

# Becoming Real On Turtle Island: A Pedagogy of Relationship

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*This paper began as an oral presentation delivered at the Pedagogies of Decolonization and Reconciliation in the Post-Secondary Classroom event sponsored by the Canadian Critical Pedagogy Association and the Congress of the Social Sciences and Humanities, held May 29, 2017 at Ryerson University. It discusses an interdisciplinary approach to breaking through “settler unconsciousness” using a pedagogy deeply influenced by Indigenous concepts of learning as a process of reciprocity and of understanding “self-in-relationship.” As a settler educator, I acknowledge and think through the implications of my own positionality for teaching, and assist students with their personal self-location through four frames of analysis. These include decolonizing the history of Canada; understanding colonialism and anticolonial struggle comparatively and transnationally; locating oneself in the local context; and locating oneself through family migration and time. As students explore their own relationship to colonialism and the interrelationship of these frames in an initial personal reflection assignment which is shared in the classroom, students learn about the global reach of colonialism, build community among diverse students, and come to recognize the effects of colonialism on the whole person—a crucial strategy since colonialism is a psychological structure of emotions as well as a political, social, legal, and economic set of relationships. A second pedagogical theme follows from this self-location: acknowledging relationship and recognizing one’s responsibilities. The ethic of relationship and responsibility at the core of Indigenous worldviews and ethics is also powerfully conveyed to students through co-teaching. I conclude with some reflections on co-teaching as a powerful model for Indigenous-non-Indigenous relationship and effective teaching about decolonization, drawing on personal experiences of teaching one-on-one with an Indigenous scholar, and in partnership with an Indigenous organization and support group of residential school survivors.*

## Introduction

I’ve heard Indigenous elders say that non-Indigenous Canadians are not “real” because we do not know who we are, where we are, or why we are here. Certainly, most university students I encounter in my work as a university lecturer do not recognize or comprehend their own reality of living on Indigenous lands or their own implication in the ongoing dynamics of settler colonialism. In fact, many exemplify “settler consciousness” or, rather, “settler unconsciousness” (Regan, 2010), and unfortunately they will likely replicate colonial patterns until they learn otherwise. This is true of most students of Euro-Canadian ancestry and even many of the racialized students I teach.

Ignorance of colonialism is not our students' fault but rather a symptom of the "sanctioned ignorance" (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 4) that is critical to the establishment and maintenance of colonial orders in academia and beyond. Nevertheless, it is critical that we help students understand colonial processes as the primary dynamic structuring the current relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada—in other words, that we help them to become real. I see this as a critical first step toward decolonization.

I am a non-Indigenous Canadian of British ancestry but I have been deeply influenced by Indigenous concepts of learning as a process of reciprocity and of understanding "self-in-relationship"—concepts I was exposed to first through Elder teachings and on the ground in solidarity work with Indigenous colleagues and friends, and also through the work of Indigenous scholars (Graveline, 1998; Battiste, 2000; Kuokkanen, 2007; Simpson, 2014, Cajete, 2016). I ground my teaching in Kuokkanen's articulation of reciprocity:

For Indigenous people, the world's stability, its social order, is established and maintained mainly through giving gifts and recognizing the gifts of others, including the land... The gift constitutes a specific logic... grounded in an understanding of the world that is rooted in intricate relationships that extend to everyone and everything... this logic emphasizes reciprocity with and responsibility toward all others." (Kuokkanen, p. 7)

To learn in relationship according to this ethic requires being conscious of one's relation to one's inner self, family, community, and natural environment (Cajete, 2016, p. xvi) in a participatory paradigm that requires long-term commitment (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 4). Learning, in this paradigm, is always relational and involves both the heart and the mind (Cajete, 2016, p. xiii).

A key pedagogical principle for me, therefore, is teaching and learning in relationship—for both myself and my students. I take seriously the notion that, in entering into treaty relationships with Indigenous peoples, non-Indigenous peoples become not only allies but relatives as well (Johnson, 2007), with all the roles and responsibilities that these relationships entail.

Much of what I have learned about decolonization and reconciliation has been learned in active relationship with Indigenous peoples and their communities. Some of these experiences include working at the Centre for Indigenous Studies at the University of Toronto; co-teaching an Indigenous studies course with an Indigenous scholar at the University of Toronto; helping to organize the 2012 Toronto regional gathering for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC); volunteering for nine years with First Story Toronto (a local Indigenous community history project); and working

with Indigenous theatre artists in creating community arts activities and performances on the theme of local treaties. While I do not wish to idealize my activism or negate the sometimes bumpy road of my own anticolonial education, I have learned that Indigenous pedagogies understand knowledge as active and alive, a form of “medicine” that can aid in a process of transformation and healing for all. Considering knowledge in this way means attending to the whole person—not just their mind—and it means engaging with Indigenous history, culture, and presence—not just through written documentation—but through the living voices and embodied experiences and energies of Indigenous peoples in human community and on the land.

I am also committed to an interdisciplinary and holistic pedagogy that transcends the categories and disciplinary silos of academia. I currently teach a sociology course which centres on the sociology of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (in collaboration with an Indigenous front-line organization); a Canadian studies course with the theme of decolonizing Canada; and a history course on the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada. I also previously co-taught an Indigenous studies course on the politics and process of reconciliation. While this diversity reflects, in part, my status as contract faculty, the fact remains that no single discipline does justice to the complexity of colonial relations, past and present, or the challenges of decolonization and reconciliation.

### *Some Pedagogical Challenges*

How can we teachers help our students be real—how can we help them understand themselves in relation to Indigenous peoples—if we do not understand our own implication or complicity in colonialism—that is, if we are not real ourselves? Although well-intentioned or even theoretically informed, non-Indigenous professors—especially those who benefit from White privilege (as I do)—may unconsciously approach decolonization paternalistically, perpetuating the very settler unconsciousness we seek to change. This is always a risk and non-Indigenous teachers must acknowledge their indebtedness to Indigenous scholars who lead the way. As Taiaiake Alfred (2008) says:

As Indigenous scholars who are culturally rooted and connected to their communities, they are doing what Euroamerican scholars simply cannot do for us: they are showing us forms of thought and pathways of action that are beyond the boundaries of a colonial mentality. Settlers have serious difficulties thinking thoughts that are outside foundational premises of their imperial cultural background. Very few of them can overcome the ingrained patterns of authority and dominance that are the heritage of empire and colonialism. So we have to do it for them. And for us. (p. 10)

Clearly, academia needs far more Indigenous professors to create a critical mass for radical change. However, given the demographic imbalance between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in this country, there is also a need for non-Indigenous teachers who continually struggle, as best they can, to deconstruct a colonial mindset. My hope is that students learn something valuable in seeing non-Indigenous professors of varying backgrounds locating themselves, interrogating their own thought patterns and practices, and modelling allyship. I hope that, in this way, students learn that we are all part of this relationship and all our contributions are needed to advance decolonization.

A second challenge is that academic disciplines have themselves directly contributed to colonial hegemony, Indigenous dispossession, and racialization, and they continue to perpetuate White racial superiority and colonial relations through a profoundly Eurocentric curriculum and the structural racism of academic institutions and the educational system generally, as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *Final Report* (TRC, 2015) and many other studies<sup>1</sup> have pointed out. It is crucial to interrogate the practices and assumptions of our own disciplines and of the academy generally. As Kuokkanen (2007) argues, decolonizing post-secondary education requires ending "the sanctioned ignorance that prevails in today's academy which is unable and unwilling to recognize and hear other than dominant Western or mainstream epistemes" (p. 4). For non-Indigenous academics, that means "active participation and ongoing engagement with intellectual and epistemic conventions other than one's own" (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 8). For a professoriate that is conditioned to think of itself as *expert*, this can be profoundly humbling.

A third challenge, as Lee Maracle and others have said, is that colonialism is a psychological structure—a structure of emotions—as well as a political, social, legal, intellectual, and economic structure. It can be difficult to process our own emotions and those of our students, especially emotions of defensiveness, denial, anger, guilt, shame, shock, confusion, and fear. Mainstream Canadian society is already structured around guilt and blame, and so students are extremely vulnerable to feelings of rejection, guilt, worthlessness, or invalidation. Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students may feel helplessness, powerlessness, or despair when they learn about the magnitude of colonial injustice.

An additional challenge is that students have different emotional needs. It can be triggering for Indigenous and racialized students to be exposed repeatedly to the brutal details of colonial history, the dynamics and consequences of which they often know all too well at an experiential level, even if they often don't know the specifics of the history that created

the difficult conditions of their lives. Indigenous students may also feel shame about their own ignorance of their history and culture, and anger that they are learning for the first time about Canada's colonial legacy and even aspects of their own heritage in university (and from a White instructor, no less). Non-Indigenous students, on the other hand, need to learn precisely how brutal colonialism has been to break through their ignorance and indifference, yet not be overwhelmed or paralyzed by this new knowledge. All students need to feel hope and their own power to effect change.

### *Teaching Strategies*

I'm going to talk about the two main strategies I use to address at least some of these challenges. The first is acknowledging and thinking through the implications of my own positionality and helping students think about theirs. I use four frames of analysis to assist them with this self-location. The second strategy, which follows from the first, is acknowledging oneself in relationship and recognizing one's responsibilities.

#### *Teaching Strategy 1: Acknowledging my own Positionality*

If I'm teaching a class on my own, I am very clear about my perspective and its limitations, that I cannot speak for Indigenous peoples, and that as a result there are some things students will be unable to learn from me. I make extensive use of Indigenous-authored readings, Indigenous-produced films and videos, and Indigenous guest speakers, to ensure that Indigenous perspectives are articulated in ways that are unmediated by me. Bringing in guest speakers requires my own ongoing relationships in the community so that Indigenous people are willing to come into my class and assist me, and requires administrative support for honoraria as well. I also design assignments that require students to attend and respond to Indigenous events in the community so they experience first-hand the strength, resilience, and creativity of Indigenous people in the present.

In acknowledging my own location, I also discuss my perspective as an activist. My teaching is deeply influenced by what I have learned through my experiences working with Indigenous peoples and communities, including the challenges I have sometimes encountered stemming from my own ignorance of or obliviousness to my race and class privilege, moments of denial and discomfort when confronted about my own racism, or a lack of understanding of the complexities of intersectionality. I have reflected on this ongoing personal struggle to decolonize my own thinking and practice in the context of alliance building in an article co-written with Syyilx/Secwepemc activist Dorothy Christian (Christian & Freeman, 2010).

*Helping Students Locate Themselves*

To help students understand their own connection to colonialism and their own context as historical actors, I teach the history and sociology of colonization and Indigenous resistance through four interconnected frames of analysis. These can be summarized as: (1) decolonizing the history of Canada; (2) understanding colonialism and anticolonial struggle comparatively and transnationally; (3) locating oneself in the local context; and (4) locating oneself through family migration and time. These four frames were developed from my experience researching and writing about my own family's involvement in colonial relations in Canada and the United States (Freeman, 2000), and through my subsequent doctoral studies in colonialism, comparative Indigenous-settler relations, and the historical memory of the Indigenous history of Toronto. I will briefly outline these four frames below.

*Decolonizing the history of Canada:* As most undergraduate students I have encountered have virtually no knowledge of Canada's history, let alone Canada's colonial history, I see one of my primary responsibilities as unsettling settler narratives and assumptions by deconstructing the Doctrine of Discovery, discourses of "civilization", doctrines of racial and cultural supremacy, and the unquestioned frame of the settler nation-state for the history of Turtle Island. In every course I teach, I introduce alternate and Indigenous accounts of Indigenous history from time immemorial, Indigenous-settler relations post-contact, and Indigenous creative adaptation and resistance. I discuss bias in academic historical methodologies and expose students to Indigenous conceptual frameworks, worldviews, oral tradition, wampum, and other mnemonic traditions that contribute to Indigenous epistemes about the relation of past, present, and future. To do this, I draw on the work of Indigenous scholars and Indigenous community historians, and the now considerable academic literature that deconstructs settler historical discourses. I try to balance coverage of colonial brutality and cultural genocide with stories of Indigenous resistance, creative adaptation, and resurgence; Indigenous guest speakers are especially helpful in bringing the impact of the past vividly to life in their personal stories, while highlighting resilience and renewal and, thus, hope for the future.

*Comparative and transnational understandings of colonialism and anticolonial struggle:* Students need to understand the relationship between Indigenous struggles in Canada and the broader context of global capitalism, international discourses of race and civilizational progress, and transnational anticolonial struggle in order to understand the history and persistence of colonial dynamics in Canada and the linkages between var-



ious forms of oppression around the world. They need to be aware of the potential role of international institutions and international instruments, such as the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in advancing decolonization and redress in Canada.

Furthermore, a comparative, transnational frame of analysis helps many non-Indigenous students consider the colonial dynamics of the countries they or their families originally emigrated from and the similarities and differences of these dynamics with Indigenous struggles; this helps students more clearly locate themselves and also find common ground for working in alliance. It helps students understand the complexities of positionality and that not all non-Indigenous peoples are in the same relation to Indigenous struggles. For example, by demonstrating that the African slave trade and Indigenous colonization in North America were two aspects of the same global process of European wealth accumulation, linked through trade, and carried out by the same colonizing powers, students understand not only the possibilities for allyship between Indigenous and racialized peoples but also that the forms of colonialism have varied with different imperial needs for labour, natural resources, or land in different settings or time periods. This transnational framework helps students understand the extraordinary persistence of settler colonialism as a structure, not merely an event, and the ways that neocolonial dynamics remain tremendously resourceful and adaptive in the present.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, a global perspective also offers hope to Indigenous and non-Indigenous students alike, as they understand that Indigenous peoples, while a small minority in what is now Canada, make up a considerable portion of the world's population, are organizing across borders, and now have an international presence at the United Nations.

*Location in the local:* While the first two frames may be understood by many students on a theoretical level, it is far more challenging to settler unconsciousness and denial to ask: *Whose land are you on?* When students focus on the historical, cultural, and geographic specificity of colonial relations where they live and study, they learn that colonialism is not "out there" but here, right where they are, and involves local struggles and local relationships between peoples and the land, even if these conditions are also tied to larger dynamics. Asking: *How did non-Indigenous peoples gain control of the land that you/we live on?* brings home to students the failures in their local education, the erasure of Indigenous peoples, the ongoing structures of exploitation and privilege, and their own connection to these processes. In bringing forward this frame of analysis, I am able to draw on my doctoral research on indigeneity and settler colonial memory in Toronto, as well as my community-based experiences with First Story Toronto.<sup>3</sup>

*Location through family migration and time:* A key assignment I give students asks them: *What is your relationship to colonialism? How have you and your family been shaped by it? How did you/your family come to be living here?*<sup>4</sup> This is probably the single most important assignment in each course I teach, as it grounds students and makes history and colonialism real and present to them, something embedded even in family relations (or adopted family relations and community) over time. It encourages them to cultivate honesty and to recognize the profound intertwining of the personal, the social, the political, and the historical, as well as the interrelationship of all of the analytical frames I have mentioned.

After the assignments have been marked, students are invited to share their reflections in class (strictly on a voluntary basis and a few at a time over many classes) so the diverse family histories of students become a resource for understanding not only individual positionality but the global impacts and history of colonialism, and the multiple ways that all of us are shaped by the past and constituted through social forces. This deep sharing is often a revelation to students, most of whom have never been exposed to any history beyond a year of mostly twentieth century Canadian history in high school or had the opportunity to learn about and from their classmates. They see each other and where they live with new eyes, and gain a new and more holistic understanding of their social and political context, and of how much they don't know. They learn first-hand the value of storytelling. The stories educate their hearts as well as their minds; they are gifts, exchanged reciprocally, and with courage. They are often inspiring.

### *Teaching Strategy 2: Teaching and Learning in Relationship*

By sharing their stories, students build a community of reciprocity, safety, and courage in the classroom, deepen their respect for and acknowledgement of difference, and spark new and more impactful conversations among students in the class and between students and their parents. (Often, students start talking to family members about their family history for the first time and these familial conversations about history, colonialism, and Canada often continue throughout the course, multiplying its educational impact.)

At the same time, it can be challenging to create safety and support for all students in the conversations that ensue, where some students may have been deeply impacted by colonialism and racism while others may have never before considered their own privilege. There are usually very different levels of political consciousness among students in each class, and it is a delicate task for an instructor (and particularly a White, middle-class instructor) to create an environment that is truly respectful for all. When



the reality of Canadian racism and colonialism is acknowledged, Indigenous and racialized students often feel empowered to speak their truths, both personal and political, but that can be hard for some non-Indigenous (and particularly White) students to hear. I see it as critical that all students are helped to open themselves to what may prove to be difficult learning and to be supported in that process.<sup>5</sup> Mindful of the vulnerability of Indigenous students in predominately non-Indigenous classrooms, I am also careful not to pressure Indigenous students to share their stories, though most decide to do so.

Despite these challenges, my experience is that the sharing of our stories humanizes all of us. Even if only some students share their stories with their classmates, they all learn that we start in different places, that all our perspectives have value and significance, that no one has the whole picture, and that we can learn much from each other—in fact, that we are all both teachers and students. They also learn that a rigid binary of *colonized* and *colonizer* is problematic, since many of us have the experiences of both colonizer and colonized in our histories. They learn that by breaking through silence or denial we experience transformation and often deepen our compassion for each other and our commitment to work together for social change. Some of the transformations I have witnessed through this assignment have been truly life-changing and all students have said that it deepened their engagement with the class and their classmates, as well as with Indigenous issues generally.

### *Teaching In and About Relationship Through Co-Teaching*

In my experience, the ethic of relationship and responsibility at the core of Indigenous worldviews and ethics is also powerfully conveyed to students through co-teaching. I have had the opportunity to co-develop and co-teach courses with an Indigenous scholar or organization on two occasions, in spite of the fact that co-teaching is not well supported through current university administrative structures or funding models and it is particularly difficult for contract faculty. From 2010 to 2012, Sto:lo writer and traditional teacher Lee Maracle and I proposed, co-developed, and co-taught a third-year course, *The Politics and Process of Reconciliation*, in the Indigenous studies program at the University of Toronto. More recently, I co-developed and, in the fall of 2017, co-taught a new third-year sociology course on *The Sociology of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission* with the staff and residential school survivors of Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre for the University of Toronto, Scarborough.

Both of these teaching partnerships came about because of previous relationships I had developed in the Indigenous community in Toronto

and elsewhere. Lee Maracle and I had first worked together on the organizing of the 1993 conference *Beyond Survival: The Waking Dreamer Ends the Silence*, an international gathering of Indigenous writers, artists, and performers. I had previously worked with Council Fire as a member of the core organizing group for *The Meeting Place: Truth and Reconciliation Toronto 2012*, a regional gathering of the TRC, and I had continued to bring residential school survivors from their support group to speak in my classes at York University every year after that. This relationship built, in turn, on previous work I had done in researching and writing about my grandfather's involvement with the Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School near Shoal Lake, Ontario in the 1920s, and in the relationships with Indigenous people that resulted from that project.

My role as the non-Indigenous instructor in these teaching partnerships varied. In the course I co-taught with Lee, we lectured for roughly equal amounts of time and co-facilitated the weekly sharing circles. I provided perspectives as an academically-trained historian and long-time non-Indigenous activist working on Indigenous/settler issues; Lee offered her deep knowledge of oral tradition and Indigenous cultural traditions and pedagogy as well as her experience as a long-time Indigenous rights activist.

In teaching together in the classroom (we both attended every class, though receiving only half of a course instructor's pay), we modelled active collaboration, mutual support, and solidarity; our different perspectives, drawing on both academic scholarship and oral tradition, encouraged multi-epistemic literacy or "Two Eyed Seeing" in our students, as called for by Elder Albert Marshall (Battiste, 2010, p. 17). Participating in 24 sharing circles over the duration of the course proved to be a profoundly transformative experience for the students as well as for Lee and myself. The pedagogy we co-developed for that course deeply informs my teaching to this day.<sup>6</sup>

Toronto Council Fire, my partner in the second course, is an Indigenous service agency in downtown Toronto with a long-running survivors support group and a strong activist agenda. Our joint aim in designing the course on the TRC was to centre the voices and experiences of survivors—those who have been most harmed and silenced and who now seek redress and healing. We also needed to ensure that the teaching process was beneficial to them as well as to students. We knew that learning about residential schools and the TRC would be difficult for students, and that sharing their experiences would be difficult for survivors, but that healing and reconciliation in Canada was the ultimate aim of the TRC; we decided, therefore, that the course would offer students a concrete and practical experience of allyship through transformative relationship-building.

The class was conducted in a sharing circle format. Four to eight survivors attended every class along with Council Fire staff and usually also Elder (and survivor) Andrew Wesley, who opened the circle and offered a number of teachings on Indigenous knowledge. The survivors contributed to all discussions and some gave presentations on topics of their choice. Another Indigenous pedagogy employed in the classroom was “learning by doing” through a craft session where the survivors taught the students to make leather medicine pouches and discussed the entire process of hunting, preparing hides, using all parts of the animal, and gathering medicines, which challenged any tendency to view survivors only as victims. Council Fire hosted the class on their premises on two occasions, including the final feast, so that students experienced being in an Indigenous environment, learned about the varied responsibilities of this front-line organization, and recognized the real-life accountability and reciprocity that came with their learning.

After students had completed their first assignment, which encouraged them to reflect on their own positionality in relation to colonialism and Indigenous peoples (as discussed above), small groups of four or five students worked with two survivors to listen to and record the stories that survivors wished to share. This group project had a significant impact on students, as they formed relationships with individual survivors and had to seriously consider the ethics of bearing witness in a real situation; it was also very meaningful to the survivors to be closely listened to in this way. One student commented:

This was the first assignment I have ever completed in which I felt a profound responsibility that extended beyond myself to execute well. The importance of the stories written by my classmates and I, extended beyond us, and we carried an important responsibility to capture and affirm the experiences of residential school survivors, in their own terms.” (personal communication)

Many students spoke of the responsibility they felt going forward to educate others after having been gifted with those stories. As part of its Restoration of Identity (ROI) project<sup>7</sup> honouring residential school survivors, Council Fire plans to publish the survivors’ stories alongside excerpts from student reflections about what they learned through this process.

Our course also required students to reflect on their learning through a weekly journal of responses to the sharing circles and readings. In their final summative project, they researched and identified their own personal Call to Action, which they presented to the survivors and their fellow students at the final class and feast. Many students are continuing to carry out the responsibilities and actions they identified for themselves through this

process, developing new relationships with Indigenous community members in Toronto.

In many ways, my role in the teaching of this course was to step back and create space for Indigenous voices. I generally did not lecture or provided only short introductory PowerPoint presentations to historically contextualize or otherwise set up the theme and readings for the week; otherwise, my voice was one among many in the circle. I did acknowledge and discuss my own particular relationship to the residential school system through my grandfather's involvement in Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School at Shoal Lake in the 1920s<sup>8</sup>, but the survivors' stories took precedence. I developed the overall structure of the course, proposing topics, readings, and assignments that were revised or approved by Council Fire staff, and I facilitated all interactions with the university regarding university infrastructure, marking, the class online management system, access to readings, the payment of honoraria, and most arrangements with guest speakers. I saw my role as creating the conditions and space for the survivors to be able to share their perspectives with the students as well as educating the students to interact respectfully with the survivors; understand the historical, political, and social context for these interactions; and critically reflect on alliance-building.<sup>9</sup>

The survivors were always accompanied by staff from Council Fire who provided emotional and cultural support for them. Even so, sharing their stories was sometimes triggering for the survivors, and we have determined that next year we will hold a debriefing session involving the survivors, Council Fire staff, and myself immediately after every class so there is the opportunity to emotionally process whatever comes up. The willingness of the survivors to share, in spite of this emotional risk, tremendously inspired the students and evoked their deep gratitude and admiration; several spoke of the course as a life-changing experience and of the survivors as profound teachers. Certainly, the presence of the survivors enabled students to more clearly recognize their own responsibilities. As one student put it, "You can't unlearn the truths we learned in this class." That, I hope, marks the beginning of becoming real.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Battiste (1998); Mihesuah and Wilson (2004); Dei (2000); Kuokkanen (2007); Smith (2012), and the online journal *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*.

<sup>2</sup> See Wolfe (2001) on labour, land and settler colonialism as a structure; Veracini (2010) on triangular social relations involving settlers, Indigenous, and "abject others"; and Freeman (2012) for a concrete example of the benefits of a comparative analysis of settler discourses. See Amadahi and Lawrence (2009) on alliance building between Indigenous and racialized peoples in Canada.

<sup>3</sup>First Story Toronto (formerly the Toronto Native Community History Project) created the First Story smartphone app, and offers bus and walking tours of Toronto highlighting its Indigenous history and culture.

<sup>4</sup>An earlier version of this assignment was developed with Lee Maracle in our *Politics and Process of Reconciliation* class and has since been revised.

<sup>5</sup>I recognize that the issues of classroom safety and micro-aggressions warrant much more discussion than I am able to provide in this article.

<sup>6</sup>We have also shared our pedagogical approach with others, notably presenting "Teaching Reconciliation: The Place and Power of Indigenous Pedagogy" at the 2011 Native American and Indigenous Studies Association conference in Sacramento, California; at the *Indigenizing the Academy Symposium*, hosted by the Four Directions Native Students Association at Queen's University, Kingston, in 2012; and in a one-day workshop for the Initial Teacher Education Program, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, also in 2012.

<sup>7</sup>See <http://www.councilfire.ca/restoration-of-identity.html> for details of the Restoration of Identity project.

<sup>8</sup>My grandfather's involvement is discussed in my book *Distant Relations* and also in "Family Matters: Considering My Grandfather's Involvement in Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School", published in the *Proceedings of the Rupert's Land Conference*, David Malaher (Ed.), and published by Centre for Rupert's Land Studies (Freeman, 2004, pp. 303-310).

<sup>9</sup>Resources on alliance building include Lynn Gehl's excellent Ally Bill of Responsibilities at <https://www.lynngehl.com/ally-bill-of-responsibilities.html> and Lynne Davis (Ed.), *Alliances: Re/Envisioning Indigenous/Non-Indigenous Relationships* (2010).

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