# Testing the Waters: Engaging the Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake/Two Row Wampum into a Research Paradigm

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we learned to take a canoe from a cedar without felling it
slate for tools profuse with islands
not just a way of life but life itself
hunting trails berry trails trading trails
we assemble bit by bit the canoe giving thanks
in that place europhilosophy calls "conceptual space" t/here
I speak with the assembled tree nations to a particular tree
asking permission to use part of its clothing its body its spirit
as a vehicle for my journey of words ideas intentions actions feeling
as a companion
paddle paddle paddle
swooooooooossshhh (Cole, 2002, p. 459)

*This paper is based on the lessons learned through a research project exploring the concepts of the Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake and "putting these ideas into action." We consider the reflections of an Indigenous and non-Indigenous researcher who paddled together in a canoe on the Grand River as part of a grassroots canoeing initiative. Using the Two Row Wampum as a frame for their research together, the researchers used critical autoethnography to situate themselves, and also a shared journey to consider the wholistic critical consciousness that arises out of being and doing in research.*

*One of the oldest treaties in North America is the 1613 Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake/Two Row Wampum Treaty, originally between the Haudenosaunee and Dutch in recognizing their cultural differences and agreeing to live peacefully on Turtle Island. A group from Six Nations Polytechnic Deyohaha:ge[1] Indigenous Knowledge Centre, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars and students from McMaster University formed an interdisciplinary partnership to discuss the foundational concepts of the Two Row Wampum Treaty:* Kariwiio *(good mind/equal justice),* Kasastensera *(strength in unity/respect), and* Skenn:ne *(peace) in an effort to create an Indigenous research paradigm that respects the knowledge and culture of the Haudenosaunee People.*

## *Introduction*

This article is a critical autoethnography that is community-based and uses a partnership framework to revitalize Indigenous knowledge and lan-

guage between a Haudenosaunee community and academic institutions. The exploration of this partnership considers the Two Row Wampum Treaty, the relationship building between Indigenous and non-Indigenous research, as well as the being and doing that occurred through participation in a grassroots commemorative Two Row canoe journey. The development of the Two Row Research Paradigm stemmed from Bonnie Freeman's participation with the Two Row Research Partnership group as an Indigenous scholar from McMaster University and as a community member from the Six Nations of the Grand River. The Two Row Research Partnership group is comprised of community historians/scholars and researchers from Six Nations Polytechnic Deyohaha:ge Indigenous Knowledge Centre, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars and students from McMaster University in Ontario, Canada. The group meets monthly and discusses Haudenosaunee philosophical concepts of the Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtak/Two Row Wampum Treaty, Covenant Chain of Friendship Treaty, and the Haudenosaunee Great Law of Peace to develop a research paradigm to be used within Six Nations territory. The preliminary outcome from these monthly discussions related the interlinking of three central philosophical concepts from Haudenosaunee teachings—*Kariwiio* (good mind/equal justice), *Kasastensera* (strength in unity/respect), and *Skenn:ne* (peace)—and how these concepts can inform a Haudenosaunee research paradigm.

At one of the Two Row Research Partnership meetings in April 2016, a community researcher from Deyohaha:ge suggested that "we put these ideas into action." Bonnie Freeman suggested a pilot project with a grassroots community group that was organizing a three-day canoe journey, based on the Two Row Wampum teachings and alliance building between Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants. With approval from the Two Row Research Partnership group and the Two Row on the Grand River Canoe group, Freeman developed a community-focused pilot project that would attempt to bring an understanding of these concepts using action through an autoethnography perspective of the experience by the two researchers. Bonnie invited one of her allied colleagues, Trish Van Katwyk (Settler, Dutch ancestry) "into the canoe" for this research experience. The "Testing the Waters: Building Relationships through a Two Row Research Paradigm" research project came together to understand how alliances and relationships are formed and maintained among Haudenosaunee and allied research scholars. The project incorporates the philosophical knowledge of the Two Row Wampum and the Covenant Chain of Friendship.

*Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake (Two Row Wampum)*

One of the first treaties between the Haudenosaunee and the early settlers (the Dutch, and later the French and English) was the Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake (Two Row Wampum). The Haudenosaunee recognized and respected the differences in lifestyles, beliefs, and values between themselves and early settlers. Therefore, wanting to maintain the cultural tenets of peace and friendship as defined through their cultural philosophy of the Great Law, the Haudenosaunee created the Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake (Two Row Wampum). This Wampum belt expresses an agreement and responsibility between the Haudenosaunee and the new settlers in a peaceful and respectful coexistence between two distinct cultures in North America.

The Haudenosaunee have shared the story of this wampum belt for many generations, explaining this treaty through the metaphor of two water vessels sailing parallel to each other in the river of life. One vessel is described as a European ship symbolizing the culture, ideologies, and lifestyle settlers brought with them from their homelands. The other vessel represents the Onkwehonwe/Haudenosaunee canoe and their balanced and respectful way of life with the natural environment. Oren Lyons (1984), faith keeper for the Onondaga people and an academic, shared the meaning of the Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake (Two Row Wampum):

> [This]... treaty established our equal rights in this land and our separate and equal coexistence on this land between our two peoples, the canoe of the Indian and the boat of the white man going down the river of life in peace and friendship forever. (p. 33)

The agreement is interwoven into this Wampum with shell beads that describe the respect and harmony in which both the Haudenosaunee and the settlers are to exist upon North American lands, parallel to each other, neither interfering with the other's culture or lifestyle (Hill, 1990). The Dutch, and later the French and English, all agreed to uphold the principles and the relationship of this Wampum treaty.

Tuscarora and Six Nations historian and scholar Richard Hill (1990) shares the views from late Haudenosaunee prominent leaders Huron Miller and Jacob Thomas that "political protocol between two races" (p. 25) speaks to the respect, responsibility, and friendship between nations and peoples. While we are to remain in our respected vessels and live according to our own cultures, settlers have come into our canoe and the Onkwehonwe have ventured onto the ship. However, as Miller and Thomas explained, Onkwehonwe people are cautioned never to straddle the two vessels (cultures/lifestyles), meaning, not to have one foot on the ship and one foot in the canoe.

> If this so happens that ... their feet [are] in each of the two boats, there will be a high wind and the boats will separate and the person that has his feet in each of the boats shall fall between the boats, and there is no living soul who will be able to bring them back to the right way given by the Creator but only one—the Creator himself. (Hill, 1990, p. 26)

When viewing the physical Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake (Two Row Wampum) belt, both Onkwehonwe and settler lives/cultures are represented by two parallel rows of purple beads. Also, rows of white beads on either side of and in between the purple rows represent the "river of life." One purple row represents the life and culture of the Haudenosaunee and the other represents the life and culture of the settlers. The white rows on the outer sides of the purple rows represent the cultural philosophies and norms for that particular people. For the Haudenosaunee, this represents *Kariwiio* (the good mind/equal justice/righteousness), *Kasastensera* (strength in unity/respect/power), and *Skenn:ne* (peace). Note that these terms do not represent a Western notion of power and privilege. For the Haudenosaunee, these philosophical concepts represent the cultural knowledge and spirituality which is at the foundation of Haudenosaunee government and life (Freeman, 2015). The concept of *peace* represents The Great Law of Peace brought to us by the Peacemaker, which defines how we are to conduct ourselves with respect and equality to everything around us. The term *power* stands for the power of a good mind and equal justice. The concept of *righteousness* symbolizes the virtue in living with a good mind and incorporating The Great Law of Peace into our daily activities (Freeman, 2015). John Mohawk refers to righteousness as "the shared ideology of the people using their purest and most unselfish minds. It occurs when the people put their minds and emotions in harmony with the flow of the universe and the intentions of the Good Mind or the Great Creator" (cited in Barreiro, 2010, pp. 241-242). Mohawk also explains that we, as humans, have to put aside our "thoughts of prejudice, privilege, and superiority" (cited in Barreiro, 2010, p. 242) and recognize that *all* of creation is equal. By having thoughts of superiority, we, as humans, are not appreciating the gifts and benefits the Creator has bestowed upon this earth: "Nothing belongs to human beings, not even their labor or their skills, for ambition and ability are also the gifts of the Great Creator" (cited in Barreiro, 2010, p. 242). By having the gift of reason, the human mind has the capability to "make righteous decisions about complicated issues" (p. 242). Mohawk explains the principles of reason and righteousness as understood by the Haudenosaunee:

> The Peacemaker began his teachings based on the principle that human beings were given the gift of the power of reason in order that they may settle their differences without the use of force. He proposed that in every instance humans should use every effort to counsel about,

> arbitrate, and negotiate their differences.... All men whose minds are healthy can desire peace, he taught, and there is ability within all human beings, and especially in the young human beings, to grasp and hold strongly to the principles of righteousness. The ability to grasp the principles of righteousness is a spark within the individual that society must fan and nurture so that it may grow. Reason is seen as the skill that humans must be encouraged to acquire in order that the objectives of justice may be attained and no one's rights abused. (cited in Barreiro, 2010, p. 242)

Another principle which the Peacemaker brought to the Haudenosaunee through the Great Law was the understanding of the concept of power. Connecting spirituality enacts peace with all aspects of life, a "spiritual conscious society using its abilities of reason that resulted in a healthy society" (Barreiro, 2010, p. 243). The Peacemaker brought the spiritual concepts of living in a conscious society through the Great Law of Peace. As a result, the political and spiritual foundations of governance were formed by bringing together five nations (Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and the Seneca) to form the Haudenosaunee Confederacy (Freeman, 2015).

The Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake (Two Row Wampum) works within the context of Kayanaren'kó:wa (The Great Law of Peace) in which the Haudenosaunee extend this binding agreement to settler nations with the assurance of peaceful co-existence between nations and with the natural world. This agreement was first made with the Dutch and later accepted by the French and the United Kingdom. A subsequent Wampum belt known as the Covenant Chain of Friendship Treaty was created by the Haudenosaunee to show settler nations the value of friendship. If settlers needed the assistance of the Haudenosaunee they would "shake" the chain and this would indicate to the Haudenosaunee to come and assist that settler nation. If the Haudenosaunee needed assistance, they would "shake" the chain and this would be felt on the end of the settlers to come and assist the Haudenosaunee.

The story shared in explaining this friendship wampum was first represented with a rope and then by an iron chain. The Haudenosaunee recognized that a rope could wear out and break, so then this treaty was symbolized with an iron chain. However, it was realized that iron also rusts. Therefore, a silver chain was decided to best represent the respect, friendship, and peace that binds the relationship between the Haudenosaunee and settlers. To ensure that the agreement would not tarnish, and that the two groups coexist in peace and friendship forever, it is said that periodically the silver covenant chain would be taken out by both groups and polished to remember the binding agreement of the Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake.

## *The Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake Journey and the Canoe: An Indigenous Qualitative Research Paradigm*

Indigenous qualitative research is based on a paradigm that conceptualizes and integrates the notion of Indigenous knowledge through the "being" and "doing" of research from an Indigenous ethical perspective (Absolon, 2011; Ermine, 2007; Hart, 2008, 2010; Wilson, 2008). Kathy Absolon (2011) refers to this Indigenous paradigm and process as *Kaandossiwin* (Anishnnabe) or *how we come to know*. Erica-Irene Daes (cited in Marie Battiste and James (Sákéj) Youngblood Henderson) expressed in her report to the United Nations that:

> Indigenous knowledge is a complete knowledge system with its own epistemology, philosophy, and scientific and logical validity ... [and] can only be understood by means of pedagogy traditionally employed by the people themselves ... [with] the role of land or ecology ... [as] central and [an] indispensable classroom. (Battiste & Henderson, 2004, p. 41)

For many generations, Native people have been critically analyzed through a Eurocentric lens which has scrutinized the values, beliefs, and culture of Aboriginal people. This paper shifts the way we look at and overcome problems by undertaking a conceptual framework that is rooted in Haudenosaunee knowledge and epistemology (Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008). Sadie Buck, a cultural knowledge keeper from Six Nations, explains: "As Haudenosaunee people we cannot take only one aspect of our knowledge in an attempt to understand our cultural lifestyle as a whole, our philosophy and epistemology is sustained by how we live and conduct our lives according to our teachings provided to us by our Creator" (cited in Freeman, 2015, p. 94).

An Indigenous research paradigm is spiritually based and connected to the land and natural environment. It is crucial for us as academics, social workers, educators, and professionals to understand that we cannot compartmentalize or deconstruct Indigenous philosophy due to the spiritual level in which it is based (Absolon, 2011; Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008). Oren Lyons articulates the importance of spirituality and the respect that is critical to the political and social welfare of the Haudenosaunee:

> we are told that our first and most important duty is to see that the spiritual ceremonies are carried out. Without ceremonies, one does not have a basis on which to conduct government for the welfare of the people. This is not only for our people but for the good of all living things in general.... Whether it is the growing life of trees, plants or animals, or whether it is human, all life is equal.... We believe it is equal because we are spiritual people. If a tree is standing there, then the Creator must have put it there, and if the Creator has put it there, then you must respect it. If a person is sitting there, obviously the Creator has made this person; therefore, you must respect the person. If we are to put this belief into practice, then we must protect life and all its manifestations. (Lyons, 1984, pp. 5-6)

The framework of Indigenous inquiry engages a wholistic paradigm by drawing "on the emotional, spiritual, physical and mental well-being of a people" (Martin-Hill, Darnay, & Lamouche, 2008, p. 60). Our relationship built between the spiritual and natural worlds is reflected through our interaction with the natural environment and expressed through the discourse of our Native languages and our cultural practices (Freeman, 2015). Martin-Hill, Darnay, and Lamouche (2008) express that Indigenous people move beyond the attachment to land: "Our epistemology and consciousness is informed by the Creator and shaped by the land" (p. 60). Mohawk scholar Marlene Brant-Castellano (2000) states that Indigenous knowledge "derives from multiple sources, including traditional teachings, empirical observation, and revelation" (p. 23) and that "Aboriginal knowledge is said to be personal, oral, experiential, holistic, and conveyed in narrative or metaphorical language" (p. 25).

For Indigenous researchers who have been educated in a Western institution, acquiring and returning to an Indigenous system of knowledge is challenging because it rejects everything we have been taught within colonial society (Freeman, 2015). The knowledge that we experience on the land and in the natural environment is so different from the knowledge we obtain from within the institutions of the western academy (Absolon, 2011; Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008). For Indigenous people, the land, the natural environment, and the animals teach us the importance of relationship, humility, and respect—that we are a small part of something bigger. To know from within an Indigenous perspective is to touch, feel, smell, taste, see, and to live the experience. Indigenous knowledge "does not flow exclusively or primarily through our intellect" (Brant-Castellano, 2000, p. 29); it is multidimensional and engages all our senses which contribute to our knowing (Freeman, 2015).

An Indigenous qualitative research paradigm incorporates a way of knowing or seeking knowledge by turning our gaze inwards to trust the inner exploration of answers (Absolon, 2011; Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008). Willie Ermine (1995) writes:

> Those who seek to understand the reality of existence and harmony with the environment by turning inward have a different incorporeal knowledge paradigm that might be termed 'Aboriginal epistemology'.... The inner space is that universe of being within each person that is synonymous with the soul, the spirit, the self, or the being. (p. 103)

By trusting ourselves and our connection to the Creator, on physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual levels, we can deepen our experience of knowledge and consciousness to become the people we desire based on our values, principles, and the journey we share together.

Critical autoethnography is a qualitative approach to research that also highlights the importance of turning one's gaze inward. By incorporating a critical autoethnography, the researchers are learning and interpreting research that entails the researcher closely observing their own experience that includes a full acknowledgement of the social/political context that informs personal conduct and response (Chew, Greendeer, & Keliiaa, 2015). Whitinui (2014) describes an Indigenous autoethnography that extends the autoethnographer's attention to self and context to incorporate deep assumptions about (w)holistic, esoteric, relational, and profoundly connected existence. With these enhancements, and with the centering of Indigenous experience, Indigenous autoethnography becomes a resistance that supports the objectives of Indigenous approaches to research in general, where the research method highlights the abilities to protect, problem solve, provide, and heal (Kainamu, 2012; Whitinui, 2014). A group of Indigenous researchers used a collaborative approach to autoethnography in their exploration of language learning (Chew et al., 2015). They described how this method centred Indigenous voice, knowledge, and existence, even as it has evolved out of Western approaches to qualitative research. By utilizing an "epistemology of insiderness" (Bainbridge, 2007, p. 9), Indigenous ways of knowing and of constructing knowledge are validated and central to the research/knowledge activity. While research has historically been used in ways that have brought harm to Indigenous individuals and communities (Drawson, Toombs, & Mushquash, 2017; Gillies, Burleigh, Snowshoe, & Werner, 2014), a critical autoethnography approach compels the non-Indigenous researcher to re-examine the history and impact of research, and to self-examine in such a way as to disrupt the colonizing effect that knowledge acquisition, production, and validation can have (Graeme, 2013; McCall, 2016; Whitinui, 2014). Non-Indigenous researcher Transken (2005) describes research as a process of remembering: remembering as being a reconnection to a whole we are a part of, and that, through autoethnography, this remembering can occur, because it connects the personal to the cultural to the political and social; it reconnects to the whole. The self-reflexivity that comes with autoethnography, the awareness of the whole one is a part of, may disrupt the harm that unconscious privilege and colonialism causes. Non-Indigenous researchers conducting autoethnography can participate in research as allies, supporting research that seeks to de-colonize (McCall, 2016; Transken, 2005). Graeme and Mandawe (2017) used autoethnography to explore the research relationship they had as Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers, looking for the possibility that research could be reconciliation. The authors contend that reconciliation needs to acknowledge the ongoing processes of colonization

found in current structures and relationships, and that research needs to decolonize and/or be Indigenous. Self-reflexive practices create opportunities for non-Indigenous researchers to question themselves and their assumptions, and to rupture ways of being and doing that are colonizing and dominating. Self-reflexive practice also creates opportunities for Indigenous researchers to centre themselves, their subjectivities, and the contexts which erode and support those subjectivities. Self-reflexivity situates us in a context that we must acknowledge as part of the process of political and social transformation, where we come to know our contexts and how we are situated within those contexts.

An Indigenous or decolonizing process in "coming to know" (re-search) does not happen through steps, order, compartmentalizing, or deconstructing the process of a research paradigm. "Coming to know" happens as we put forth our intention to seek "knowing." By having a good mind and going forward in a good way we have that possibility of acquiring that knowledge we want to know. In the next section, the authors share their experience of putting forth their intention in exploring "re-search" through an allied relationship and "coming to understand" the Tekani Teyothata:tye Kaswenta/Two Row Research Paradigm using a canoe journey on the Grand River.

### *Inviting an Ally into the Canoe*

The shared experience of two researchers, Freeman (Haudenosaunee) and Van Katwyk (Settler, Dutch ancestry), explores the development of an Indigenous "re-search" paradigm in "coming to know again" (Absolon, 2011). The paradigm connects to an understanding of the "search for knowing" by participating in a water-based/land-based consciousness while journeying 54 kilometres on the Grand River in a canoe. The researchers decided to implement an autoethnography methodology for this research project as a means to centre this Indigenous perspective of "action and involvement" in searching meaning for "re-search", as well as in developing relationships.

The two researchers travelled three days in a canoe during a grassroots community-organized event called Two Row on the Grand Paddle, from July 1-3, 2016. While the two researchers have known each other and journeyed through a PhD program together for over ten years, they had never undertaken such an experience as this before. For Freeman, taking her one foot from the ship and placing both feet in the canoe was invigorating, yet scary. There was a sense of comfort in being back in her Haudenosaunee community and culture. However, there was an underlying feeling of fear and judgment in trying to live up to an academic expectation while vali-

dating and centering Indigenous knowledge within a research focus. For Van Katwyk, being invited as a Settler and ally into the canoe was a profound but intimidating honour. The unconscious privileges of settler/ship could rock and destabilize not only the canoe but the relationship with Freeman. The canoe is an Indigenous space, welcoming an ally relationship, and Van Katwyk was mindful of her capacity to dishonour such space with assumptions and ignorance. As an outcome from this experience, along with their personal and shared reflections, the two researchers began to understand a Two Row and how this draws on the Haudenosaunee philosophical perspectives of epistemology, ontology, axiology, and methodology through a research paradigm that involves Indigenous journeying. In understanding how the philosophical concepts from Haudenosaunee teachings relate to a working research paradigm for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers, the next section shares personal reflections on how the two created a working relationship while searching for answers and knowledge.

## *'One foot in the Ship and One foot in the Canoe': Indigenous-non-Indigenous Reflections*

In their reflections, Freeman and Van Katwyk shared their fears and concerns as Haudenosaunee and Settler researchers in unsettling what they have learned in their upbringing and from the academy, while fully immersing themselves in an Indigenous perspective of "coming to know" (Absolon, 2011). They offer their perspectives and reflections on how they come to terms in straddling these two worlds (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) and Haudenosaunee culture.

### *Bonnie Freeman*

At times in my life and during this canoe journey, I had one foot in each of the two boats, leaving me to question: Am I straddling two cultures or have I chose to step into the White man's world? If I have chosen to leave my "Indian world", do I leave my identity behind? These are questions I have asked myself for much of my life, confused as to whether or not I have left my "Indianness" at the door of the "Whiteman." (Freeman, 2015) After reading Hill's (1990) article with Huron Miller and Jake Thomas's interview, I have taken solace in one part of the narrative in which Haudenosaunee Knowledge keepers, Miller and Thomas, shared as to what happens if we, as Native people, decide to embark into the Whiteman's world:

> The Whiteman said, 'What will happen if your people ... go into my vessel?'
>
> The Onkwehonweh replied, 'If this happens, then they will have to be guided by my canoe'. (cited in Hill, 1990, p. 26)

When I reflect on my struggle with my identity and the questions of having one foot in either vessel, I realize that we do not lose ourselves or our identity as an Onkwehonwe[2] if we decide to pursue life or an academic career in the Whiteman's world. I will always be an "Indian", and the cultural guidance from my people is always there guiding and supporting me (Freeman, 2015). My understanding from discussions with knowledge keepers is that Onkwehonwe sovereignty and a Good Mind provide us with a cultural identity and a sense of belonging to the land, our way of life, and to our Onkwehonwe people. When you have a strong foundation in your Onkwehonwe beliefs, you understand that you are a part of a collective, one that includes all other nations. When we have our Good Mind we are not held back from asking for help; we understand that by contributing to an individual, family, community, or nation we are contributing to all of us as a people, as well as creation as a whole. In our teachings, we are told to share, be generous, and be grateful; this does not mean we will not struggle. Rather, we have the freedom and independence within our Good Minds to bring about change and action for the benefit of our people and creation, which is our responsibility (Freeman, 2015).

For the Haudenosaunee, the Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake (Two Row Wampum) is a strong foundation in our Onkwehonwe beliefs and values, which carries us through generations. By remaining firm in our understanding of and maintaining respect for the teachings of the Creator and The Great Law of Peace, we will remain a distinct and resilient people upon our lands. Therefore, Onkwehonwe people are not only seeking peace, equality, and justice for their own lives, but also for the earth, the natural environment, and all of creation (Freeman, 2015).

*Trish Van Katwyk*

I was honoured and excited to be invited to work with Bonnie and to accompany her on this canoe and research journey. I began to learn about the Two Row Wampum belt (Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake), touched by the idea that some of the very first treaties between Europeans and Indigenous peoples were relationship and friendship treaties (Coleman, 2015; Hallenbeck, 2015; Hill, 2013; Parmenter, 2013). The idea that a relationship could be considered significant enough to create a formal commitment between nations commemorated with a gathering and a traditional feast was mind-boggling. It changes the idea I had of *treaty* as being a noun, a *thing* that documents ownership as validation. I come to realize the depth of the offense committed through settler encroachments which have violated the agreements that land treaties have documented. With the Two Row Wampum belt, *treaty* becomes a verb and it is about the

relationship rather than ownership. The Tekani Teyothata:tye Kaswenta (Two Row Wampum) is about an ongoing relationship, not a place to arrive at, but an intentional process to be and to do. I was looking forward to being part of an exploration, delighted about the idea that a canoe trip had become a scholarly pursuit that was resonating on a number of different levels for me.

As the first day of the canoe journey approached, I began to feel anxious about my Settler blinders, and how they would interfere with my learning and "being" in this experience. I was anxious about participating among paddlers, and in a location that was far from my familiar and comfortable places (my home, my community, and my academic setting) in territory that I have come to assume as my rightful place. I have been granted privileges, space, and belonging that were established with little to no effort on my part (Keenan, 2010). I was anxious about my relationship with Bonnie, as it felt that our self-reflexive approach and shared journeying was bringing us to an intimacy that brought vulnerability and risk. Finally, while it was delightful to become involved in a canoe journey as a research activity, it occurred to me that the skills and capacities of doing such a search for knowing were new to me, and I began to feel uncertain as a researcher and specifically as a paddler.

## *The Journey*

*Bonnie Freeman*

A journey from an Indigenous perspective involves travelling using horseback, foot, or canoe. In doing so, it connects people back to the land and water, and the land and water to the people. Therefore, "undertaking an *actual* journey is often seen as an outward expression of, and crucially a catalyst for... an inner (psychological or spiritual) journey" (Morgan, 2010, p. 248). Alun David Morgan (2010) explains that journeys by foot, canoe, or horseback serve as a physical challenge, which engages the traveller with the natural environment and sacred spaces, as well as reducing one's pace of life into that moment to allow for personal reflection.

While there is not much literature that discusses a perspective of paddling a canoe, we are going to relate walking to paddling on the water and the similar connection the two modes of travelling have to the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual, as well as to the land and water. Susie O'Brien (2007) explains that travelling:

> is both peripatetic and forward-moving, it demands unmediated engagement with a physical world whose rhythms still confound the dictates of civilization. At the same time, a journey such as canoeing or walking asserts human agency, linking the steps of the walkers or the pulling the paddle through the water as an act of self-determination. (O'Brien, 2007, p. 95)

The physical engagement of our bodies connects us to our emotions and consciousness on various levels (Morgan, 2010; Solnit, 2001). Rebecca Solnit (2001) speaks to the state where the body, mind, and the world align (p. 5) through the movement of walking or paddling, and that it is more than arriving at our destination—it is a means to how we arrive at transformation, clarification, and liberation:

> The rhythm of walking [and canoeing] generates a kind of rhythm of thinking, and the passage through a landscape [or water that] echoes or stimulates the passage through a series of thoughts. This creates an odd consonance between internal and external passage, one that suggests that the mind is also a landscape of sorts and that walking [and canoeing] is one way to traverse it. A new thought often seems like a feature of the landscape [and water] that was there all along, as though thinking were traveling rather than making ... for the motions of the mind cannot be traced, but those of the feet [and paddle] can.... It is the movement as well as the sights going by that seems to make things happen in the mind [body and spirit]. (pp. 5-6)

Both Solnit (2001) and O'Brien (2007) express the significance of physical movement to land and water, and how this connects us to "a conscious cultural act rather than a means to an end" (Solnit, 2001, p. 14). The assertion of physical movement enacts personal agency, which is connected to the past, present, and the future of all people (O'Brien, 2007).

*Trish Van Katwyk*

Journey is an initial action in research that incorporates "being" outdoors and feeling movement with the land and environment. The land is an encompassing life experience. The land is shown to be about territory, resources, dignity, freedom, power, and self-sufficiency—it is a wholistic way of life, which includes a connection to the social, physical, spiritual, personal, and political (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Jeffrey, 2015; Wolfe, 2006). An Indigenous journey from an allied perspective embraces an active rather than passive engagement in knowledge creation. John Borrows (2006) notes in his description of the transformative and active role of Indigenous peoples the un-extinguishable capacity to self-govern, which is exquisitely tied to the land and all that this stands for.

Therefore, the journey is about "the being and the doing" in the natural elements. Paddling through the water and feeling the movement of the canoe contributes to an experience of the world from a different perspective. As we sat poised in the canoe, balancing with the rocking of the vessel as we pulled our paddles through the current of the water, we were brought to a moment in the present. This experience slows us down to feel the coolness of the wind and warmth of the sun while witnessing eagles, blue herons, and turtles in their moment on the river. We become aware of how we are a part of this natural environment that calls upon and initiates

knowledge that crosses through and brings together all of the senses, including intuition.

*The Canoe*

The beginning of community-based research is building upon relationships (Battiste, 2002; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Denzin, Lincoln & Giardina, 2006; Martinez, 2014; Smith, 1999). The same is true when working with Indigenous communities with research, where relationship-building is vital throughout and even following the research process (Battiste, 2002). The pace of relationship-centred research is shaped according to the time and space that will nurture the precious bonds of the people who are involved in the research. Relationship-centred research also recognizes the dynamics of power. Therefore, it is essential for researchers to be reflexive, considerate, and engage meaningfully with their community collaborators to ensure that respectful relationships are developed. When the act of "being and doing" are brought into the research project, relationships can be celebrated with a sense of solidarity (Loewenson, Laurell, Hogstedt, D'Ambruoso, & Shroff, 2014).

Freeman and Van Katwyk drew from a critical autoethnographic research method as the initial focus of this exploration into an Indigenous/non-Indigenous relationship based on a Haudenosaunee perspective of ally-ship. Through autoethnography, we carefully considered our unique experiences as they related to the structures and experiences that shape our worlds (Custer, 2014). Using a critical autoethnographic approach, the researcher examines the web of relations that they are embedded in and begins to reconsider the realities and inequities that are woven into this web (Manovski, 2014). Absolon (2011) writes extensively about the impact on research and the extent of connectedness when a researcher begins their work by positioning themselves within their research. Both Freeman and Van Katwyk decided to ground the exploration in the critical autoethnographic work of an Indigenous journey. In doing so, we expanded our web of relations to include the natural elements (land, wind, water, sun, rain, rocks, eagles, turtles, blue heron, etc.) while embedding and reflecting on ourselves in this research project with profound connectedness (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015).

The canoe is the space that Freeman invited Van Katwyk to enter together. However, we are not just in the canoe; we are in the natural elements surrounded by the Grand River, and in the treaty relationship of the Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake and the Six Nations Haldimand Treaty of 1784[3]. Regarding treaty relationships, the canoe experience for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous researcher is essential. Both Freeman and Van

Katwyk are creating the distinctness as identified regarding position, responsibilities, and roles within the canoe, as well as allies defined by the old agreements and treaties. In Figure 1, the canoe becomes the ethical space in which both Indigenous and Settler share a relationship in and with the "re-search". The canoe becomes this shared space in which both researchers begin to learn to work together. The person who sits at the bow (front) of the canoe is paddling straight, navigating and motoring the canoe forward. The role of the bow or navigator is to look and read the water,

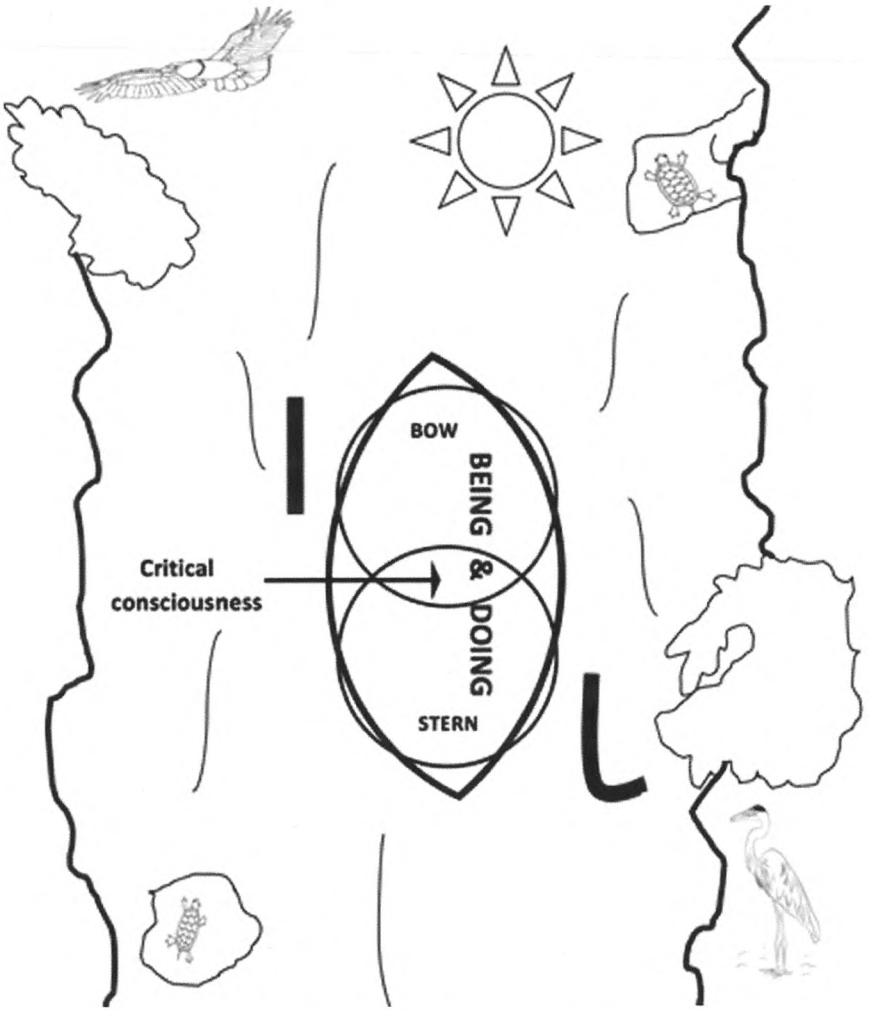


*Figure 1. The ethical space of the canoe and the epistemology of the natural environment.*

rocks, and land for obstructions to avoid (logs, shallowness, etc.) while communicating the best direction of the canoe. The person who sits in the stern of the canoe, whose paddling comprises of straight and J shape strokes, is steering and motoring the canoe. Figure 1 highlights the intersection of "critical consciousness" that occurs when being and doing are brought together to form the critical positioning of self framed by the ethics of an allied, Two Row relationship.

Both researchers explored this wholistic place of critical consciousness in their research reflections.

*Trish Van Katwyk*

For me, this is to try to understand what I bring to the canoe and the research that Bonnie and I share. By sharing in the canoe, my distinctness was not transformed so that I became a "person of the canoe", but it was the canoe that becomes transformed, merging with the river to become ethical space. Ermine (2007) writes of the differences that constitute ethical space:

> These are the differences that highlight uniqueness because each entity is moulded from a distinct history, knowledge tradition, philosophy, and social and political reality. With the calculated disconnection through the contrasting of their identities, and the subsequent creation of two solitudes with each claiming their own distinct and autonomous view of the world, a theoretical space between them is opened. (p. 194)

Alfred and Corntassel (2005) write that "Indigenousness is an identity constructed, shaped and lived in the politicized context of contemporary colonialism" (p. 597). I believe that an introduction of myself needs to consider the manner in which my identity as a Settler is "constructed, shaped and lived in the politicized context of contemporary colonialism" (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005, p. 597). To merely list off my privileges without attempting to understand more deeply the political, philosophical, social, and epistemic implications of such an identity construct would be to contaminate the ethical space and lose the potentialities of such a space.

There are other aspects of my experience that I bring to the space that Bonnie and I share. As a teacher, I become bored and seek change in the dead space of a classroom where the design hampers engagement and the methods silence the students. As a social worker, I am committed to social justice and equally destabilized by how this profession has been and continues to be complicit in injustices of magnitude. As a researcher, I begin to question the impact of the relationships that can be a part of the research process and I become bound to equity, action, and interpretive, wholistic ways of knowing that are based in the community.

*Bonnie Freeman*

Somehow, our cognitive knowledge about the Tekani Teyothata:tye Kaswenta (Two Row Wampum) and our extensive thinking about what each of us was bringing into the research project and into the canoe did allay feelings of anxiety. The challenge of the research was to explore how our knowledge could expand and deepen through the "being and doing" that this journey called upon. The knowledge that comes with "being and doing" extends from the surface of the water, to beneath the water, beyond the banks, and high into the sky. The "being and the doing" of this journey resulted in deepening our knowledge through the mindfulness that opens the way to critical consciousness through the space of engagement (Ermine, 2007). When we look at the Tekani Teyothata:tye Kaswentathe's "three white beads between the two purple rows", we begin to comprehend the respect, friendship, and peace we are to have with each other and with the world around us. The land and water played an important part in creating and supporting our relationship as Indigenous and non-Indigenous allies. The land and water themselves are powerful beings that shift our relationship from distant friends and working academic colleagues to a familial relationship. Our interactions with the land, water, and air awaken place-based consciousness (Watts, 2013). This form of place-based consciousness or thought is the foundation which supports and mobilizes Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in appreciating each other and our roles and responsibilities to our treaty relationships, families, and as humans in protecting the land, water, place, and each other (Freeman, 2015). Vanessa Watts (2013) describes this notion of consciousness as Place-Thought where:

> the non-distinctive space where place and thought have never separated because they never could or can be separated from an Indigenous perspective. Place-Thought is based upon the premise that land and water is alive and thinking and that humans and non-humans derive agency through the extensions of these thoughts. (p. 21)

Therefore, consciousness transcends back to the beginning of time—to Creation, and the thoughts and actions of Sky Woman as she landed on the turtle's back, the animals, and the water, to now. The earth and water hold that knowledge, which transcends to the consciousness and memory ingrained in our bodies and blood memory to which we have been created. From a Haudenosaunee/Onkwehonwe perspective, we, as human beings, were put on this earth understanding that the earth is our mother, the waters on this earth are the bloodlines of our mother, and everything is related (Freeman, 2015). Having this level of consciousness with our experience, "re-search" connects us as humans to the history and the thought

of our creation, as well the creation and purpose of everything living, including the earth (Watts, 2013). Place-based thought (Watts, 2013) is innate within us, interconnecting us with the outer world and the outer world connecting to us.

### *Conclusion: What We Have Come to Learn?*

Out of many engaged discussions that carefully consider how the Two Row Wampum could be used to inform interdisciplinary and Indigenous/non-Indigenous alliances, a call for action arose. While dialogue was an essential component of the partnership that was formed between the Deyohaha:ge Indigenous Knowledge Centre and Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars and students from McMaster University, there was also a desire to put ideas into action in revitalizing the cultural knowledge and practices of the Haudenosaunee beyond the conceptual understanding of the Two Row Wampum. Freeman responded to this call by inviting a non-Indigenous researcher, Van Katwyk, to join her in a project that featured Indigenous approaches to being, doing, journey, and critical self-reflection in the true essence of Indigenous learning by means of the land, water, and the natural environment. In doing so, we were provided an intergenerational experience and transmission of ancient Haudenosaunee knowledge to the present time, for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants.

Our journey opened up and consolidated a search that brought us out and beyond, as well as deeply inward. This search made it possible to explore the Indigenous/non-Indigenous alliance space that we were creating, by "being and doing" our exploration. We found ourselves immersed in metaphors that could describe the developments of our alliance and friendship through "re-search" in a way that tapped into the knowledge that does not rely only upon text. In this way, our experience, with its metaphoric weight, provided insight about the challenges and rewards of Two Row relations.

The insights came with experiences that could be metaphors for our Two Row relationship. When we first entered the canoe, there was the uncertainty that comes with unfamiliar movements and balancing with the rippling waves of the river's surface. We held on to the sides of the canoe to try to stabilize our positions. We discovered various ways of creating movement: from paddling, to pushing against the river's bed, rocks, and branches with our paddles, to lurching our bodies in a rhythm forward to loosen the canoe after having become grounded. We struggled to find a way to take the distinct responsibilities of our position in the canoe while learning to respond and join our efforts when the situation called upon it.

On the first day, we entered into deep waters whose current was strong. There was a large rock in front of us, and we were unable to steer clear of it. In our effort to change direction, our canoe turned sideways and came alongside the rock. Our canoe capsized. After finding our footing, we worked hard to stand upright in the rushing water and prevent the canoe from sinking under the heavy current. A paddle and a hat disappeared down the frothing river. As we scooped the water out of the canoe using a water bottle, we began to pull and push the canoe towards the shore. The current got a hold of the canoe and swung around and almost knocked Freeman over. We stood there, in the middle of the river, unable to do anything but remain standing, clinging to the canoe so it would not be swept away. "What do we do?" Van Katwyk yelled to Freeman over the din of the rushing water. "I don't know!" Freeman replied.

With the help of another paddler and a long rope, we worked together to bring the canoe to the calmer water at the river's edge. We borrowed another paddle and carefully re-entered our canoe. We listened closely to the advice of a skilled paddler, and steered clear of the tumultuous and rocky waters, aiming the canoe towards a deep and calmer surface that did not show the signs of rocks close to the surface or shallow depths. Van Katwyk kept her eyes facing forwards, scanning the water and focusing on the information that the river was willing to share with her. She decided to stop "helping" Freeman with the steering and focus only on her role in the canoe. Soon, Freeman and Van Katwyk had settled into a way of moving that was graceful and fluid, a rhythm falling into place like breathing, with a smooth gliding forward and then a moment of pause before another splash of the paddles entering into the water, deftly maneuvering forward through the Grand River.

This capsize experience represents the rupture that occurred in order for a collaborative and intentional relationship to begin forming. By gazing inward, we can see the constructions that need to be loosened in such a significant way as to capsize us into a place of dilemma or uncertainty. We needed to attentively re-learn our space to establish an ethics of respect, friendship, and peace that creates the potential of the Two Row Wampum alliance, where side-by-side non interference, optimal regard, and the capacity to self-govern are exemplified. The river asked us to undertake our place in the relationship and then provided us with the knowledge drawn from the entirety of the environment in which we move and journey.

The Two Row Wampum shows two rows of purple to represent vessels travelling side by side. There are rows of white beads to represent the river. The rows of white are on either side of the purple lines and also in between the purple lines. Within this relationship treaty, there is a narrative that can

guide the Indigenous/non-Indigenous research relationship. There is the inward gaze that the outside rows of white beads call upon, so that in our relationship we can carry a wholistic awareness of what we are bringing of ourselves into the relationship. This is an attention to *being* that is called upon in allied research. There is also the movement and journey that is depicted with the two vessels moving alongside one another through the river. This is the attention given to *doing* that expands the connections and immersions that occur in allied research. It is also important to acknowledge how being and doing are not distinct occurrences: in both the self-reflexivity and the journeying, there are both being and doing. When being and doing are brought together, we suggest that a critical consciousness can occur for researchers. The critical consciousness enhances experience to incorporate profound connectedness, reflexive considerations of social/political/historical/cultural/environmental contexts, and a way of knowledge that draws upon the multiple senses that are engaged in our day-to-day moments. The being and the doing centres Indigenous approaches to knowledge, to connection, and to balance. The Indigeneity of the Two Row framework is found in the ethical field that is shared between the two rows of purple, lessons in relationship that draw heavily upon the principles of the Haudenosaunee Great Law of Peace that has brought diverse nations together for cooperation, collaboration, and mutual well-being.

*Notes*

[1] Translates to *Two Paths.*

[2] Haudenosaunee word, meaning *Original People of the land.*

[3] The Haldimand Treaty of 1784 was originally granted to the Mohawks and later to the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory for their alliance with the Queen of England during the American Wars of Independence. The Haudenosaunee of Six Nations were granted six miles on either side of the Grand River in Ontario, Canada from the Source to the Mouth (to be held in trust by the Crown). Six Nations Land and Resources, retrieved Nov. 11, 2016 (http://www.sixnations.ca/LandsResources/ClaimSummaries.htm)

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