *Indigenous scholars have focused much attention on relationships between land, epistemology and, importantly, ontology. Places produce and teach particular ways of thinking about and being in the world. They tell us the way things are, even when they operate pedagogically beneath a conscious level. . . . Extending this, we might imagine that the ontology of place-based paradigms is something like 'I am, therefore place is,' in contrast, the ontology of land-based pedagogies might be summarized as 'Land is, therefore we are.'* (pp. 44-45)

This last quote is a very powerful one for me. I had very good teachers, and it had not occurred to me to articulate what difference there might be between Land and place—Land is always first teacher. Humans, in Anishinaabe ontology, are the fourth order of creation—subject to Land and rock, to plants, and all other inhabitants of Land (Anishinaabe-kwe Elder Edna Manitowabi, personal communication, 1996). I use the word place out of work developed for my Master's degree, because I conceptualize place as encompassing not only Land, but also the buildings, habits of use, designs, intentions, civic responsibilities, privileges, politics, and values that are inscribed on particular places, especially in an urban setting. In this way, I am acknowledging that place-connection looks different for different people, and that diverse and complex Indigeneity can encompass those Indigenous people who do not have a close relationship with Land. From these scholars, I value and am learning the reasons why Land must be articulated in the context of PBE as part of the work of decolonization, in that the interruption or absence of this relationship in these identities is as important as its presence. Land is agentic in and of itself, and must do its work in teacher education instruction.

Battiste (1998) and Calderon (2014) call for decolonization as a necessary process in education: for justice, for Land, and for Indigenous communities. PBE is predicated on the understanding that what is necessary for the wellbeing of people and of planet is connection to Earth—*reinhabitation* (Gruenewald, 2003). Without a centreing of the understanding that many of the places being *reinhabited* are Indigenous territories that have been violently assaulted and stolen by colonial practices, PBE and, by extension, teacher education, may serve to repeat these assaults in service of the settler colonial aim—to lay claim to Indigenous territories from a position of right or moral authority and to erase or incorporate Indigenous bodies into the new societies. *Reinhabitation*, as noted by the PBE major theorist Gruenewald (2013), and as one of Gruenewald's twin goals of a critical pedagogy of place (2003), must not be another colonization. Gruenewald's second of these twin goals is *decolonization*—Calderon (2014, p. 26) characterizes this move of Grue-

newald's as a "step in the right direction". In my own writing, I have suggested adding *reconciliation* to these twin poles (Scully, 2012). Another caution is offered here, however: in the popular CBC radio program *Canada Reads 2014* Anishinaabe media personality and advocate Wab Kinew repeated a statement from his blog (http://wabkinew.ca/sam-great-spirit/) that, "Reconciliation must not be a second chance at assimilation"(http://www.cbc.ca/player/play/2440791389). This statement also appears in the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, on p.210. As with reinhabitation, reconciliation must not be "settler moves to innocence" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 1), where the gesture does not follow through into action or justice, but is merely performative. Reconciliation must include decolonization and means contending with ongoing settler colonial structural oppressions in support of a better future for Indigenous peoples.

In Canada, Indigenous education in teacher education must be about redressing 400 years of violence and oppression that continues to be perpetrated upon Indigenous peoples and communities in the name of settler colonialism. Indigenous pedagogies and perspectives are of inherent and enormous value—not only in the resistance they offer against colonizing history, practices, and perspectives—but first and foremost as holistic and sovereign epistemologies for Indigenous peoples. In my experience, and as reflected and expressed by some of the community of practitioners in this field, the considerable challenges within this field include contending with whiteness along with unsettling, revealing, and recovering Canadians' existing citizenship implications related to Land and to Indigenous peoples. Place-based Indigenous education, with decolonization and Land at the centre, can support the intercultural and territorial awareness of pre-service teachers, and in this way change education to serve a just future in Canada.

Notes

[1] In this paper, the nation-affiliation of each Indigenous scholar, Elder, and mentor will be identified the first time they are cited. This break from APA style (6th edition) has created some awkwardness in my citations. I apologize in advance for any mistakes or omissions—this is a practice in process.

[2] Although there are many people that I am indebted to, I would like to acknowledge the warmth and support of Kickapoo and Mexican scholar Carmen Rodriguez de France, Jennifer Tupper, Nicholas Ng-a-Fook, Papaschase Cree scholar Dwayne Donald, Mohawk scholar Frank Deer, Potawatomi/Ojibwe Anishinaabe scholar Mark Aquash, Brooke Madden, Marc Higgins, Chippewa scholar Sandra Wolf, Julian Kitchen, and Paul Berger. All of these people have greatly contributed to my learning about this practice through conversations over time.

[3] According to Anishinaabe-kwe Elder Edna Manitowabi, healthy self-concept in Anishinaabe epistemology is the fundamental understanding of 'right relation' (personal commu-

nication, Trent University, October 17, 1996). In terms of wellbeing, from this perspective, a healthy person understands with respect and humility that they are implicated in their relationships with their family, clan, community, and the Land.

[4] I am an extremely pale-skinned, red-headed woman of Celtic descent. (I have actually been asked why I am wearing white 'nurse-stockings'.) I have found that joking about how white I am can create an entry point to the conversation about whiteness.

[5] I was working as a canoe trip guide and outdoor educator throughout my undergraduate and graduate degrees. This helps to contextualize my emphasis on Land.

[6] King's (1991) term *dysconsciousness* refers to purposeful ignorance—that is, where knowledge/truth is suppressed either personally or systemically to support a certain perspective or privilege.

[7] Anishinaabe Elders Peter O'Chiese and Jim Dumont are foundational Elders in contemporary Anishinaabe epistemology and practice. Their teachings have been invoked by each and every Anishinaabe Elder that I have ever worked with and learned from (Mark Douglas, John Snake, Biboon Nimkii, Gerry Martin, Edna Manitowabi, Jacqui Lavallee, and Doug and Shirley Williams). I cite them out of respect and, breaking somewhat from academic tradition, without date.

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