

Pulling Together in an Indigenous Cultural Revitalization Canoe: Indigenous Women's Water and Land-based Research Methodologies in Action

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This article tells the story of a four-year (2013–2017) canoe revitalization research study enacted between Musqueam First Nation and three Indigenous women faculty members working in two universities in British Columbia. This Indigenist research project resulted in the first canoe carved and launched in Musqueam in over 30 years. It identifies the Musqueam theoretical framework and role of the Musqueam Advisory Council that guides the awakening of ancient carving practices and research methodologies for the benefit of future generations. It explores and considers traditional Coast Salish protocol and practices of calling witnesses to community-based work, and its adaptation and relevance in research with university partners. Finally, it makes funding policy recommendations to better support future Indigenous community-university research partnerships.

Introduction

This article tells the story of a four-year (2013–2017) canoe revitalization research study that occurred on the unceded and occupied traditional Musqueam territory in Vancouver, British Columbia (BC). It is a research partnership between Thompson Rivers University and the University of British Columbia, which is located on unceded Musqueam lands in Vancouver, BC. This article is written from the perspective of two Indigenous women; one is Musqueam and a community-based research assistant and program manager, and the other is a Saulteaux university-based professor and researcher.

When a Coast Salish canoe is made ready for a journey a series of cultural protocols are followed to awaken its spirit. Cultural protocols include traditional customs that guide cultural practices, actions, and approaches. These protocols and practices may become known through an oral tradition and can include prayers, songs, ceremony, language, and physical

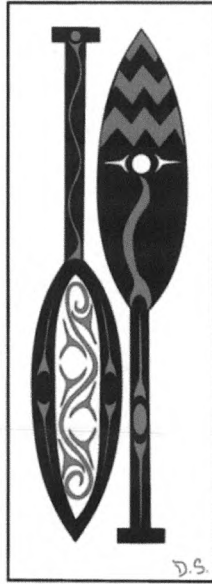


Figure 1. *Paddling into the Future* logo by Debra Sparrow (2014).

attributes of participants and objects. This research project was given the name “Awakening the Spirit” (ATS). It demonstrates how Musqueam, universities, and potentially other Northwest Coast Indigenous canoe families can work together to mobilize this traditional as well as academic knowledge. The focus of the ATS project is to awaken the spirit of a cultural practice and maintain it for future generations. It is also meant to work towards the strengthening of relationships between social work, forestry, and education professions, and the Musqueam people.

The ATS research logo was created by Musqueam artist Debra Sparrow, world renowned for her textile art and weaving. Sparrow explains that she designed the *Paddling into the Future* logo (Figure 1) as two paddles:

to represent our relationship with the IMPORTANCE of canoes throughout our history in Musqueam. The paddles are a strong image of a people who once used our waterways as a highway. Our Ancestors who use these paddles were fit and strong. Sometimes they designed them and sometimes they left them plain. Our community won many, many races in the past and times have gone by where the paddles were put away, as were the canoes. There is a resurgence of interest. I thought and was inspired to use the textile geometric patterns together with the design. I love to make my signature mountain goat bracelet designs. These beautiful and ancient patterns have been a gift for me to create and remind us of who we are. *Paddling into the Future* is fitting, as we look for a balance: One foot in Tradition and one foot in the Future. (personal communication, August 15, 2014)

*Beginning Research Based in Community-identified Need:
Spirit Appears When the Time is Right*

The vision for this project began during a 2013 discussion about Indigeneity, respective roles and responsibilities as an employee of the Musqueam Indian Band (Corrina Sparrow), and as a university researcher (Shelly Johnson). Corrina was asked, "What do you see is needed for the people in your community?" She answered:

Traditionally, we are an ocean and river canoeing people, but now we aren't out on the water in the same ways that we once were. I am concerned about what that means for our future if we are not being guardians of the river. That's our identity. That's our connection and relationship to this land and water. What will it mean for our identity as a people if that traditional knowledge is not rekindled and supported to grow in the community?

Corrina first outlined her vision to encourage and support Elders to awaken, teach, and revitalize traditional canoe carving to younger people in the Musqueam community. Second, she identified the community-based need to build a community-centred carving shed to support ongoing canoe carving revitalization in Musqueam. Third, she identified a community-based interest to train and support Musqueam youth to participate in an upcoming west coast Pulling Together canoe journey. She wondered if the revitalization of canoeing in Musqueam could help to address youth depression and addiction issues, and to increase mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual community well-being. At the end of our conversation, she joked, "This will cost about a half million dollars. So, if that money falls out of the sky into your lap one day, let me know." We laughed at the ridiculous concept and parted ways. Corrina returned to her duties and I returned to my university-based office to review the day's email messages.

The first email identified a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) call for research proposals up to \$500,000. After reading the criteria, I lit a smudge, prayed for guidance, and asked the Creator to use me in ways to help the Musqueam people. Prayers grounded me to trust in the traditional knowledge within the Musqueam community, to think past my lack of knowledge about the potential research subject matter, and to consider Indigenous principles of reciprocity when living on another nation's territory. I forwarded the email to Corrina with the subject line: "Here is \$500,000 for your canoe revitalization project. Let's talk." One week later, an Indigenous collective comprised of Musqueam Elders, youth, management and staff, community members, and university academics gathered at Musqueam to discuss the SSHRC call for proposals. At the conclusion of the meeting, we agreed to work together to draft a research proposal to reawaken and revitalize canoe carving in Musqueam.

*Weaving Traditional and Contemporary Musqueam
Knowledge and Experiences to Awaken the Spirit*

Musqueam ancestors have lived in what is now BC's lower mainland since time immemorial and in their present location for thousands of years. Their traditional territory occupies what is now known as Vancouver and surrounding areas. The name Musqueam—*xʷməθkʷə əm*—means *People Where the məθkʷə Grows* in *hən q əmin əm*. The river plant *məθkʷə* has long grown at the mouth of the Fraser River (Musqueam First Nation, 2011; Von Puttkamer, Von Puttkamer, & Von Puttkamer, 2010). Prior to colonization, seagoing canoes were a main form of transportation and indispensable to fishing: a vital activity for Musqueam both culturally and economically (Brown, 2008; Stewart, 2009). Today, many Indigenous people struggle with the devastating intergenerational trauma and cultural rupture resulting, in part, from the influence of mainstream Euro-Western based social work and education professions, residential school, and child welfare experiences (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). The Musqueam, like other Indigenous peoples on this continent, have been deprived of the stories, history, and traditional knowledge associated with a cultural identity. Few Musqueam Elders retain thorough knowledge of Musqueam's canoeing and carving traditions, which makes this canoe cultural revival project critically important (Johansen, 2012; Neel, 1995).

Musqueam Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for the Awakening the Spirit (ATS) project is based on an existing Musqueam process and vision. Through a multi-year comprehensive community planning process, Musqueam articulated a vision to guide community-based projects in their Musqueam Comprehensive Sustainable Community Development Plan (CSCDP). The *hən q əmin əm* phrase *nə əmat tə šxʷqʷeləwən ct*—which translates roughly into *we are of one heart and one mind*—describes this vision (Musqueam First Nation, 2011). The ATS project pulls together engagement strategies and methods utilized in Musqueam's comprehensive community planning process with theoretical and methodological approaches advocated by various Indigenous scholars, such as Archibald (2008); Battiste (2008, 2009); Castagno and Brayboy (2008); and Smith (1999), in pursuit of creating a unified approach. This participatory, holistic Musqueam theoretical and research framework supports Musqueam self-determination in the research conception, design, development, and implementation.

nə əmat tə šxʷqʷeləwən ct—we are of one heart and one mind—brings together three streams of knowledge: (1) traditional cultural knowledge of

community members; (2) experience, planning, and resources from Musqueam's leadership and administration; and (3) the expertise and professional commitment from the participating universities. These streams are united by eight Musqueam guiding principles: (1) participatory; (2) strategic; (3) Musqueam; (4) thoughtful; (5) entrepreneurial; (6) practical; (7) educational; and *8) learning and sharing. Examples of the types of decisions in the research process united by the eight guiding principles are provided below.

1. Participatory

The ATS project committed to being member-driven, inclusive of interactive planning and implementation. A seven-member Musqueam Advisory Council (MAC) was developed and is inclusive of Musqueam leadership, Elders, youth, knowledge keepers, and university faculty. Its purpose is to ensure that engagement practices not only reflect Musqueam's approach to governance but to also meaningfully involve grassroots peoples and families outside the colonial structure. It was meant to support a transparent process exemplified by the Tri-Council Policy for research involving First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples of Canada. This is a critical body in terms of directing Musqueam protocol within and outside the community, identifying potential collaborations, responding to queries about process, and involvement with children and schools. A policy was established to outline the role and responsibilities of the MAC and to set a reasonable amount of financial reimbursement for their time and knowledge contributions (See Appendix A). In addition, the MAC took responsibility to make final decisions about the ATS project name, the finalized canoe name, and the *Paddling into the Future* ATS logo design by Debra Sparrow.

2. Strategic

The ATS project is rooted in the community and council objectives identified in the CSCDP. Additional documents that guide the ATS project are the UBC Aboriginal Strategic Plan (University of British Columbia, 2008) and the Memorandum of Affiliation (MOA) between UBC and the Musqueam Indian Band (University of British Columbia, 2006). The MOA exists to facilitate cooperation in the creation of opportunity and access to community, research, and educational programs that build upon their respective strengths. The ATS project works to find synergies between these three guiding documents, to ensure the planning, implementation, and reporting phases of the project are mindful of the greater context in which the project is situated. The following procedural, planning, and evaluative questions guide the ATS project: Where have we been? Where are

we now? Where do we want to go? How do we get there? Have we arrived? Consideration of these questions keeps the project connected to Musqueam's strategic goals.

3. *Musqueam*

Musqueam cultural protocols are largely unwritten but consist of cultural teachings and etiquette passed down through generations of Musqueam since the beginning. These protocols influence all aspects of the daily life of the Musqueam people and directly influence governance, administration, community planning, external affairs, and are at the heart of all policies and objectives. Wherever possible, the ATS project incorporates traditional knowledge, key Musqueam knowledge-holders, language speakers, and governance approaches. From family meetings to more consensus-based decision making, we worked to have the ATS research project reflect Musqueam values of respect, pride, inclusiveness, honour, and shared responsibility.

Adapting Indigenous Research Methodologies and Timelines after a Tremendous Loss, Log and Carver Search, Log Drying, and Shed Design

4. *Thoughtful*

This ATS research project builds upon, confirms, and incorporates the cumulative and comprehensive community work already underway or completed in Musqueam. This principle recognizes and draws on existing organizational and community capacity, understands the parity of cultural and academic knowledge, and respects the community's ability to identify its research needs and processes.

The October 2013 death of the late Musqueam Chief carver and former elected band council Chief Ernie Campbell left a tremendous void within the community. He was well known and respected for his traditional Musqueam canoe carving knowledge. The late Chief Campbell was a supporter of the Musqueam Awakening the Spirit (ATS) project from the beginning but unfortunately passed away before the project began. He and many others supported Musqueam canoe builder Johnny "Dickie" Louis to continue the work; however, the ATS project timeline required the knowledge, skills, and abilities of more than one carver. To support the research timeline and to respond to the void left by Chief Campbell's death, Musqueam cultural protocols extended to include Master canoe carver Elmer Sampson (see Figure 2). The late Elder Sampson was a renowned Master canoe carver, aged eighty-seven at the start of the project, and a member of Stz'uminus First Nation, a Coast Salish nation on Vancouver Island. Elmer's role was to support and mentor Musqueam



Figure 2. Elder Johnny “Dickie” Louis (left) and Elder Elmer Sampson (right). Photo credit: Nicole Newton.

canoe builders and other carving apprentices throughout the project. Elmer passed on May 18, 2018 shortly after the conclusion of the Musqueam canoe carving project.

A number of factors encouraged Musqueam community representatives to specifically seek Elmer's carving guidance and knowledge. He was Coast Salish, as are the Musqueam; he has current family members living in Musqueam and ancestors from the Musqueam community. Elmer was a respected relative and Elder to Musqueam. Elmer estimated that he'd built more than 100 cedar canoes. He was and is revered by the Musqueam for his many years of traditional carving knowledge and experience. Financial compensation flowing from the SSHRC grant was identified to ensure the mentorship and transfer of Elmer's knowledge and guidance to Musqueam community members and visitors to the carving site. Elmer

also agreed to allow a videographer to document the carving process for educational and teaching purposes. An internal agreement between the Musqueam and university at the inception of the project ensures that all raw video footage will forever be held and owned by Musqueam. Three short videos of the carving process and the final conference are available for teaching and conference purposes. One 21-minute professional grade video was created in 2016 through collaboration with the ATS Musqueam Advisory Council (MAC) (Johnson, 2017): <https://www.tru.ca/edsw/research/indigenizing-higher-education/awakeningthespirit/awakening-the-spirit/awakening-the-spirit-video.html>. The second video of the project was developed by a social work student enrolled in a land-based course at Musqueam (Watkins, 2016): <https://www.tru.ca/edsw/research/indigenizing-higher-education/awakeningthespirit/awakening-the-spirit/our-creation-story.html>. The third video was co-developed by members of the ATS team and created by a professional videography business in Vancouver. It reflects a two-day community-university culture and language revitalization conference held at Musqueam in October 2017 arising from the ATS project. The ATS conference program and final video are available at <https://www.tru.ca/edsw/research/indigenizing-higher-education/awakeningthespirit.html>

The research project timeline was extended once the research team came to understand the difference between a research plan developed around a table, in theory, and the actual implementation of the research plan in the community. Our search for a Coast Salish Master carver was not the only factor that extended the proposed community-based research timeline. A second factor was the search for a suitable red cedar log of a size appropriate for the planned journey canoe. Through colonization, Musqueam lands have been reduced to a fraction of their former size and within these boundaries a suitable log could not be identified. After a one-year search, a red cedar log of acceptable size was found on Vancouver Island—in Elmer Sampson's front yard. Elmer offered the log for Musqueam to carve a journey canoe at the time he was invited to participate as the chief carver on ATS project.

As previously mentioned, Elmer Sampson lived in Stz'uminus territory on Vancouver Island and quite a distance from Musqueam Reserve #2 on the mainland. Musqueam leadership needed to identify a plan to transport the log to Musqueam safely and explored a variety of options on land and sea that may be available to them. In the end, it was determined that pulling the log across the ocean using a tug boat was the most cost-effective and safest way to achieve this. Therefore, Musqueam hired a boat and driver, chained the log to the tug, and pulled it to Musqueam all within the

same day (see Figure 3). When the log arrived on Musqueam shores, Musqueam leadership needed additional time to identify how they were going to move the massive log from the water to where the carving shed would stand and what equipment was needed for this task. While leader-

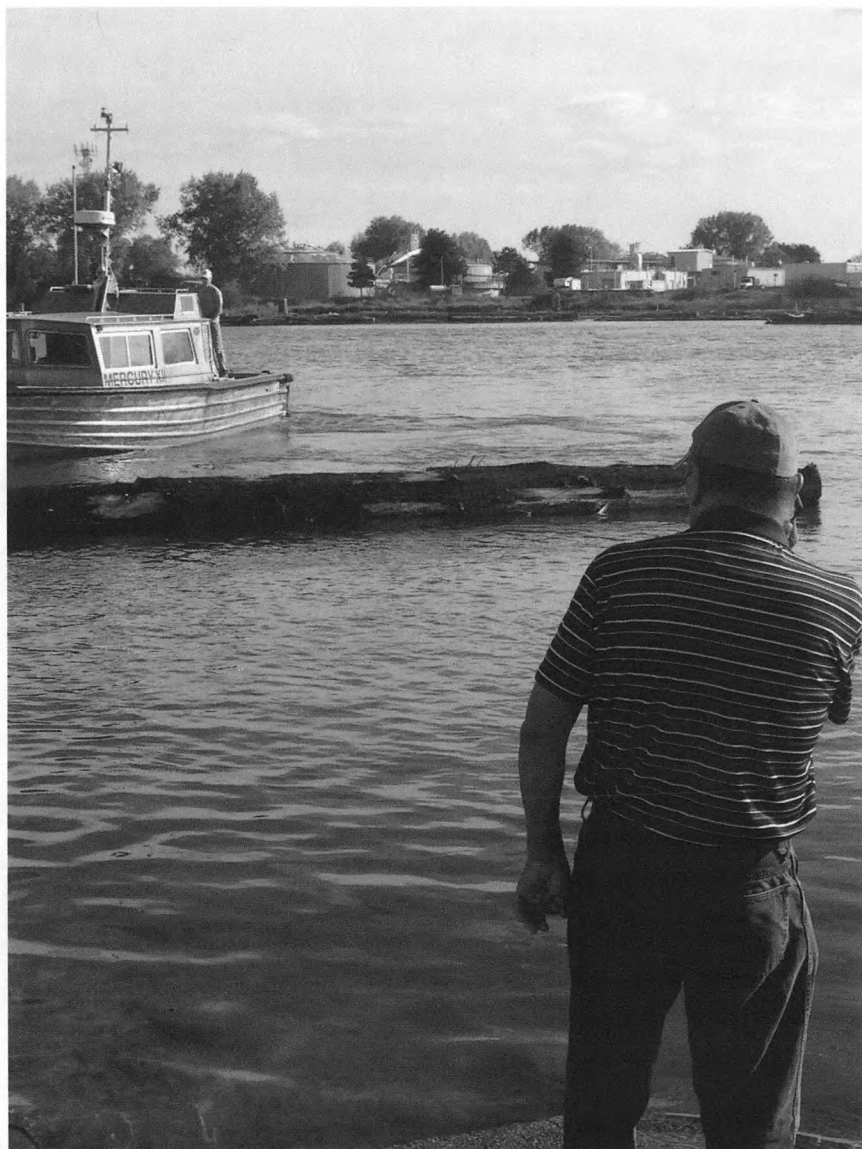


Figure 3. The arrival of the Old Woman Log at Musqueam foreshore, after its journey across the ocean. Photo credit: Corrina Sparrow.

ship worked on these plans, Musqueam hired a number of Log Watch People in the community to remain on the shore and take shifts guarding the log against any theft or damage it may endure while floating in the river. Musqueam community members guarded the log for four days, all days and nights, before it was ready to be moved on shore. They slept in their vehicles and in tents set up on the Musqueam shoreline. The Musqueam community was invited to visit the log and to help keep the Log Watch People company. They all sat together on the shore during these days, visiting and sharing stories about Musqueam canoeing and carving days. The relationship, respect, protection, and bond between this log and Musqueam community members had already begun.

When the 350-year-old log arrived in the Musqueam community, she was promptly claimed and nicknamed the “Old Woman Log” to honour the circle of four Indigenous women that initially envisioned the ATS project. Workers from the Port of Vancouver happened to be doing some excavation work near the Musqueam community when the log arrived on the shoreline. Members of the Musqueam leadership approached these workers and asked to borrow one of their cranes to move the log out of the water to the carving site (see Figure 4). Once the equipment operators completed their own work, people gathered at Musqueam to welcome the log on shore and the transport began. Musqueam community members of all ages gathered to celebrate the Old Woman Log’s arrival, share fresh tea and bannock, and observe a ceremony on the field where the log would rest and dry. Part of the ceremony included Musqueam leadership who made speeches and offered a traditional welcome to their territory. In addition, Musqueam members sang traditional paddle songs to bless and wake up the spirit of the log and support its transformation into a new Musqueam canoe. Finally, Musqueam members gifted blankets and publicly acknowledged the Port of Vancouver workers for their respectful support of the Old Woman Log’s journey from the Fraser River onto the community site.

Children from Musqueam’s daycare also witnessed the log transport. On that day, their caregivers taught the children stories about Musqueam’s canoeing history and traditional Musqueam values of shared responsibility, respect, honour, and protection. Children are fast learners. The next morning, one of the Musqueam children who had attended the welcome ceremony woke his grandparents at 7:00 am. He said, “There’s an Old Lady Log in the field down by the water and we’re supposed to take care of her. Can we go make sure she’s okay?” Half an hour later, at approximately 7:30 am, the child and his grandmother walked out in their rain gear to the field so they could check on the log before breakfast. The Old

Woman Log was now part of Musqueam community and recognized as a relative. This was the beginning of her transformation into the new Musqueam canoe.



Figure 4. Transporting the Old Woman Log on Musqueam land to dry. Photo credit: Shelly Johnson.

The research time period was impacted by many critical factors. For example, the year-long search for a log and the planning for its transfer to the Musqueam community was not factored into our initial timeframe. Nor did we account for the amount of time required for the water-logged cedar tree to dry to the point that carving could begin. The death of former Musqueam Chief Ernie Campbell was not expected, and our search for another Coast Salish Master carver also meant an extension to the research timeline and process. Our initial research plans identified that the carving shed would be built first and then the canoe would be carved within it. However, after a comprehensive internal Musqueam community consultation process regarding the location and design of the carving shed, unforeseen logistical and community-based issues internal to Musqueam arose and further delayed the carving shed construction. These delays proved necessary to ensure that Musqueam community members were meaningfully consulted, policies regarding infrastructure and shed construction were developed and enacted, and that Musqueam community members were employed as carving shed construction workers. These delays were necessary to ensure, as much as possible, that Musqueam would benefit from each step in the research process, whether that be con-



Figure 5. Johnny “Dickie” Louis stripping bark from the Old Woman Log. Photo credit: Sharon Stogan.



Figure 6. Elmer Sampson creating cut lines on the Old Woman Log. Photo credit: Sharon Stogan.

struction policy development, capacity-building employment, and meaningful consultation within their community as to the placement of the carving shed.

These delays resulted in the late Chief carver Elmer Sampson arriving in Musqueam prepared to begin his carving mentorship in advance of the carving shed construction. Upon learning that the carving shed was not complete and given the seasonal weather changes that were pending, he simply gathered his team together adjacent to the proposed carving shed site. A portion of the open field was marked by a temporary fence around the Old Woman Log and identified by signs indicating the project purpose.

Between April and July 2016, Elmer taught and mentored Musqueam canoe builder Dickie Louis and apprentice Bradley Charles (and many other children, youth, adult, and Elder visitors) at the active Musqueam

carving site (see Figures 5 and 6). Scarcely protected from the elements, including sun, rain, sleet, fog and wind, Elmer's team carved a 36-foot 8-person canoe from a 350-year-old red cedar log. The entire carving process and canoe launch were documented by a Musqueam videographer. All raw footage remains the property of the Musqueam people. Short segments of the raw footage were used to create a video of the process for educational and conference purposes.

The Musqueam cedar Journey canoe launch of the *teytexen princess* occurred on August 6, 2016 in the Fraser River adjacent to Musqueam Reserve #2. Eight Musqueam paddlers comprised of youth, adults, Elders, men, women, and Two-Spirit people participated in the launch of the first canoe carved in Musqueam in more than 30 years (see Figure 7).

Despite carving over 100 canoes in his lifetime, this was the first time that Chief carver Elmer Sampson had ever witnessed the launch of any of his canoes. Typically, he told us, the person buying his canoe would simply arrive, hook up the canoe and trailer, and tow it away.



Figure 7: Photo credit: The Vancouver Sun
(<http://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/canoe-culture-makes-triumphant-return-to-Musqueam-band-after-30-years>).

According to Musqueam Councillor Howard Grant, watching the launch brought back memories of his ancestors, who long ago paddled flat-bottom canoes to fish for sturgeon, war canoes to protect their land and deep-sea vessels to navigate the Salish Sea (Vancouver Sun, August 7, 2016). "I think many of us had either tears flowing or a lump in our throat, because it brought back memories of what we saw coming down the river with our past elders and teachers," he said. "It really bonds you with the foundation of who you are." (Eagland, 2016)

5. Entrepreneurial

In addition to promoting holistic wellness for Musqueam members, the ATS project develops marketable skills for youth and students who either volunteer or are paid to work on some aspect of the project. Development of hands-on skills (including carving, pulling, and videography) is augmented with the deeper understanding and appreciation of respectful intercultural collaborative skills for all participants. These skills will provide Musqueam members with experiences that can be translated into self-sufficiency, successful educational pursuits, and healthy relationships. In addition to the carving project, the carving shed was built with labour from within the Musqueam community (see Figures 8 and 9). Two men from the Musqueam community were hired by the construction company as a condition of the Musqueam/construction company contract. One of the men is married into the community and the other lives off reserve. Both men were unemployed at the time and gained full-time employment on other construction projects at the end of the carving shed build. Both expressed satisfaction with the opportunity to give back to their community and to contribute to future community well-being.



Figure 8. Johnny "Dickie" Louis and Shelly Johnson. Interior of the Musqueam Carving Shed. Photo credit: K. Tecza.



Figure 9. Musqueam Carving Shed. Exterior. Photo credit: Shelly Johnson.

6. Practical

The ATS project links existing resources and departments in Musqueam, TRU, and UBC to ensure a lasting legacy. Various activities such as “Cedar Days” and National Indigenous Peoples Day activities, the canoe launch, and other community-based actions are broken down into achievable steps to synchronize with existing research work plans and timelines. The canoe was used to mark Musqueam’s presence at the re-opening of the Kitsilano Coast Guard Station in June 2016. Under the leadership of Master Carver and skipper Johnny “Dickie” Louis, it joined the canoes of the Squamish and Tsleil Waututh peoples for the ceremony designed to protect the water adjacent to the city of Vancouver.

7. Educational

Through the project, we have helped to train and increase the capacity of Musqueam people; provide hands-on learning experiences to Musqueam youth, adults, and Elders; and link traditional and Western-based educational models. University students and faculty, through coursework and research assistant roles, have increased their educational understandings of Musqueam culture and research protocols, thereby ensuring capacity building of faculty and students.

The ATS research project has worked to extend existing Musqueam educational projects such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) program and the UBC First Nations Languages Program (FNLG). The Musqueam traditional knowledge and values identified through the ATS research and

the assistance of ATS university graduate students will be a useful resource for future educational projects. The IB program is in the local public elementary school that many Musqueam children attend. The cultural knowledge and outcomes of the ATS project have been introduced into two elementary schools' curriculum, which is a cooperative desired learning direction of the Musqueam community, Vancouver School Board, and IB.

In 1997, Musqueam Chief and Council and UBC signed a protocol agreement regarding FNLG stating the importance of language to Musqueam and stipulating acceptable use, cultural copyright over the language, and copyright over projects resulting from research in the program. With the signing of the protocol agreement in 1997, Musqueam and UBC created a series of university-level language classes for credit. As Musqueam is just one of a handful of traditional hən q əm in əm speaking peoples, the course allows other communities, such as Kwantlen, Katzie, and Tsawwassen, to develop a speaker base. As well as language instruction, classes are co-taught with a Musqueam Elder who offers a cultural and historical perspective on the language and its importance to the people. The ATS project team drew on the experience of this successful program to enhance the cultural and linguistic components of the canoeing project.

The Role of the UBC Researchers as Witnesses

8. Learning and Sharing

The eighth and final Musqueam theoretical principle, learning and sharing, seeks the knowledge and experience of others and values shared experiences with other First Nations and project partners. In this research example, it was enacted when Indigenous university-based researchers worked with Musqueam to witness, document, and gather the stories of Musqueam community members formerly involved in canoe racing events, Canoe Journeys, and Pulling Together canoe events. The participants were Musqueam men who were pullers, skippers, and helpers; and Musqueam women who were helpers and pullers. Musqueam youth, Musqueam, and non-Indigenous support people that were participants on Pulling Together journeys were also interviewed about their recent canoeing experiences. The project uncovered factors that led to the loss of canoeing and carving knowledge, and established a number of ways to reawaken its spirit both in and outside the community. Musqueam men recounted stories about carved canoes that were burned in a longhouse fire and of a puller that drowned during fishing season. For these reasons, and

in accordance with Musqueam cultural protocol, the canoeing practices were “put away” for a time period. That time period extended to three decades as more Musqueam canoe carvers passed away and with the introduction of soccer as a burgeoning new and affordable Musqueam pastime. As researchers from the “outside”, our roles are vastly different from the Coast Salish Master Carver and Elder from Stz’uminus First Nation, Musqueam canoe carver, and apprentice who became the heart of the project. Instead, we became part of a diverse collective of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples to reach across borders, oceans, nations, and colonial realities to contribute to Musqueam community-based well-being, research, educational, and teaching contexts. It was during one of the ATS Musqueam Advisory Council (MAC) meetings that we began to explore our specific roles as “witnesses from the University” and asked Musqueam to explain the traditional role of witnesses in their ceremonial practices. A Musqueam ATS member, Corrina Sparrow, agreed to seek guidance from a Musqueam Elder and traditional knowledge keeper, and to share that knowledge in this article. The next section is her understanding of this witness role.

Witness Role and Practice in Musqueam Community Ceremonies

As far back as we can recall, our Musqueam people have always followed the process to call witnesses to the cultural work that we do within families and community. This timeless tradition of witnessing as part of ceremony, for me, speaks to our Coast Salish identity as a public people. It is part of the oral traditions of Musqueam documentation and archive systems. The hiring of witnesses and the responsibilities attached to witnesses are also public in nature. Everything we do as Musqueam, how it is observed by others and passed on, is vital to the perpetuation of our ways of being and the transference of cultural treasures, knowledge, and histories within each family. It has been this way for thousands of years.

I had a conversation with Musqueam Elder and Coast Salish knowledge keeper, Shane Pointe, about the process of witnessing for Musqueam people. He told me that historically when other villages would come to our big house to participate in a ceremony, they would always bring their own historian—their witness—with them. This was done automatically, just in case they were called upon to be a witness to the work in Musqueam at that particular gathering; they would have their most skilled history keepers ready and available to comply. Historically and after colonial contact, the family conducting the ceremony would pay each witness by giving them a Hudson’s Bay blanket, which was valued at fifty cents at that time. Over time, the leaders in the community decided that the families of wit-

nesses may get more use out of monetary compensation for their services rather than blankets as payment for the work, so they may buy other items that families may need. Therefore, payment for witnesses shifted from blankets to fifty cents each. This form of payment has remained the same in our ceremonies since then.

In the past, all attending villages would automatically bring their own witnesses with them to a ceremony in the Musqueam longhouse. Around the 1950s, there was a shift in this practice whereby the Musqueam host family would identify and personally invite their own witnesses to the work in advance. Then the other villages knew they needed to bring their historians with them ahead of time, as they were going to be called to witness. In the 1960s and 1970s, there was yet another shift in practice whereby some Musqueam families would call many witnesses at once during an event and even include young people as some witnesses.

The responsibilities of the witness in ceremony are critical. Witnesses are the historians of other villages and places. Traditionally, they are very seasoned in ceremony and know the ancestral names and histories of the family who calls upon them to witness. Before colonial contact, only one or two witnesses would be called during a ceremony, but now different families can call many witnesses at once. The highest priority of a witness in a Musqueam ceremony is to maintain the absolute accuracy of all the details in the work they have observed. This absolute accuracy is vital to the retelling of what was observed in their home communities in order to maintain this history for generations to come.

The traditional Musqueam protocol of calling witnesses today involves:

- The family identifies who will be a witness ahead of time.
- The hired speaker for the family calls the name of each witness out twice in public before the work begins.
- The witness is asked to listen, watch, and feel the work the family will conduct.
- Each witness is given fifty cents (two quarters) from each member of the family doing the work as payment.
- Upon conclusion of the ceremony/work, the witness stands before the family and shares what they have heard, seen, and felt in the work.
- The witness is paid by each member of the family again.
- The witness brings the message of what was heard, seen, and felt back to their home village.

*Witness Roles and Practices in Indigenist Community-based
Research, Teaching, and Education*

My home community is a small *Saulteaux* reserve in central eastern Saskatchewan. However, I (Shelly Johnson) currently reside and work on *Secwepemc* territory in the interior of BC. As an Indigenous university faculty member, my role is nuanced and varied in scope. In this project, I have responsibility for interview and talking circle preparation and analysis, dissemination of findings, identification, and hiring of students in the roles of learners and community/university research assistants. As a collective of university researchers, we understand that this research is conducted at the direction of the *Musqueam* Advisory Council (MAC) and that changes in planning must occur at times to further the work in ways that make sense to community members and processes. We have all come to understand and value that patience is required on all sides of the research process. Most importantly, university partners have learned to be patient as *Musqueam* works through political and logistical issues within its community control, and our *Musqueam* partners have been patient while we worked out university finance systems and transfer issues.

As an Indigenous researcher “from the university” and an eastern-located First Nation, there is an opportunity within this research reflection to consider the ways in which my own Indigenous community-based research practices are shifting and changing. One important example to consider is how to adapt the *Coast Salish/Musqueam* purpose and practices of witnessing for future research purposes and, more specifically, to ask how can I, as a non-*Musqueam* person, adapt a *Musqueam* cultural practice to make it relevant for future cross-cultural dissemination purposes to non-*Musqueam* audiences. What follows is my attempt to adapt the *Musqueam* cultural practice of witnessing as a critical reflection process, to better inform my perspective as a *Saulteaux/university-based* researcher working with *Musqueam*. This example may offer other Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers an opportunity to consider the ways in which they could adapt relevant cultural practices to assist in their own Indigenous community-based research, reflection, and dissemination projects. Alternately, it may open discussions about cultural practices that should not be adapted for research or cross-cultural dissemination purposes. Both of these actions are important to consider in moving Indigenous research agendas forward.

The family identifies who will be witnesses ahead of time.

The *Musqueam* “family” has called Indigenous university colleagues, students, and research assistants to be witnesses to this research project. It is

understood that this research initiative was created at the invitation/request of the Musqueam people and has proceeded solely due to long-term, intersectional, and existing relationships between community members and university partners. Musqueam identified who the university research witnesses would be long before the project began or the invitations were issued. In this way, Musqueam took control of who they would work with in this project and for what purpose.

The Musqueam family calls the name of each witness out twice in public before the work begins.

Initially, Shelly identified the roles that Indigenous researchers from the university could undertake to address Musqueam's research needs. She encouraged identification of both university and community-based potential funding sources, potential joint collaborations, and invitations to other academics. With Musqueam consent and through long-term existing and familial relationships, Dr. Jo-ann Archibald from the UBC Faculty of Education and Andrea Lyall of UBC's Faculty of Forestry were approached and invited to participate based on their knowledge of education, research, and forestry practices.

The witness is asked to listen, watch, and feel the work the family will conduct.

Throughout this four-year research process, Indigenous university researchers have listened, watched, and felt from many perspectives. We've listened to and watched the enactment of issues from multiple Musqueam perspectives, stories, traditions, and ways of doing, being, and working. We have felt the emotions when standing with Musqueam people as they watched and celebrated the launch of the first canoe carved in their community in over 30 years. We watched as the initial pullers in the canoe left the shore and returned to it full of joy. It has meant bearing witness to tears and pride of having their own carved canoe back on the water and to their shared responsibilities as guardians of the water. It means listening to and documenting the stories of children, youth, and adults as they completed a Pulling Together journey but were unable to use the canoe for the majority of the first journey in 2017. It means making space to witness their feelings of being part of a developing canoe family, its inevitable struggles and challenges, and to their deepening sense of their growing Musqueam identity. It has also meant bearing witness to successes and challenges within community work to ensure that all perspectives have space to be heard and considered, and to considering our roles, if any, in the holding of that space.

Each witness is given fifty cents (two quarters) from each member of the family doing the work, as payment.

Our research “payment” is reflected in a much deeper understanding of what it means to be involved as university partners in Indigenous/ university community-based research and the impacts on all members of the research team. This project afforded deep reflection and a much better understanding about the amount of time and work it takes on the part of all peoples involved in the reawakening of traditional carving and practices in the Musqueam community. Despite the time pressures, project issues, delays, and time needed to develop new policies and procedures for aspects of the overall project, much important research and work was accomplished.

For example, in the space of four years this research project enacted:

- a Musqueam Advisory Council that guided the project;
- the location of a suitable log on Coast Salish territory that was barged to Musqueam;
- protocols with various First Nations communities and forest companies;
- Musqueam members who learned to carve a canoe through Indigenous mentorship;
- Musqueam’s launch of the first canoe carved in the community in 30 years;
- positive media coverage of the canoe launch in print, Internet, and television platforms;
- children, youth, university students, and a wide range of adults including politicians and other First Nations members who benefited from the instruction and teachings of Musqueam carvers;
- a carving shed that was built in the community for current and future projects;
- new Musqueam policies and procedures for the construction and use of the carving shed;
- Musqueam members hired through a construction company to build the carving shed;
- an international academic conference held in Musqueam for the first time which supported Musqueam businesses and sports activities;
- Musqueam youth and adults trained to successfully complete a canoe journey;
- a graduate university course in social work, jointly developed and delivered in the Musqueam community;

- the hiring of Musqueam research assistants and videographers;
- the Musqueam carved canoe, towing trailer, and carving shed;
- agreements that all the raw footage of the actual carving process remains in the care and control of Musqueam;
- that interviews were conducted with Musqueam children, youth, adults, and Elders on their canoeing reflections; and
- three videos produced about the project for educational purposes, including one by a university student.

Upon conclusion of the ceremony/work, the witness stands before the family and shares what they have heard, seen, and felt in the work.

This is dissemination work that continues in the form of this article; in local, national, community-based, international conference presentations; book chapters; additional articles; and university websites. It was also disseminated through inclusion in the university curriculum of an Indigenous research methodologies, protocols, and practices master's level course in July 2018.

The witness brings the message of what was heard, seen, and felt back to their home village.

In this project, my "home village" is experienced as both my academic institution, Saulteaux First Nation, and other Indigenous communities. In my academic village, this project is being infused into course development and lessons learned that can be translated into future university-Indigenous community research engagement, curriculum development, teaching, and service work. It furthers reflections and discussions about who has the right and responsibility to hold the financial responsibilities for Indigenous community-based research, developing capacity in Indigenous community-based research, and the furthering of Indigenous research ethics.

In my home village, this project has enlivened discussion and storytelling about Indigenous principles of reciprocity as we travel onto and through the territory of other nations and what our responsibilities are as Indigenous visitors to those lands. In discussions with Indigenous colleagues, it has opened discussions about the potential future research implications and contributions we can leave behind for future generations. Our hope is that we have contributed to a reclamation of traditional knowledge that is meaningful and relevant to Musqueam people and have furthered action of our principles of reciprocity and responsibility as guests on their territory.

Conclusion: Paddling Towards New Research Policy

According to the SSHRC policy, funds for research projects must flow through a research institution such as a university and cannot be administered by a First Nations community. This research project indicates that this is a policy area that could benefit from discussion and evaluation by SSHRC and other Indigenous entities that are considering entering into university-community research relationships. In addition, policy makers, university finance departments, and Indigenous community leadership could benefit from opportunities to more closely examine and address financial, oversight, and delay issues and concerns embedded in research relationships. Opportunities may exist to shift or change policy in ways that make sense to the current and future research partners.

In this community-university research relationship, Musqueam identified the need for the project, assigned internal leadership to facilitate the project, identified the research goals and framework, identified the traditional carvers, contributed expensive land for the carving shed, and the canoeing expertise. Musqueam also committed substantial funding to pay for part of the Musqueam carving shed construction costs, agreed to pay community-based research and conference costs “up-front”, and to be reimbursed by their university partners after the fact. While not every First Nation may have this financial capacity, exploration of the opportunities that do exist are key. As well, frank discussion and resolution processes must be developed ahead of the project implementation about the implications to the community entity or nation if university-generated reimbursement delays negatively impact the nation, entity, or process.

As a funder, SSHRC has also made a commitment to assist Indigenous communities and institutions to enter into research that is relevant to Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing. An early conversation with SSHRC representatives about the project's outcomes was informative and heartening. They cited the substantial financial contributions of Musqueam and indicated that they supported the construction of a carving shed structure, purchase of carving tools needed for the canoe construction, purchase of a trailer to transport the canoe, training, and safety materials for Canoe Journey participants. They understood and supported that these “research tools” would stay in the community and become Musqueam property at the conclusion of the project. The SSHRC position was that while the funding body had not funded a project such as this before, SSHRC is open to supporting research with Indigenous peoples in ways that recognize the need to shift, change, and be relevant to Indigenous community-identified research needs. It is a position that offers promise to future university-Indigenous community research relationships.

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Appendix A:

The terms of reference and honoraria policy, revised on July 19, 2016, are as follows:

The Musqueam Advisory Council (MAC) is an integral part of the Awakening the Spirit (ATS) Research Project. The MAC will guide, support and lend leadership to ATS project employees, Musqueam ATS employees and UBC ATS employees, faculty and students. The MAC will support the ATS project through the Musqueam teachings of respect and leadership inherent in One Heart, One Mind.

A. Terms of Reference

1. General Purpose & Mandate

The MAC is a council of Musqueam members and appointees that provide guidance, support and advice to all areas of the ATS project, including but not limited to, ATS students, employees, and faculty. Working within Musqueam policies and guidelines, the MAC's primary role is support for ATS students, employees and faculty members and to provide advice and support for the ATS language and culture revitalization project. The MAC is unique in that their role is to ensure the Musqueam values, culture, interests and family concepts remain at the heart of the ATS project.

2. Key Duties & Responsibilities

The key responsibilities of the MAC members are to:

- Participate in regular MAC meetings at Musqueam
- Provide guidance and support for ATS students, employees and faculty
- Provide guidance with Musqueam Protocol and enact Protocol when required
- Be committed to ATS success
- Provide cultural guidance throughout the ATS project
- Promote and support the preservation and use of the Musqueam language
- Promote and support the revitalization and use of Musqueam canoeing knowledge
- Provide cultural and spiritual assistance as requested
- Assist the ATS project in maintaining an ethical foundation
- Participate in ATS events, as available and able

3. Participation at MAC Meetings

At the request of the ATS Coordinator or Principal Investigators (PI) or Collaborators, up to seven members of the MAC may be requested to attend the MAC meetings. The MAC role is to provide the ATS Coordina-

tor, PI and Collaborators with support and guidance. Only MAC members who are unemployed and requested to attend will be paid an honorarium. If the MAC meetings are held after working hours, then all MAC members will be paid an honorarium.

4. Appointments

The MAC will have a minimum of five and a maximum of seven members, and all members will be identified by the ATS Research team on the advice of the Musqueam ATS Research Member in collaboration with Musqueam Elders.

5. Qualifications

Individuals nominated to the MAC must meet the following qualifications:

- Be recognized as an Elder or significant knowledge holder by the Musqueam Indian Band representative on the ATS Research team
- Live a healthy lifestyle
- Be active and in good health
- Be a good role model
- Be involved in the community
- Be a good listener, a good communicator, and be a good teacher
- Be able to work collaboratively with the ATS Research team

6. Removal of a MAC member

Upon the recommendation of the majority of the MAC, or upon a recommendation of the Musqueam IB member of the ATS Research Team, the ATS Research Team may remove an individual from the MAC.

7. Meetings

Normally, the MAC will hold joint meetings on a quarterly basis. The ATS Research Team will appoint a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) and/or Coordinator who will support the MAC in organizing meetings, providing a schedule, monitoring the budget, and taking notes, writing minutes and distributing minutes of the meetings. The GRA and/or Coordinator will also act as the point of contact for MAC members wishing to add agenda items to the regularly scheduled meetings. Members of the ATS Research Team will attend all MAC meetings.

8. Compensation and Scheduling

The MAC will be provided with a budget each ATS project year to pay for meetings costs, travel and honorarium. Unemployed members of the MAC will receive \$100 honorarium for meetings lasting longer than 1 hour and less than 4 hours. Where a member of the MAC must meet after working hours or during an unpaid lunch hour, they will be entitled to an honorarium equal to unemployed MAC members. Where a member of the MAC

participates in a field trip or a prolonged meeting, the maximum amount of an honorarium per day is \$150. The MAC members meetings and travel will be scheduled to ensure they stay within their annual budget. All MAC members must sign an ATS Honorarium Form (1) attached for each meeting or field trip to initiate payment.