Editorial: Reflection, Reconciliation, and Renewal

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Reflection

The theme of *Reflection, Reconciliation, and Renewal* for this volume of the *Canadian Journal of Native Education* (CJNE) brings together the past, present, and future, through my personal reflections as the CJNE theme editor for almost 25 years. This volume presents previously published CJNE articles that address some aspect of reconciliation related to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC, 2015) and renewal considerations for the CJNE. This editorial will be my last as the senior theme editor. Before I begin this editorial, I acknowledge that the land on which the University of British Columbia (UBC) is situated is on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam First Nation. This beautiful land meets the majestic Pacific Ocean every day. Often eagles can be seen flying overhead.

I have often shared the Indigenous teaching of the late Tsimilano, Dr. Vince Stogan, of Musqueam, as found in my "Hands Back, Hands Forward" CJNE theme issue editorial (1999). It seems fitting to share it once more and to use it as an educational framework for this issue's editorial. Elder Tsimilano taught many of us at UBC and elsewhere to gather in a circle for prayerful or good thoughts to guide the work of the group, and to establish a caring and respectful environment for each other and for Indigenous knowledge. He said:

> When we stand in this circle, we put our left palm upwards to symbolize reaching back to receive help and the teachings from those who have travelled before us. We take these teachings and put them into our everyday lives. We then have a responsibility to help others learn these teachings. We symbolize that work or giving to others by putting our right palm downwards. We then join hands with each other in this circle. Tsimilano also said that there is always room for one more to join this circle of caring, learning, and sharing.[1]

The reflection part of this CJNE theme is like the action of "Hands Back". I reached back to the two Indigenous editors who strengthened the theme volumes of the *Canadian Journal of Native Education* during their editorships and who inspired me to take over this role: Carl Urion at the University of Alberta and Verna J. Kirkness at the University of British Columbia. I consider Carl and Verna to be among the first wave of Indige-

nous academics who made a tremendous impact on Indigenous education and Indigenous education scholarship. Carl Urion, a member of the Dearborn River Métis of Montana, was an editor for the CJNE from 1991 to 1997 and served on its editorial board for many years on behalf of the University of Alberta. Verna J. Kirkness, of the Fisher River Cree Nation in Manitoba, was the CJNE editor from 1986 to 1992 on behalf of the University of British Columbia. Since 1986, the CJNE theme volume has been produced in partnership between the University of Alberta and the University of British Columbia. In fact, the CJNE began in 1973 as a newsletter called *Indian Ed* (Urion, 1991) and developed into the *Canadian Journal of Native Education* by 1980. It has grown into a refereed journal with various university partnerships producing its volumes of scholarship focused on Indigenous education. The University of Alberta, however, has been the main university sponsor of the CJNE since 1973. Annually, one CJNE volume has been devoted to a theme and the other volume has included a diversity of articles about Indigenous education. My editorial, however, will limit its discussion to the time period of 1992 to 2017 and focus only on the annual theme volume.

I consider myself among the second wave of Indigenous academics. When I took over the CJNE theme editorship, the commitment was to publish one volume per year. At the time, I did not realize the extent of the time commitment and effort required to publish a double-blind peer-reviewed journal. Since 1992, I have edited 21 volumes and assisted editorial teams with two additional volumes. Based on this lengthy commitment, I had to develop some processes for producing an annual CJNE theme volume. Sometimes I missed a year and at times an additional volume or supplement was published.

I learned to plan early and to set milestone deadlines for each phase, such as: determining the theme; sending out the call for papers widely; completing an internal review to determine if an article was ready for external review; identifying two external reviewers and requesting their assistance; receiving the reviews; making decisions about which articles would be accepted; guiding the authors with their revisions; reviewing the revised articles; writing the editorial; and working with the copy editor and printer to finalize the proofs. I used the internal review process to determine if the submitted articles addressed the theme adequately and if the written quality of the article met CJNE standards. I followed a principle to give encouraging but realistic feedback to authors whose work was not accepted for publication. This feedback encouraged them to keep working on their article for future publication purposes, using the fairly detailed feedback from the reviewers and me as the editor. Many reviewers gave

valuable feedback. I often was impressed with the care and attention to detail that reviewers gave to this process. Whenever people were asked to review an article, they often did so quite willingly. There were few 'no' responses compared to the demand. I thank the numerous reviewers for their assistance with this important academic task.

One of the major difficulties that I experienced over the years was finding time to meet my deadlines, which I often did not; however, the CJNE eventually got to press. Being a journal editor is a labour of love: I learned to enjoy and value my editorial work, even though at times I felt it was a love-hate relationship. The 'hate' part resulted from the conflict created between my various commitments and often I wished that I could spend CJNE time on my own scholarship. As an academic, there was no course release time provided for CJNE and editing a journal is not usually given the same value for scholarship as writing for refereed publications for tenure and promotion purposes. The 'love' part happened when I remembered a traditional Indigenous teaching that says when you work on something, it is important to have good feelings when doing the work. The good feelings will go into the work, making the work strong so that others will have enjoyment or benefit. Each time I work on the CJNE, I practice this loving teaching.

Another challenging issue has been the limited financial resources for the CJNE, despite the administrative support and funding from its university sponsors. The UBC First Nations House of Learning provided initial support and was then taken over by UBC's Faculty of Education's Office of Indigenous Education/Indigenous Education Institute of Canada in 2005. The University of Alberta has certainly contributed in-kind administrative support. However, more academic assistance was needed over the years.

To address the time and limited human resource issues, I invited various academics from across Canada and internationally to work with me as members of editorial teams for many theme volumes. We then invited graduate students to join the editorial teams, with full editorial responsibilities. An Appendix lists these theme volumes and editorial teams. I raise my hands in thanks and appreciation to all the CJNE theme editorial teams, which also provided publication experience and exposure for academics and graduate students. This form of learning exemplifies an Indigenous approach to intergenerational learning where seasoned scholars work with and mentor emerging scholars. The broad range of CJNE editorial teams increased the number and scope of submitted and published journal articles as well as the range of external reviewers. The scope and nature of the articles also changed over the years.

The exciting changes that I have witnessed and experienced in CJNE's scholarly publications since 1992 include the development of Indigenous educational theories, Indigenous methodologies, and Indigenous pedagogies for all levels of education in Canada and internationally. At the same time, Indigenous community cooperation, decision making, and involvement in the research process has increased. The critical engagement of ideas about the impact of colonization, the place of decolonization discourse, and situating Indigenization at the core of education and research has continued and become stronger over the years. More examples of Indigenous educational success and promising practices are emerging in the CJNE literature. However, the following issues persist in the literature: IK being marginalized; teachers and principals not being prepared to address Indigenous education; parents and community not being included in meaningful ways; and the academic gap continuing between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners.

I believe that critical questions need to be asked continually about how to improve educational systems so that they facilitate the holistic success of Indigenous learners, increase awareness and knowledge of all learners about Indigenous matters, and assess the multi-dimensional impact of policies, programs, and approaches. At the heart of these questions and subsequent approaches are respectful, responsible, and reciprocal relationships (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991) between all those involved in education. Reconciliation has emerged as a critical consideration for such relationships. National commissions such as the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) point out the educational areas that need to be improved using a reconciliation framework.

Reconciliation

The opportunity to reflect on or "reach back" to the past CJNE editorial responsibilities and the scope of Indigenous education scholarship brings me to the current and recurring topic of reconciliation. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) emphasized the need for a better relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians through a process of reconciliation. However, the federal government, policy makers, and Canadian society did little to advance RCAP's many important recommendations. The 20th anniversary of RCAP was marked by a national symposium where advances and issues in governance, justice, education, health, community and economic development, and citizen engagement were discussed[2]. The release of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC, 2015) regarding the

impact of Indian residential schools reiterated the need for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, as built upon RCAP's earlier recommendations, and emphasized the key role that education can play:

> Much of the current state of troubled relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians is attributable to educational institutions and what they have taught, or failed to teach, over many generations .... the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) believes that education is also the key to reconciliation .... Education must remedy the gaps in historical knowledge that perpetuate ignorance and racism. (TRC, 2015, p. 117)

The TRC Calls to Action (2015) include two major actions focused on education:

> **Call to Action 62:** We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to:
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> i. Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students.
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> ii. Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms.
>
> iii. Provide the necessary funding to Aboriginal schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms.
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> iv. Establish senior-level positions in government at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in education.
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> **Action 63.** We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including:
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> i. Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
>
> ii. Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.
>
> iii. Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.
>
> iv. Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above. (pp. 121-122)

I selected some articles from CJNE theme volumes published between 2001 and 2013 that address the aforementioned TRC calls to action and that have been cited and used by numerous educators. These articles are as relevant today as when they were first published. The authors gave permission to reprint their articles with the exception of two who have passed to the

Spirit World. The articles have not been changed; therefore, authors' university affiliations may have changed. In the "Hands back, Hands Forward" teaching, reconciliation brings the past and present together in this collection of articles. When we receive knowledge, it is then our challenge and opportunity to make that knowledge useful to our lives as educators. Readers of these articles are given an opportunity to learn from the past, and then to put the knowledge and understanding gained from the authors' articles into action.

Article Summaries

The set of articles starts with Elders' intergenerational teaching approaches (Sterling) and then moves to two articles (Young, Gardner) about Indigenous language revitalization and learning that show the commitment and action of family and community-based Elders to provide Indigenous language learning to younger members. Elders' and community members' perspectives about traditional learning approaches and the importance of Indigenous languages facilitate an understanding of Indigenous history. The contribution of and need for Indigenous knowledge (IK) to be an integral, natural, and relevant part of educational systems is portrayed in a series of articles that sets the conceptual frame for IK (Battiste & Henderson), and then shows how IK is used by K-12 teachers (Goulet) and a university program (Newhouse), exemplifying the TRC calls to educational action. The TRC (2015) emphasizes the need for youth to understand the impact of residential schools, and to have greater intercultural respect and understanding. Two articles focus on youth as researchers of the intergenerational impact of residential schools (Gray) and of the link between IK, health, and education (Riecken, Tanaka, & Scott). A concluding article in this series provides reflections from four waves of Indigenous scholars (Pidgeon, Muñoz, Kirkness, & Archibald) on the seminal *Indian Control of Indian Education Policy* (ICIE) of 1972, which could be the philosophical underpinning for the education recommendations of both the RCAP (1996) and the TRC (2015). ICIE emphasizes local Indigenous community control, parental responsibility, and using Indigenous knowledge as the foundation for education.

In Indigenous learning contexts, we often seek guidance and look to the wisdom of Elders to gain direction for developing our understandings of things that matter. The late Shirley Sterling (2002) shared the teachings that came from her grandmothers Yetko and Sophie of the Nlakapamux people of British Columbia in her article *Yetko and Sophie: Nlakapamux Cultural Professors*. The power of traditional stories is demonstrated, with one life experience story used as an intergenerational educational model to

develop criteria for success, especially for contemporary education and for living a good life. The grandmother professors showed that by teaching the younger generation the traditional cultural teachings in ways that honoured Nlakapamux knowledge and the learner, they continued the powerful intergenerational cycle of learning, caring, and sharing.

The late Mary Young (2003), Anishinabe Kwe from Manitoba, demonstrates the power of learning from family and Elders in her article *Anishinabemowin: A Way of Seeing the World—Reclaiming My Identity.* She reminds us of the importance of recognizing the spiritual dimensions of Indigenous languages. She cautions readers to acknowledge and value the role of speakers and asks that we each think about our personal role in language preservation. Mary also shares stories of learning important life lessons from her father. In *Tset Hikwstexw te Sqwelteltset: We Hold Our Language High*, Stelómethet, Ethel Gardner, Sto:lo (2004) describes beautiful poetic monologues from Sto:lo people involved in a Halq'emeylem language renewal initiative in southwestern British Columbia. Gardner identifies the larger community, political, economic, and policy implications needed to support the advancement of Indigenous languages. The tenacity, skill, and commitment of the Halq'emeylem language revivalists demonstrates transformative action when people bring their hearts and minds together. Both of these articles emphasize the importance of Indigenous identity, relationship to land, relationship to each other, and all our relations through Indigenous languages.

Marie Battiste, Mi'kmaq, and James (Sa'ke'j) Youngblood Henderson, Chickasaw, (2009) provide a reminder of the recognition of Indigenous knowledge (IK) as an international right, IK as a growing field of inquiry, and the challenges conveyed by placing IK in Eurocentric knowledge educational systems. Their article Naturalizing Indigenous Knowledge in Eurocentric Education addresses these issues and the possibilities of making IK a natural part of education dominated with Eurocentric knowledge. Battiste and Henderson present a summary of promising IK programs and identify principles for naturalizing IK for Indigenous learners, based on the research of the former Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Centre of the Canadian Council on Learning. A literature review about Indigenous knowledge, written by Marie Battiste (2002), is still relevant today and can be used alongside her CJNE contribution.[3]

In *Two Teachers of Aboriginal Students: Effective Practice in Sociohistorical Realities*, Linda Goulet (2001) presents two teachers' stories, one Aboriginal and one non-Aboriginal, and the teaching approaches they believed were successful for Aboriginal children they taught. Goulet sought out teachers whom others recognized as being effective, and learned from their stories

and perspectives, which is an important Aboriginal way of learning. Goulet demonstrates an effective use of foundational research literature that emphasizes the importance of culture and relationships with community and addresses colonization and power relations as a framework for the teachers' pedagogy. Theory and practice were brought together in meaningful ways to reflect teaching experiences that worked for the First Nations contexts of the teachers, their students, and the community.

David Newhouse, Onondaga (2008), in *Ganigonhi:oh: The Good Mind Meets the Academy,* articulates the creation of a landscape in the academy that allows for "the good mind" to be affirmed through an education that engages both Indigenous thought traditions led by Indigenous Elders and the stores of knowledge already held in the academy. In contrast to the emphasis of Western thought traditions on Cartesian logic, Haudenosaunee philosophy expresses that it is the ability to maintain a delicate balance between reason and passion that is integral to the development of a fully educated person. Newhouse describes the development of the Indigenous studies program at Trent University and the journey to arrive at an education that "extends the rafters" of the academy and affirms the "interrelatedness of reason and passion" at the heart of the creation of a "good mind."

Robin Gray, Tsimshian and Mikisew Cree (2011), in her article *Visualizing Pedagogy and Power with Urban Native Youth: Exposing the Legacy of the Indian Residential School System,* uses photovoice methodology to explore how urban Indigenous youth understand the legacy of the residential school system and the strengths of Indigenous family and community members. Her youth research partners draw attention to the loss of culture for Indigenous individuals, families, and communities; the continued inaccurate representation of these and other historical events; and the continued discrimination of Indigenous peoples within the modern education system. At the same time, they present photos and images that show culture, strength, and hope. Another article focusing on youth participants and the use of technology for research is *First Nations Youth Reframing the Focus: Cultural Knowledge as a Site for Health Education* by Ted Riecken, Michele Tanaka, and Tish Scott (2006). They demonstrate the effectiveness of digital video as a research tool for young people. Aboriginal high school students are co-researchers who determine a health topic of interest, create a video on the topic, and then present it to their community. They use Aboriginal knowledge and culture as their chosen paradigm to bring health and education together in ways that are relevant to them.

The *Indian Control of Indian Education* policy (ICIE, 1972) was and continues to be evidence of the power of Aboriginal peoples in Canada

working together to speak up against government assimilationist policies. The voices in the article *Indian Control of Indian Education: Reflections and Envisioning the Next 40 Years* represents four generations of Indigenous scholars since this influential document was created. Pidgeon, Muñoz, Kirkness, and Archibald (2013) share their reflections on the original ICIE document, the impact of this policy on their education careers, and their ICIE visions of the future. This article includes lessons learned, reflections on power and knowledge, and visions for reciprocal relationships that embody the values articulated over 40 years ago within the ICIE policy paper. These authors demonstrate the relevance of ICIE today, and the need for further development and sustainability of programs, educational practice, and research in the future, which lead us into the renewal phase.

Renewal

The Office of Indigenous Education, through the Indigenous Education Institute of Canada (IEIC) in the UBC Faculty of Education, continues to sponsor the *Canadian Journal of Native Education.* The position of associate dean for Indigenous Education, which I have held since 2005, oversees the IEIC and the CJNE. In July 2016, I completed my associate dean term and my responsibility as theme editor concludes with this CJNE volume. Dr. Jan Hare, Anishnaabe scholar and excellent educational leader, has taken over both of these responsibilities.

The "Hands Forward" of my CJNE responsibilities is an opportunity for renewal of this journal. In July 2017 I will officially retire from UBC. It seems fitting that, as a second wave Indigenous scholar, I am able to pass the theme editorial responsibility to a third wave Indigenous scholar. Dr. Hare is continuing to work cooperatively with an editorial team for the 2018 theme issue, for which a call for papers will be issued soon. The CJNE is situated ideally for this renewal phase. With new leadership, it is timely to engage in re-examining the CJNE's thematic purpose, structure, and partnerships to see what can be improved, strengthened, or developed. Discussions will be held with various educators on these matters, to obtain their suggestions and identify those who may want to help with CJNE in the future.

The "Hands Back, Hands Forward" teaching has provided a strong educational and research framework for the CJNE editorship, resulting in a refereed journal that *reflects* Indigeneity, *reconciles* education and research through Indigenous knowledge, and continually *renews* Indigenous education approaches through scholarship. In my Indigenous tradition, I raise my hands in thanks and respect to all who have contributed to the CJNE in the fulfillment of these valuable purposes.

Notes

[1] This teaching is shown as a quote but it does not have a citation date. I follow the oral tradition of sharing this teaching, said and practiced many times over the years.

[2] See the final report *Hear Our Voice: Sharing the Land, Sharing a Future. Report on a National Forum on Reconciliation—Marking the 20th Anniversary of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (November 2016): http://www.queensu.ca/sps/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.spswww/files/files/Events/Conferences/RCAP/17-068%20Land%20of%20our%20Fathers%20final%20small%20English.pdf

[3] See *Indigenous Knowledge and Pedagogy in First Nations Education: A Literature Review with Recommendations:* http://www.afn.ca/uploads/files/education/24._2002_oct_marie_battiste_indigenousknowledgeandpedagogy_lit_review_for_min_working_group.pdf

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Appendix: CJNE Theme Volumes, 1992-2017

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Archibald, J. (Ed.). (1998). Creating power in the land of the eagle. Canadian Journal of Native Education, 22(1), 1-154.
Archibald, J. (Ed.). (1999). Hands back, hands forward: Revisiting Aboriginal voices and re-visioning Aboriginal research. Canadian Journal of Native Education, 23(1), 1-136.
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