

go unhonoured and unceded lands receive, at best, token recognition; whether it's in the form of more of our children being "in care" now than at the height of the residential school era; or whether it's in the form of dozens of our people of all genders continuing to be murdered or declared missing, so much is being unjustly taken from us.

Nothing that I've written here about injustice should come as a revelation. But perhaps it can serve as a reminder that Indigenous peoples must receive justice not only at the systemic level but also at the individual level, where names need to be named and actions must be taken. Instead of reconciliation, perhaps a better name for what is required to obtain this justice at all levels is one that might cause those in power some discomfort and that is the almost forgotten concept of revolution.

POSTSCRIPT

In choosing to identify with my traditional name, it is a way of being grounded, speaking more from my centre and calling out to my ancestors that the sacred act of naming is still living and breathing within us as Indigenous people. Systems of oppression have the power to name, but it doesn't mean we have to fully accept them as primary signifiers.

Science, Race, and the Alchemy of Love in Postwar British Columbia

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AS A CHILD GROWING UP ON Vancouver Island in British Columbia during the 1960s and 1970s, I learned early that the world was ordered and arranged according to systems of classification in which everything had its place in relation to everything else. Names within these systems had meanings that had social and material consequences. As I was to learn later, one of the most pervasive and powerful systems of classification in the province was that of science – specifically, the colonial pseudo-science underlying provincial and federal laws and

policies for population management and racial segregation (see Adachi 1976 [1991]; Sunahara 1981; McLaren 1990; and Lawrence 2004).

Yet I grew up with a different understanding of science, based on my mother's and father's embrace of a vision of postwar society in which justice and love crossed the racial lines of segregation and all forms of life were interconnected and interdependent. Both studied at the University of British Columbia in the 1950s, my father in oceanography and my mother in biochemistry. My brothers and I inherited their delight in the world seen through the lens of what science could be. The walls of our home were lined with books on geology, plankton, plant life, and birds species. These studies were tucked into bookcases with local histories, Japanese folk tales, Roderick Haig-Brown's treatises on trout fishing, Indigenous teachings, Moomintroll books, and my mother's books on ceramics and international cuisine, with all varieties of novels, from Tolstoy and Maria Campbell to my father's favourite spy novels. I learned that scientific nomenclature, with its hierarchy of families, species, and subspecies, could open up magical connections between creatures, like tiny shore crabs (*Hemigrapsus nudus*) and plump garden spiders (*Araneus diadematus*), that seemed to live in completely different universes. Who would guess that shore crabs inhabiting the lush salty world of small slippery black blenny eels, pink sea anemones, and darting sculpins in the low tide zones along the shores below our home were related to garden spiders inhabiting the aerial world, floating in gossamer webs, swinging airborne on almost invisible silver threads strung across footpaths through the thimbleberry thickets to the forest of ancient cedar and massive maple trees that, as kids, we'd shinny up to daydream amidst their green canopies.

My parents and their family members were well aware of the other kind of science, the pseudo-science of eugenics and racial classification that structured pre-war life in British Columbia and that was one of the key ingredients in the colonial ideology and infrastructure that was set up to remove Indigenous nations from their territories and invalidate their universe-affirming cosmologies. In 1942, in accordance with this larger racial scheme, the Canadian government categorized my mother's family, along with over twenty-one thousand other Japanese Canadians, as yet one more undesirable race that needed to be removed from its borders. Prime Minister Mackenzie King used the War Measures Act to instigate a massive plan to remove "all people of Japanese racial descent" within the span of seven years. By 1946, most were relocated east of the Rocky Mountains, and another four thousand were shipped to Japan (Adachi 1976; Sunahara 1981).

For my mother and father the postwar period opened a world of opportunities that were impossible in pre-war British Columbia. Science was intrinsic to a new way of thinking. In 1951, in response to the racial ideologies driving genocide and colonialism, UNESCO concluded “that there were no scientific grounds whatever for the racialist position regarding purity of race and the hierarchy of inferior and superior races” (Kuper 1975, 348). Like many other members of their generation, my parents embraced this new era at every level, finding liberatory joy in the clean geometric lines of modernism in art, architecture, music, and style. But the science of the 1950s was by no means innocent. Its utopian (totalitarian) visions made possible another level of violence, with military technologies and agri-business aimed at the irreversible obliteration of unwanted forms of life. My parents were not ignorant of science’s destructive force. My mother was the president of the Voice of Women in Nanaimo and its anti-war, anti-nuclear campaigns; my father, in the 1980s, was involved in recovering estuaries damaged by industry and gave testimonies at court hearings against oil tanker routes down the Pacific coast.

I think it must have been my parents’ sense of play, love of art, and political principle that continued to unite them through even the most difficult years in the white working-class town of Nanaimo, where my father was hired by the Federal Fisheries’ Biological Station. This was a town that was and arguably still is at heart, a brutish coal-mining town occupying the unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation (<http://www.snuneymuxw.ca/nation/history>).

In all of this, how does the alchemy of my parents’ love fit into the legal and emotional structures of the postwar society? Rather than defying racial segregation, others have argued that “intermarriage” amounted to assimilation (Adachi 1976), especially given the 90+ percent rate of intermarriage for Japanese Canadians (Kobayashi 1989). The larger pre-1967 colonial system that targeted “all people of Japanese racial origin,” along with Chinese Canadians, South Asians, and black Canadians, continues to be engrained in the material and psychic foundations of today’s society, most notably in the Indian Act but also in anti-terrorism legislation, its policing systems, and an ecologically annihilating economy based on pipelines and digital communication technologies. I could go on, yet I find myself pausing. It feels as though the dystopic conclusion I am heading towards is already scripted. So I ask what can be yielded from this critical script, a script that is modelled after the (Eurocentric) tradition of critical theory and its methods of deconstruction, which can dismissively, if not imperiously, generalize and

accuse from a distance, allowing for little recognition of the specificity of life. While critical assessment is necessary, if it is conducted without some humility it becomes a way of thinking and feeling that negates and produces the same rather than transforms and builds something other (see Sedgwick 2003).

Again, members of my parents' generation wanting a new society were well aware of the dehumanizing and destructive forces that structured their lives, including the systems of racial classification and the use of science to obliterate what were deemed unwanted forms of life. Here I wonder, but can't quite bring myself to ask, what they would say their own alchemy of love yielded. Perhaps it is what is life affirming – the liberatory marvel and joy in a form of knowledge, like a form of living, that recognizes the interconnections and interdependence of all life and all matter, from salty lush tidal zones to the aerial world of a spider's aerial web.

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